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TWENTY YEARS AFTER

THE
BATTLEFIELDS
OF
1914-18

THEN
AND
NOW

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TWENTY YEARS AFTER

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TWENTY YEARS AFTER

THE BATTLEFIELDS OF 1914-18: THEN AND NOW

Edited by
MAJ. GEN. SIR ERNEST SWINTON
K.B.E., C.B.

SUPPLEMENTARY VOLUME

LONDON
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TWENTY YEARS AFTER

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EDITOR'S FOREWORD

IN the ordinary way it would be a matter of some difficulty to write a second foreword to that which is, in effect, the same book. In this case, since the task must be attempted, there are reasons why it should not be otherwise than easy and pleasant.

When, nearly a year ago, I was writing the original foreword to TWENTY YEARS AFTER, I had no idea how the work would be received by ex-servicemen and the public at large. The basic idea, conceived some three years back, of showing to men who, for various reasons, have been unable to re-visit France and Flanders, the battlefields of the Western Front as they are to-day, was developed and improved upon until in the light of the experience of the past twelve months this book of memories would seem to have won for itself a secure place in the affections of hundreds of thousands of those men who, twenty years ago, endured so much and for so long.

The new and supplementary volume of TWENTY YEARS AFTER, to which this is the Foreword, is essentially something prepared in response to oft-repeated requests. On first thoughts it might be argued that nothing really sound can be so produced. In this case, fortunately, no such arguments can hold because the Great War is as a stone of many facets. Considered as a picture, it is a huge canvas. As a memory it was *the* great adventure to which many men to-day look back with an odd nostalgia.

In the first two volumes of TWENTY YEARS AFTER is given the story of the conflict. In the third volume we propose to deal with the wheels and how they went round. In other words, we shall endeavour to tell the story of those countless thousands of men who in a score of different ways and services backed up the infantry of the line.

The servicing, to use a modern word, of a huge army is an amazingly intricate business. War experience taught us that a man could be taken out of workshop or office and in three months or so placed in the front line, a passable imitation of an infantryman. But once there he had to be looked after, and the organisation required for this purpose was indeed stupendous. Gunners were required to deal with their opposite numbers lest the infantry should be strafed beyond endurance pitch; the sappers laboured by day and by night at their seemingly endless tasks; men of the Ordnance sent up clothing and more offensive packages; the A.S.C. thought in terms of food and rum. How was it all done? That question will be answered in the pages that are to come.

The Pictures

Another motive that has had a considerable bearing upon the decision to add a third or supplementary volume to TWENTY YEARS AFTER is the demand for further pictures of the Western Front. The "Then and Now" photographs of towns and villages with

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Photo: Imperial War Museum.

DICKEBUSCH—THEN

Dickebusch and its lake, south-west of Ypres on the road to Bailleul, became known, as the War went on, to almost every man who served in the northern area. In Volume I of *Twenty Years After* there appeared " Then and Now " photographs of Dickebusch Lake and Dickebusch Windmill. Here is a war-time view of the village street.

which at one time we were as familiar as with our birthplaces have, seemingly, supplied a long-felt want. The Western Front is not yet by any means covered, but it is our hope and our intention that before the work is brought finally to a close it will afford a complete pictorial record of the many well-remembered points of interest along the British battle-line. Further, it is believed that pictures of the vast majority of the towns and villages not so far photographed and reproduced in these pages can be obtained.

The Writers

When TWENTY YEARS AFTER first went into production I made a rule that has been rigidly observed. It was to the effect that every word written for the work should come from men who served overseas in the fighting services. Only by pursuing such a policy would it have been possible to strike the right note, and to recapture something of the atmosphere of those days of sunlight and shadow.

The men of the Great War, wherever they may be and no matter whether they are highly born or of humble estate, are to-day a brotherhood. They passed through the furnace and emerged undaunted, though many since Armistice Day have known hard times. This great company of ex-servicemen are now of an age and possessed of an influence powerful in the country for which they did so much. They know what war is like, and as their hands for the next decade or two must grip the tiller, anything that can strengthen the bond of union and friendship between old comrades here and overseas must be of lasting service. To recall the old days, and in some small way to strengthen the links that bind ex-servicemen together, TWENTY YEARS AFTER was first launched, and to that same purpose all the efforts of those who are working upon it are dedicated.

The policy that guided those responsible for the preparation and presentation of the first two volumes will be followed in this, the third and the last. In a very few words this policy may be summarised thus: to recall to men throughout the British Empire days that are gone and places once well-known but now half-forgotten, and to record the events of four memorable years without rancour, bias, or unfair criticism.

E. D. SWINTON.

Photo: A. J. Insall.

DICKEBUSCH—NOW

These two pictures of the main street were taken with the camera looking south-west—i.e. towards La Clytte, Locre, and Bailleul. Dickebusch never fell to the foe, even during late April and May of 1918, when our line was pushed back almost to the lake. The latter lies on the course of a small stream, the Vijverbeek, which eventually enters the Ypres—Comines Canal.

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CHAPTER I

BOOKS AND PLAYS OF THE GREAT WAR

Upon the subject of the Great War of 1914–18 *a vast number of books has been written. The conflict has been dealt with from every point of view and there is no indication that the stream is even now abating. Of many of such books one might reflect that it had been better if they had never arrived upon the book-stalls. On the other hand there are some which will be read and re-read. In the present chapter A. J. Cummings gives views on the books and plays of the Great War with which few, perhaps, will be prepared to disagree.*

A FEW days ago I was discussing with an old Army man the attitude of ex-Service men to the literature of the War. He agreed that the great majority of men he knew and had fought with in the last war were deeply interested not only in regimental histories, but in the personalia of the War, in the details of battles, in descriptions of life at the front, and indeed in every phase and aspect of that devastating upheaval which changed millions of unruffled boys who survived into mature men and transformed their future lives irrevocably.

A Kind of Nostalgia

Ex-Service men in France and in Germany, and even in Russia, as well as in this country, have told me that they could not resist a good War book; others have said that to read about the old battle-scenes was their alternative to visiting the old battlefields.

A London publisher who himself saw service on various fronts said this was a kind of "nostalgia"—a restless, instinctive desire to return physically or in imagination to an environment which could never be erased from the conscious memory.

That may be true of many old soldiers; but it is perhaps sufficient to say of most of them that they have retained an insatiable curiosity about all that can be recalled or re-created of an experience with such deep and endless implications.

There exists, in fact, a remarkable war literature.

I have in my possession hundreds of books written by Englishmen, Americans, Frenchmen, Germans and Italians, covering the whole field from every point of view. There have been innumerable divisional and regimental histories, critical military studies, comprehensive official records of the War in its entirety, expert justifications produced in self-defence by high commanders in the field, War memoirs, episodic analyses, romantic novels, and a spate of so-called "human documents" purporting to reveal with complete candour the naked realities of war, its horrors, its pain, and its misery, as seen through the eyes of experience by individual sufferers.

Some of these personal books have been written with great artistry, others with a sincere and moving simplicity. But in the case of a goodly proportion it is impossible to resist the conclusion that they were written for calculated effect, that they contain gross exaggerations of fact and of the immediate reactions of the authors, and that the violent mental

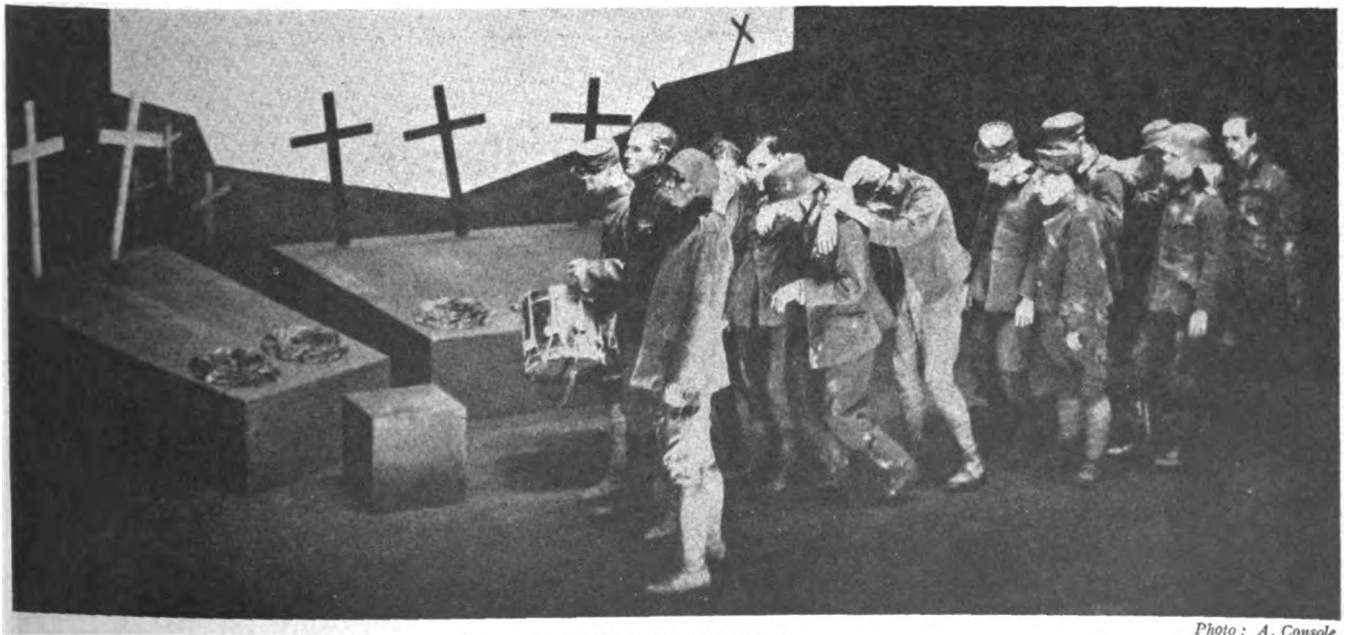

Photo: A. Console.

MIRACLE AT VERDUN

Although its run in London was limited to a few weeks, *Miracle at Verdun* must be numbered among the most powerful War plays ever written. Its theme, briefly, is that the millions who died that we might live rise from their graves to see what kind of a better world we have builded to justify their sacrifice. They find no better world at all, but the old follies, the old vices, in measure greater even than before. And so they return to their tombs, disillusioned. . . . The play is by H. Chlumberg, and was produced in London in September, 1932.

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reflections set down in elaborate detail are very frequently fictitious post-war memories due either to long and bitter brooding, or to a resolute determination to be sensational.

Such books have done no more service, in my judgment, to the cause of peace, than to the cause of truth. They have not been read to any great extent by the men who took an active part in fighting and knew what war really meant; and in any case the average ex-Service man who has read them has done so with critical detachment.

Read for Sadistic Pleasure

They have been, however, circulated in very large numbers among young men and young women of the post-war generation who have read them, not, one fears, in order to learn the worst about war so that they might avoid it, but owing to that familiar kink in human nature which finds a certain sadistic enjoyment in "horrors."

What one might call the sadistic school flourished between the years 1925 and 1930. I have heard Tommies call writers of this kind of war book by another name. They used to call them the "latrine boys"—a not inept description, since many of these works of art avoid everything in the actual experience of the War years which had no relation to dirt in one form or another, and seem to suggest that every serving soldier was a beast and from first to last behaved bestially.

This spate of "naked reality" literature reached its climax in 1930, and then suddenly disappeared. The public all at once lost interest. Publishers who had announced new horror books found themselves with thousands of volumes left on their hands. The sadist school has never since recovered its form.

It is a curious fact that the book which I think, above all others, excited most general criticism, and caused a reaction of popular taste, was a book which had many good qualities and was not related to the school of writers I have described. It was not in the proper sense of the word a "shocker."

Early in 1930, Brigadier General F. P. Crozier wrote a very striking book entitled *A Brass Hat in No Man's Land*, in which he gave a candid account of his life at the front, and recorded incidents which indicated the demoralising effect of war upon some of those who are compelled to take part in it.

It was unusual for a general to write in this vein; and General Crozier's book—admittedly not in perfect focus—excited the wrath at once of other even more distinguished soldiers.

Field-Marshal Sir George Milne, then Chief of the Imperial General Staff, who referred disparagingly in public to the "tendency of writers of war books to generalise in such a way as to make it appear that life in the Army was nothing but a drunken carousal," was among many high officers to call attention to

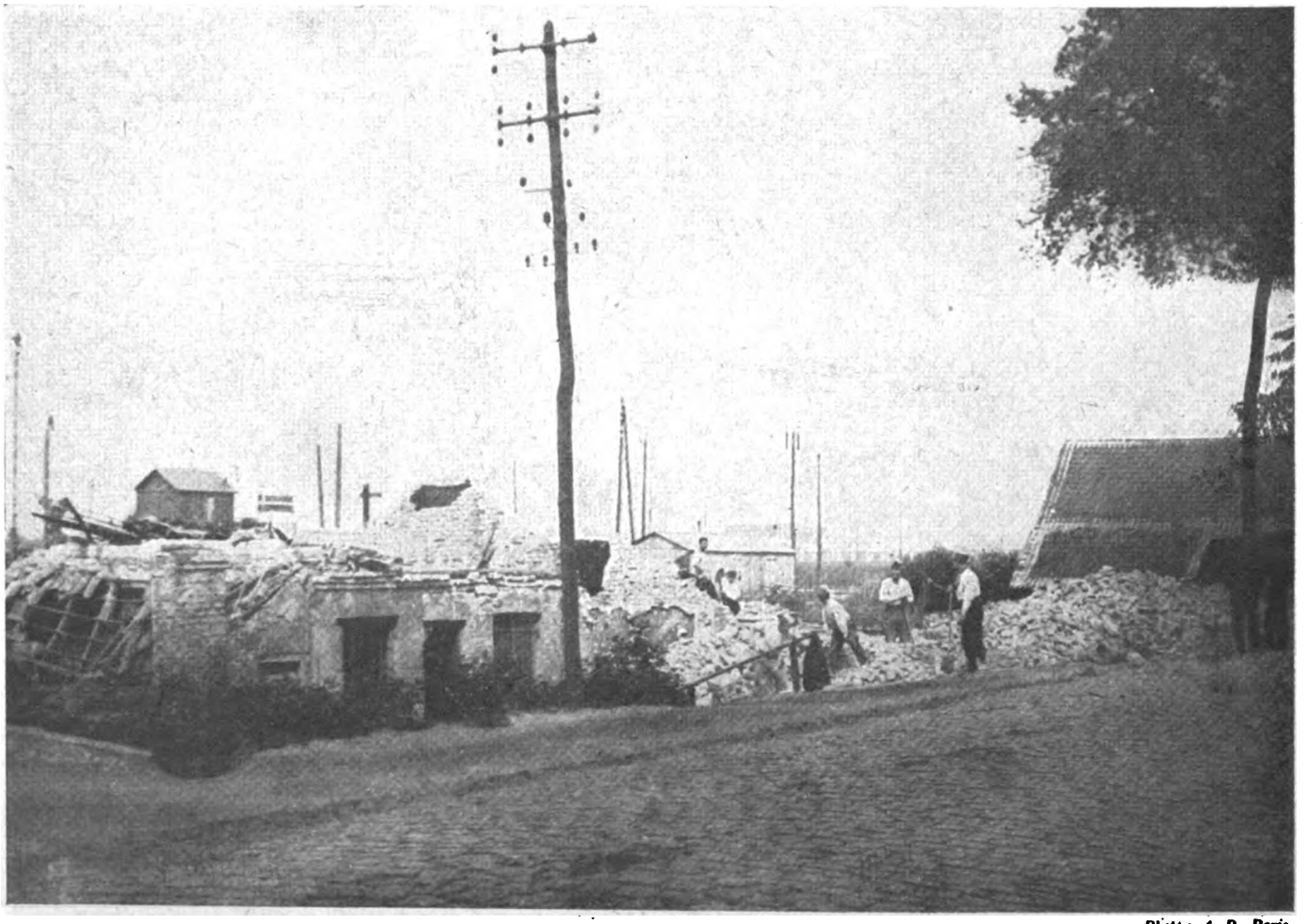

Photo: A. P., Paris.

THE SEVEN PLANETS

This oriental-sounding name is both the title of an estaminet, and that of a small district in the vicinity of Dunkirk. The present photograph, which was taken on June 13th, 1918, shows the severe damage wrought by raiding aircraft even to this relatively remote corner of Flanders. Nine men, who were in the cellars of the foremost house when the fatal bomb fell, lost their lives.

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Photo: A. J. Insall.

ECLIPSED NO LONGER

There is nowadays some doubt among the inhabitants of Les Sept Planètes as to which of their rebuilt homes was the scene of the tragedy illustrated in our War view, but the general trend of opinion is toward the house on the extreme left of the above photograph. No longer do the walls of the buildings hereabouts lie in heaps upon the ground; no longer have the local telegraph-poles a kink in the middle; but the *pavé* roads and the gravel sidewalks go on for ever.

the false impression created by "disreputable" war books, of the character and behaviour of British soldiers in war.

Resenting an Unjust Slur

I know that very deep resentment was felt among ex-Service men, for it was at that time my duty as a journalist to examine correspondence that came into my newspaper office; and hundreds of letters were received week after week in angry protest. The British Tommy didn't claim to be a plaster saint, nor did the British officers. There were wrong 'uns here and there, and many of the weaker characters certainly broke under the strain of active service and did discreditable things. But in this great civilian army there were millions of decent citizens who never lost that original sense of decency and who quietly did their duty under orders.

The ordinary British civilian soldier was a tolerant being, who retained his sense of humour and his rational goodwill, even towards the enemy he was fighting, to the very end. This attitude of mind never ceased to puzzle the enemy; and it proved not a little disconcerting to Army staffs and the political propagandists whose duty, I suppose, was to stimulate the hate complex.

One of the earliest and the most conspicuous examples of books ostensibly designed to create a mass antagonism to war was Remarque's widely publicised *All Quiet on the Western Front.* This was one of the best and the most sincere of all the books of war realism. It had a tremendous vogue, and its method was copied eagerly and crudely by numerous writers of various nationalities.

On the whole, however, the British school was first in the race for war-horror honours. This school apart, I would say without hesitation, after having read large numbers of the war books written since 1918, that the best have been produced by British writers.

I would give a very high place indeed to *War Letters to a Wife,* published in 1929 by Colonel Roland Feilding, who was in the Coldstream Guards. Colonel Feilding was one of the bravest men in the British Army, a man of great modesty and great charm. His letters home make truly fascinating reading. They are models of simplicity and self-restraint; and they give a minute record of the day-to-day experiences of a fighting soldier during his five years' service on the Western Front—a record which should make a powerful appeal to hundreds of thousands of his War comrades. His admiration of the men he commanded is unbounded, and finds spontaneous expression again and again.

An Officer on His Men

"What wonderful people" (he writes) "are our infantry! And what a joy it is to be with them. . . . The most imaginative could not perceive the heroic manner in which the men hold it (the front line) in face of its dangers and its discomforts—the mud, the slush and the snow, often knee deep and deeper still in water . . . pounded incessantly. Through it all they stand frozen and half-paralysed by the cold and wet with no individual power of retaliation."

This is what Colonel Feilding wrote to

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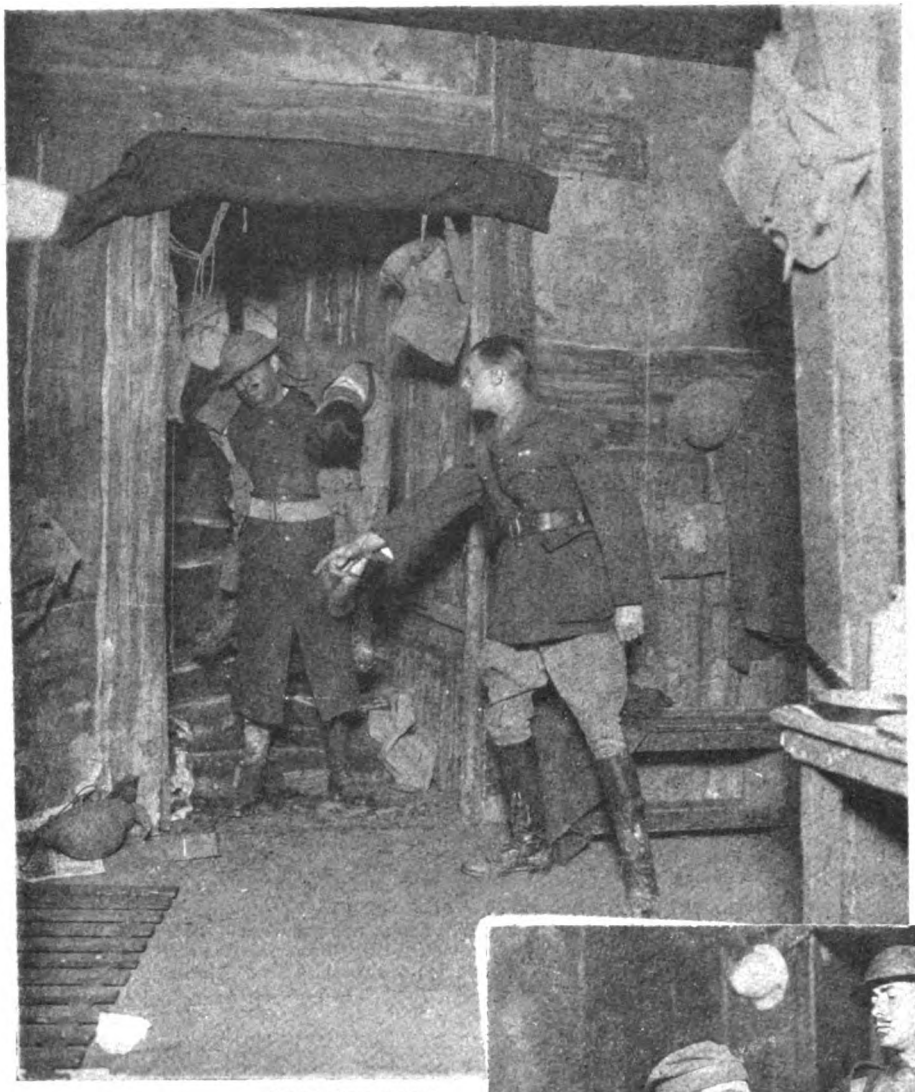

Photo: Stage Photo Co.

JOURNEY'S END

Probably the best-known Great War play in the world, *Journey's End* will have been recalled to many by the recent tragic death in the United States of Colin Clive, the actor who played the rôle of Captain Stanhope. Above is a scene from this all-masculine piece.

his wife after he had been transferred to the 15th London Regiment, 1st Battalion:

"They are little lions, these London men; the standard of courage among these lads is so high that men who would be considered brave elsewhere do not seem particularly brave here. Why, they would look like shivering rabbits beside some of them."

Here is a tragic little cameo:

"The Colonel (Lieutenant-Col. Egerton) sent for me. I moved along the trench to a point opposite the lime kiln which served as his headquarters. I reported the situation and mentioned casually that the enemy's shells were enfilading the trench. I said this in a flippant kind of way which people are apt to adopt while bombing is on, though to be candid they may be feeling far from flippant. He laughed and answered in the same strain 'It's very unpleasant.' This finished our conversation, and they were the last words he ever spoke. As he said them he was killed. A shell burst. I knew it was close to him, but direct hits are rare and believing him safely under cover from splinters, I returned to my place in the trench."

Another note:

"An officer in the battalion has found the diary of a Bavarian infantry officer—a wonderfully human document into which the writer pours his full soul. He was a man of gentle disposition who was no soldier by choice . . . A lover of music, which he describes as 'the divine daughter of Heaven and consoler,' his was one of the bodies that helped to make the Hohenzollern Redoubt."

Another book, even more poignant, published some time later, was *War Letters of Fallen Englishmen*, edited by Laurence Housman. These letters have a tragic dignity which none of the more violent war books can possess, for their authors, every one, belonged to the Choosers of the Slain who (according to the old Norse story) had touched with invisible wands those about to die.

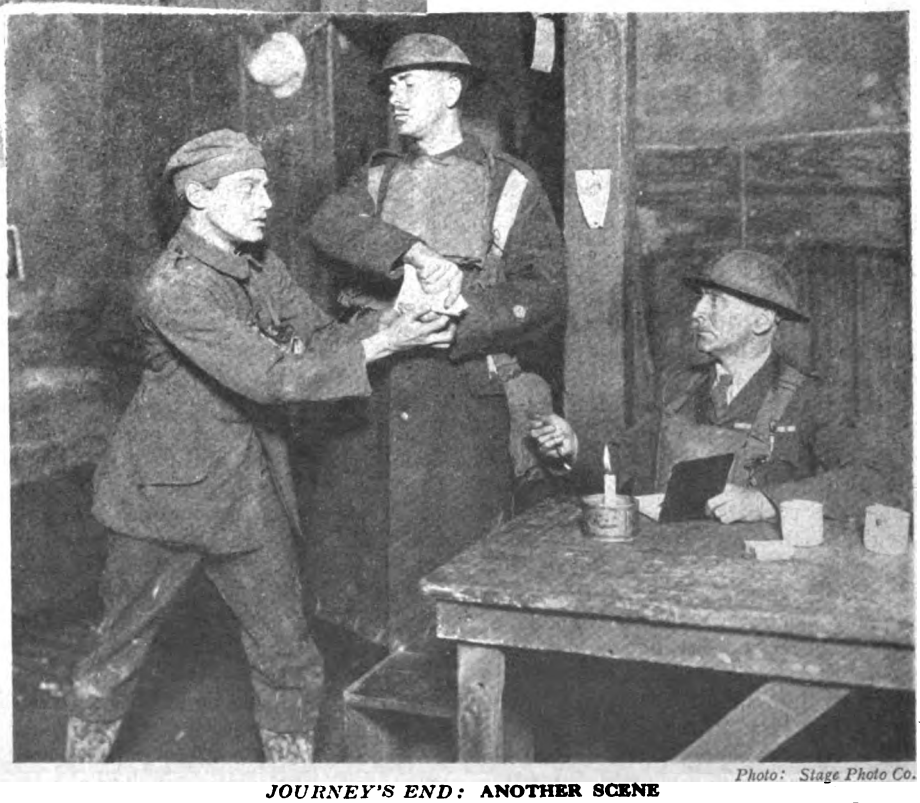

Photo: Stage Photo Co.

JOURNEY'S END: **ANOTHER SCENE**

Written by R. C. Sherriff, *Journey's End* was produced at the Savoy Theatre, London, on January 21st, 1929, and ran for 594 performances. Since then it has been made into a novel, filmed, and translated into nearly every European language. It is, indeed, as near to being a perfect drama of the front line in the Great War as we may hope to see.

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Letters which Confound the Mud-stirrers

The letters are written from all angles by every conceivable type of British soldier. They moved me greatly. They make nonsense of books which suggest that the War was a debauch indulged in by none but mental defectives, cowards, dipsomaniacs, and perverts.

One of these letters describes war as a thing of contradictions, full of beastliness and many other hateful things ; a misery to mind and body, yet of fineness as well. But that fineness, as Mr. Housman justly observes, is not of war, but of the human nature whose strong qualities it tries out and reveals.

I have met several War veterans who were at a loss how to introduce their young sons to the literature of the War. I have suggested to more than one that they could not do better than begin with the *War Letters of the Fallen*.

In a somewhat different vein is a first-class collection of *Great Short Stories of the War*—66 of them. In an introduction to this book Mr. Edmund Blunden reports in one of its numerous forms the shortest of short stories current in the trenches :

" *Voice* (at top of dug-out shaft) : ' How many of you is there in there ? '

" *Voice* (at foot of shaft) : ' Five.'

" *Voice at top* (as Mills bomb goes flying down) : ' Share that amongst you.' "

It was such grim pass-words of humour that made tragedy tolerable by turning it into a conversational cock-shy. The grotesque and incredible became the commonplace, and if you were to do your job, control your imagination, and avoid the " jumps," it was your business to keep everything as commonplace and matter-of-fact as possible.

I doubt whether all these 66 stories were born actually in the firing-line. Yet they are all the sort of story that created itself out of that never-ending stare across No Man's Land.

The book is an excellent epitome of the point of view of the ordinary fighting soldier. Englishmen, Frenchmen, Germans, and Americans contribute to this mixed bag. The German writers describe battles with a Germanic accuracy which is almost terrifying. They write with a kind of bitter zest, and their soldiers talk rather too much and rather too well.

Americans and Frenchmen

The Americans did not fight long enough to develop the profound war-weariness of most of the other combatants. Their stories still have an air of youth and enthusiasm and crude self-confidence ; and it is clear that in their contacts with the French they recognised with some bewilderment, occasionally with contempt, the cynical, fatalistic detachment of the disenchanted veterans of France.

One of these 66 stories stands out in my recollection above all the others. It is Mr. Gerald Bullett's *Prentice*.

Prentice, one of the survivors of that dark War age, meets a War acquaintance, and they talk over old times and of George Leek, Prentice's bosom pal.

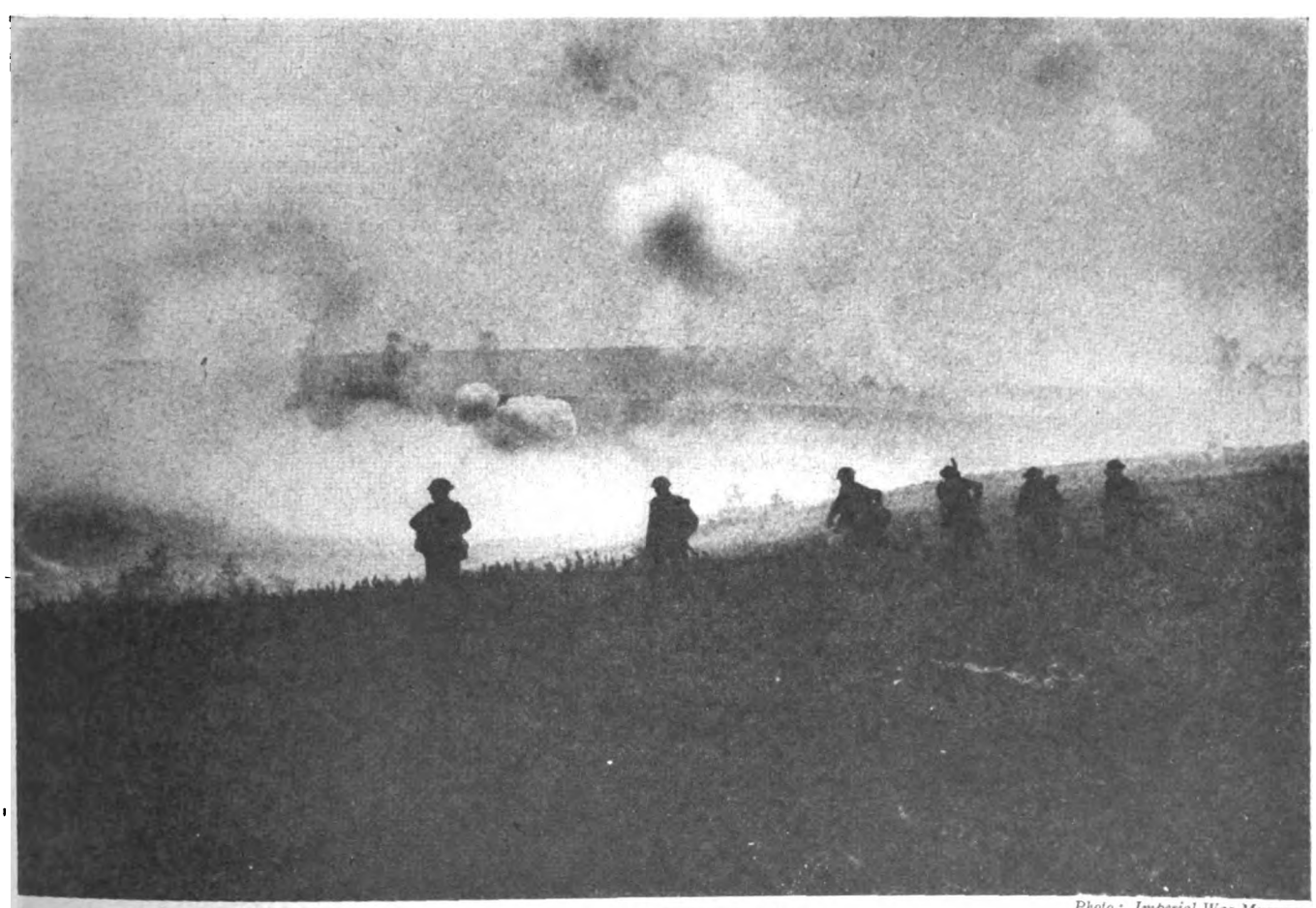

Photo : Imperial War Museum.

NEAR THE HINDENBURG LINE

A grim and graphic picture of the 45th Australian Infantry Battalion attacking behind a " creeping " barrage on September 18th, 1918, during the final drive to victory. The foremost trenches of the Hindenburg Line, half-veiled in the smoke of the bursting shells, are upon the hill seen opposite the troops.

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Photo : A. P., Paris.

SQUARE AND CEMETERY

Two views of Reninghelst, with twenty years—all but—between them. The above photograph, taken on July 3rd, 1918, shows the Place de l'Église and the cemetery attached to the church. The village lies on the road from Poperinghe to La Clytte and Kemmel, and is 9 km. south-west of Ypres.

RENINGHELST TO-DAY

Reninghelst is also directly connected by road with Vlamertinghe and Westoutre, from the latter of which a modest road leads across the Franco-Belgian frontier. All these places lie in an exceptionally well-known billeting-area.

Photo : A. J. Insall.

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Photo: A. P., Paris.

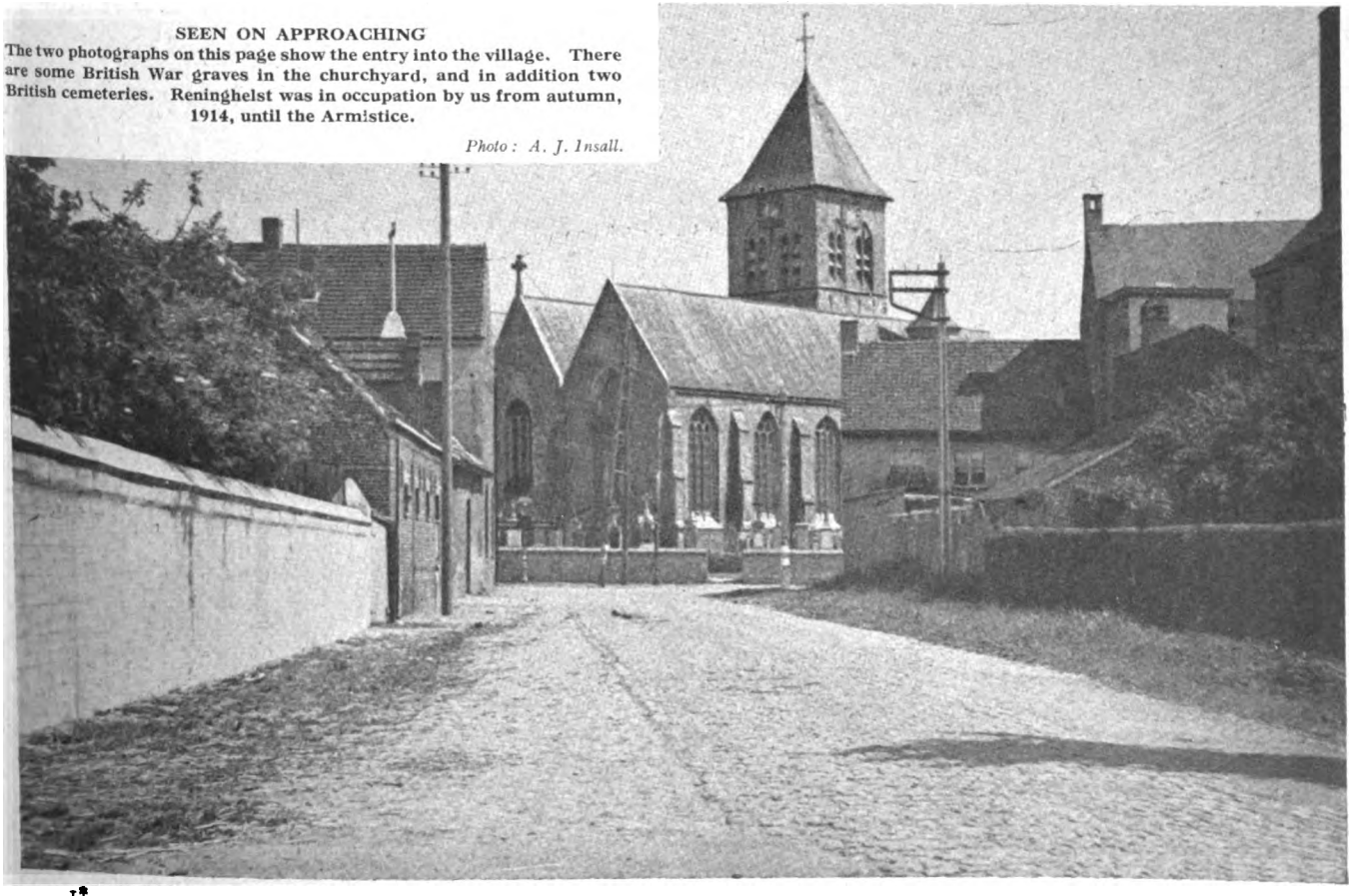
THE CHURCH SURVIVES

Reninghelst church was unusually lucky to survive the bombardment which caused so much damage to other buildings. The village derived considerable importance from its situation on the route from "Pop" to the Monts des Flandres—the hills covering Kemmel. This view is again dated July 3rd, 1918.

SEEN ON APPROACHING

The two photographs on this page show the entry into the village. There are some British War graves in the churchyard, and in addition two British cemeteries. Reninghelst was in occupation by us from autumn, 1914, until the Armistice.

Photo: A. J. Insall.



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" What became of him ? " Prentice sups his beer and makes George live again and die.

" ' Lyin' on 'is back all knocked to pieces, 'e was. Tell you straight, corp, I din' like it. . . .

" ' And suddenly 'e stop 'is row and jest stared up at me. . . . Then 'is mouf moved and 'e said, straight to me, wiv a sort of whistle in his voice and a sorta sob : " Jimmy . . . Crysake do us in ! " Well it was a fair knock-out. I dunno what to do. 'Im all to pieces like that and still alive. No getting 'im back. And whizz-bangs all round us—merry 'ell.'

" Prentice's voice wavered and was silent. I did not dare look up, but presently I asked : ' And what did you do ? '

" ' Well,' said Prentice, slightly surprised by the question, ' what could I do ? " Crysake do us in ! " says old George. So I owt wiv me jack-knife and cut 'is bloody froat. 'E was a good pal to me.' "

A book that burnt itself into the mind and memory, and was read, I believe, by an unusually large number of men who had served in the infantry, was *Her Privates We*, by " Private 19022," a pseudonym for a well-known writing man who served in the ranks. No more moving epic has been written of soldiers in the ranks.

The soldiers in *Her Privates We* are not figures or types ; they are men, subtly individualised, who are part of the pattern of war, but who keep their personality and the divine spark that is in them, re-acting tensely one upon another, and bound together under the Shadow that covers them all by impalpable sympathies that blot out the ordinary boundaries of education and social standing.

I remember saying, when I reviewed this remarkable piece of work in a London newspaper, that " Private 19022 " wrote as if the War vibrated through his being still. There are characters in this book so intensely alive that one can never forget them.

A Book for the Gunner

In my judgment far and away the best book written for artillerymen was *Medal Without Bar*, by Richard Blaker. No artilleryman could read *Medal Without Bar* without emotion. It is the most intimate, dramatic and accurate record ever presented of life in a battery in action on the Western Front.

Speaking as an old field-gunner, I would say that there was no fighting element in the War which had the distinctive character and unity of a field gun battery. It possessed its own special technique, it was self-contained, it was based on the principle of close mutual co-operation, in which at the same time every officer and man had a different individual responsibility. It combined with a peculiar fascination the control of machines and animals.

It developed an *esprit de corps* unmatched in any other kind of unit ; and there was about it a " happy family " spirit which remained unshaken until the later phases of the War, when the gigantic concentration of destructive counter-battery gun fire dissipated the personnel and produced artillery casualties almost on an infantry scale.

Medal Without Bar, however, is not merely a first-class account of one technical branch of modern warfare ; it is a true picture of war, and a marvellous revelation of the nobility of the human spirit.

One of the best of the earlier War books was R. H. Mottram's *Spanish Farm*, with its two sequels. These productions are for the most part a description of life immediately behind the lines in the divisional area. They show humorously, and sometimes tragically, the relations of the troops with those civilians who led a precarious life close to the fighting line. Mottram's excellent delineations might be described as reflecting the undertones of war.

A book which had a great vogue, and deserved it, was André Maurois's *Les Silences du Colonel Bramble*, which was translated into English and sold, I believe, in tens of thousands. It is an ironical, yet sympathetic and penetrating, account by an accomplished French writer of the personalities of an English artillery brigade to which he was attached as an interpreter. No foreigner has succeeded in etching so perfectly the reactions to war of representative English types. Maurois understood us better than we understood ourselves.

C. E. Montague the Cynic

For the thoughtful and the reflective, C. E. Montague's *Disenchantment* and *Rough Justice* are still delightful reading. Even those who may not be attracted by Montague's somewhat cynical style, not to mention his philosophy of frustration, will enjoy the many perfect little cameos which a shrewd and experienced observer has painted of men and of life at the front.

I wonder how many of my fellow ex-Servicemen know anything about the work of Bernard Newman, who has written at least three enthralling War stories quite different from any others. The first was the best : *The Cavalry Went Through* is a glorious piece of fun. It is the story of the sudden rise to fame of an English military genius who imposes his will on all the combatants in the main theatre of war, and achieves a devastating victory in the mid-summer of 1919, thereby shortening the conflict by nearly eighteen months.

It was a common pastime in countless dug-outs in France, when the armies were withering away under the pressure of that seemingly hopeless deadlock of stationary warfare, to invent dramatic solutions.

We all did it in my mess. But the war went wearily on. Mr. Newman must have been very good at the game.

His solution is dramatic, audacious, ingenious, and deliciously plausible. In the light of actual events, his strategy and tactics would, I think, pass the Staff College test, which may not be saying a great deal. At all events " Field Marshal Duncan," the man who won the War, was the kind of soldier the great Moltke had in mind in his shrewd dictum that there are always three possibilities open to the enemy—who always chooses the fourth.

Among the Field-Marshal's devoted adherents was the Hon. Worton Spender, a thinly-veiled disguise for Mr. Winston Churchill, who had left politics to follow Duncan in the field. There was an occasion when Duncan talked at rather platitudinous length of the sins of the Cabinet, ending with the usual demand for a dictatorship.

" Spender had been staring at him with mouth wide open . . . ' Yes, that's right ! ' he said, ' that's right, if you can find a big enough man. That's it—a big enough man.' A moment's pause. ' And by God, Duncan, you are the man ! ' "

I loved that bit. The spectacle of Mr. Winston Churchill looking open-mouthed at another man and presenting him with the dictatorship should be well worth waiting for.

Controversy that Stopped a Serial

One book which created something of a sensation, as well as a sharp controversy, was Commander C. R. Benstead's *Retreat : A Story of* 1918. The controversy arose out of certain episodes in the story connected with the life of an artillery brigade. Some ex-officers thought they recognised their brigade as that described in the novel, and their indignation was aroused on account of the pictures drawn of personalities as

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Photo: A. J. Insall.

MEMORIES OF 1914

"Old Contemptibles" should appreciate this picture, for it shows a present-day scene whose war-time counterpart they knew only too well. The town is Mons, viewed from the Belfry, and the camera is looking southward over the country of the famous retreat. British cavalry first came into contact with the Germans at Casteau, north-east of Mons, on August 22nd, 1914. The battle opened the next day; and the retreat, begun at nightfall, was continued on the 24th and succeeding days.

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well as of incidents. The feeling ran so high that a newspaper discontinued the serial publication of *Retreat*.

What interested me most in Commander Benstead's novel was his account of the behaviour of the padre who is the central figure in the book. There were all sorts of padres in the War—good, bad, and indifferent. They had an extremely difficult and delicate task to perform. Many of them made the mistake of trying to put their sacred profession into cold storage for the duration of the War and of trying to become merely "good fellows" who could uncork the biggest bottle and crack the broadest jokes with the junior lieutenant in the mess. Such men were always taken at their own low valuation. Their subterfuge was easily seen through, and they failed as completely as the fussy and sanctimonious minister who cared for nothing but counting heads or dishing the rival denominations.

Elliot P. Warne, the imaginary padre in *Retreat*, was of another order. He went out with a high conceit of his office, evidently supposing that spiritual ministrations in the battle-line would not differ greatly from those at home in his country parish. The realities shocked and bewildered him, and in a few weeks actually destroyed his reason.

After his departure the officers of the brigade discussed parsons and Christianity over their drinks. "No parson is really necessary out here," said the doctor; "some are merely less necessary than others." Perhaps it was a tempting thing to say; and certainly it was the sort of observation frequently made. But if one is honest in one's memories, one must add that it is not true. The parson had his place, and at its best it was the highest place. If there was an Elliot P. Warne, he was a freak. The Army, after all, was peppered with freaks.

Journey's End

One should not conclude without a reference to the most well-known, possibly, of all the War books, though it was a play before it became a book. I have seen many War plays, and many War films; but *Journey's End* is the only dramatic representation that seemed to me to belong inevitably and without qualification to the Great War. It is a fragment perfect in its expression of drama in the front line. It has been seen in all parts of the world, by millions of people of all nationalities. It has probably given the men and women of to-day a more sensitive understanding of what the War meant to the men who lived in its midst than anything else which has been produced for popular consumption.

I like to think that I had something to do with calling public attention to the play when it was produced in London; for I was the first to publish a full-dress description in the Press of this brilliant production, and to explain its characteristic significance.

How many people know that the Imperial War Museum at Lambeth contains the largest library of books dealing with the War in existence? Six years ago its shelves held more than 60,000 volumes in many languages, dealing with practically every aspect of the struggle.

Since then War books have continued to pour into the market, though the majority (I understand), since 1930, have been not personal records, but histories and military criticisms.

We may be sure of this, that for decades to come books on the greatest war in history will continue to be produced by many men in many countries, and that the number of "final judgments" passed will be legion.

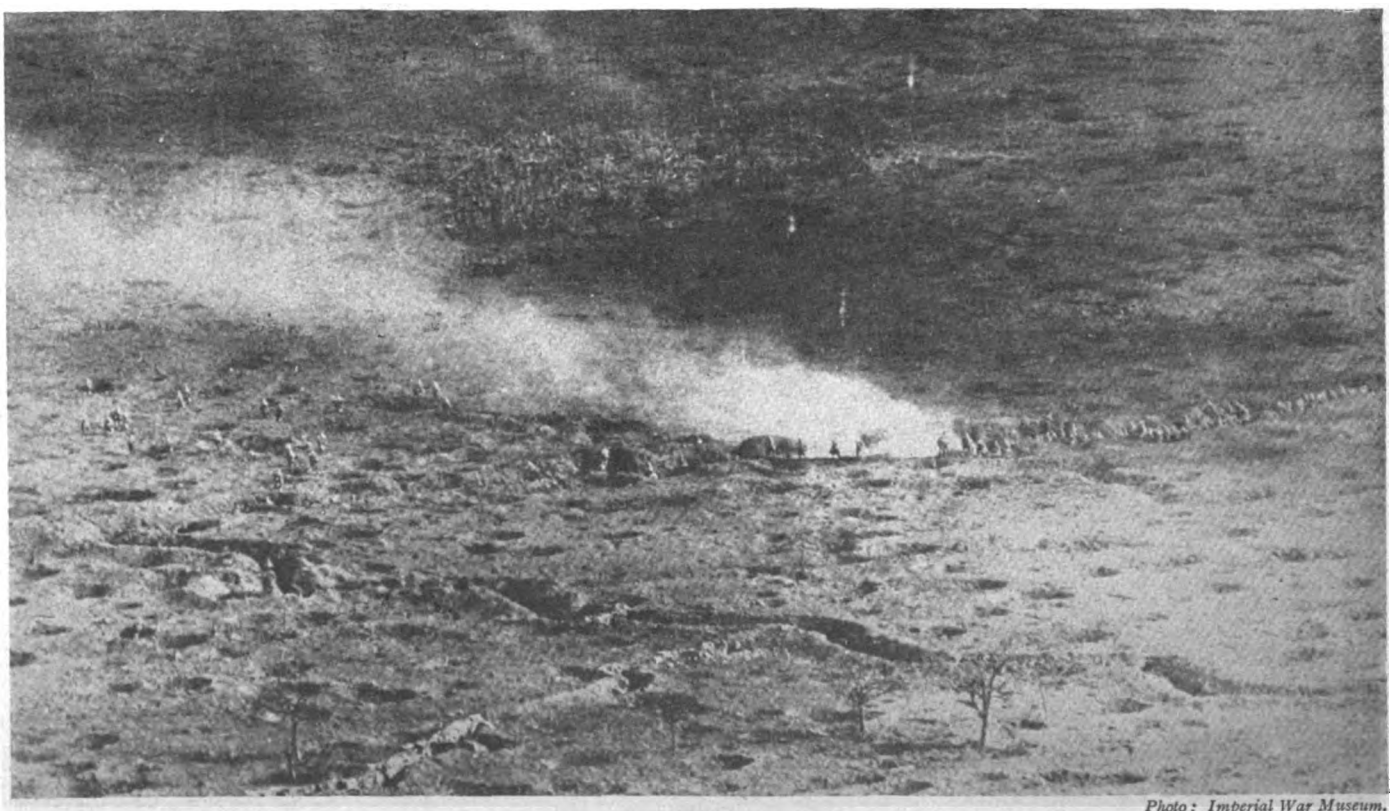

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

ON THE SOMME IN '16

A French pilot was responsible for this map-like aerial view, which shows a storming party at work south of Vermandovillers on October 10th, 1916. In the centre of the photograph, near the top, may be discerned the bare trunks of the coppice known as Bois Hart. Vermandovillers—captured by our Allies on September 17th—lies between Chaulnes and Soyécourt. A number of small woods are to be found on its south side.

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CHAPTER II

THE CAMPAIGN IN EAST AFRICA

The long campaign for the possession of the German colony in East Africa has often been described as a side-show, and even as a minor one. Certainly when we compare the East African affair with the tremendous clash of arms on the Western Front there would seem to be some justification for the description. In actual fact, however, this campaign was an arduous affair in the course of which officers and men of the Imperial force engaged, endured much and for long. The country presented every sort of difficulty to attacking troops, and the German commander, the gallant General von Lettow-Vorbeck, was the man to turn to account every opportunity that came his way.

THE campaign in East Africa is little known—undeservedly so, since it is the type of campaign which might readily recur on the outskirts of the British Empire in the future. The reason for this ignorance is easy to explain. The East African operations suffered from the fact that, from the very outbreak of the Great War in 1914, they were regarded not only as a "side-show"—which in essence they were—but also, owing to early failure, as the greatest nuisance among the many "smaller wars" which became part of the world-wide struggle.

A Source of Irritation

This rendered the campaign a source of irritation to the British authorities, and was in part the cause of its dragging on for the duration of the War. Climate, topography, and other factors demanded the best that Britain could supply in the way of men and equipment, if the struggle were to be concluded in a short time. Numbers by themselves were of no avail in the East African bush; second-rate armament and transport could only become a source of weakness in the black cotton-soil belts of the German colony. Yet force of circumstances often decreed that men of inferior medical categories were sent to this quarter, whilst their equipment and transport was neither sufficient nor specially designed for such arduous service.

The higher direction of the campaign also suffered from these and other reasons, both military and, in the majority of cases, political. It is not surprising, then, that the story of the war in East Africa should offer an illustration of how the successful conduct of a campaign in such country can be hampered at every turn by a lack of observance of the essential conditions that are needed to bring it to a speedy conclusion. In other circumstances the East African affair might have been terminated—and victoriously—within six months of its inception.

In order to follow the development of the operations, and particularly of their initial stages, it is necessary to bear in mind the topography of the country through which ran the frontier separating British from German East Africa, and also to remember the three lines of railway which ran inland from the coast in that region.

British East Africa lay directly to the north of, and adjoining, German East Africa. The Equator runs across both colonies. On the sea-coast 50 miles north of the common frontier was situated Mombasa, the chief port of the British colony, and terminus of the Uganda Railway. The latter continues for some 400 miles in a mainly north-westerly direction through Nairobi, the capital of East Africa, as far as Kisumu on Victoria Nyanza. This line, together with a spur near Nairobi branching due west to Lake Magadi, was nowhere situated more than 50–100 miles distant from German territory.

The Back Door to the Sudan

Some anxiety was consequently felt for the safety of the railway in the event of an outbreak of war. Moreover, since British East Africa might in some way be regarded as a back door into the Sudan, there was no foretelling what might have been the effects on the wilder and fanatical tribes inhabiting those regions, had a German force penetrated at all deeply into the colony.

On the coast, on the German side of the frontier and not many miles from it, was situated the small harbour of Tanga, this being the terminus of the (German) Usambara Railway which ran inland for over 200 miles in a principally north-westerly direction past Moshi, at the foot of Mt. Kilimanjaro, as far as Arusha. Moshi, owing to its altitude and better climate, was an important centre of population and commerce.

Not far south of Tanga lay the island of Zanzibar, a large British protectorate. On the mainland, south of and close to Zanzibar Island, was situated Dar-es-Salaam, the capital of German East Africa, and terminus of the Central Railway, the German line that ran in a general westerly direction for some 600 miles as far as Kigoma on Lake Tanganyika.

The importance of the districts adjacent to the frontier was considerable, since on either side of it the European settlements were more numerous and important than anywhere else either in the German or in the British colony. The lower slopes of Kilimanjaro were better cultivated and more thickly populated than almost any other part of German East Africa. It was clear that any declaration of war between Britain and Germany might bring in its train an outbreak of hostilities in this region.

The military forces present in British East Africa at this juncture were very weak, and totally inadequate for any such task as the passive defence of a long frontier and railway line. The King's African Rifles, four battalions strong, had been the only Regular force in existence in the Central and East African Colonies. These were native troops, of whom two battalions were raised in Nyasaland, one in Uganda, and the fourth in British East Africa. But in 1913 the Colonial Office, which administered all these African defence forces, decided to eliminate one of the four battalions, so that at the outbreak of war there were only two battalions of African Rifles available in East Africa, and one in Nyasaland.

A "Lawrence" of East Africa

On the declaration of hostilities, two units of white volunteers were raised, one a regiment of mounted rifles, the other of infantry. In addition, Irregulars were enrolled, including a unit of Arab Rifles for service on the coast. The latter was raised and commanded by a brilliant young soldier, Captain Paxton Wavell, whom the natives almost worshipped. Unfortunately Wavell was killed not long after.

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Photo: Imperial War Museum.

FIGHTING FOR THE GREAT WHITE CHIEF

Three stalwart guards of the 1/4th King's African Rifles photographed at Njombe, near Lake Nyasa. In view of the recent Abyssinian campaign, it is grimly amusing to learn that in August, 1914, the bulk of this regiment was not available for service against the Germans, as it was maintaining order among the unruly tribes inhabiting the borders of Italian Somaliland.

It was quite clear that, even with the help of these extemporised units, British East Africa could not be regarded as able to provide for its own defence. The Government of India was therefore requested to despatch troops to the colony in order to protect the Uganda Railway from raids, and, indeed, the whole of British East Africa from enemy incursions.

Three battalions were therefore despatched from India not long after the declaration of war. The first of these, the 29th Punjabis, sailed on August 19th, and was actually engaged near Tsavo on September 6th. Out of this unit, and two more Indian battalions subsequently despatched to Africa, was formed a brigade under Brigadier General Stewart. But this was not all, for a larger force, known as the Indian Expeditionary Force " B," was organised, and sailed from India for East Africa in the middle of October.

This force, consisting of two brigades and a few divisional troops, was commanded by (temporary) Major-General Aitken. The main characteristic of the force was the paucity of its artillery, the latter being represented only by the 28th Indian Mountain Battery. After a very slow passage from India the expedition arrived off Mombasa on October 31st.

After a consultation held between the various authorities, the following plan of campaign was adopted. Since the occupation of the Usambara Railway, together with that of Moshi and of the whole frontier region, seemed the most effective method of safeguarding British East Africa, the first movements of the Expeditionary Force were to be directed against that railway, so as to bring about the occupation of Moshi and the Kilimanjaro region.

The troops' first objective was thus to be Moshi: the Indian brigade under General Stewart, in conjunction with local troops, would make for that spot from the north and north-west, while General Aitken's Expeditionary Force " B " was to land at Tanga and move up the railway towards Moshi.

Crudeness and Delay

This would have been a perfectly practical plan in the case of a " small war " such as had been customary in India and elsewhere in the Victorian epoch. But against an enemy controlled by a leader such as the German commander, General von Lettow-Vorbeck, proved himself to be, dilatory methods and crude tactical conceptions were not likely to lead to success. All the conditions surrounding the expedition precluded strong leadership. The Colonial Office was responsible for the policy and ultimate administration of military forces in East Africa; but it was the Government of India which supplied the large bulk of the troops, and thereby influenced any plan of operations, although the commanders from India must necessarily be unfamiliar with East African conditions.

To complicate matters, there was a latent feeling of distrust current in the

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

ON LAKE NYASA

A photograph of the 1/4th King's African Rifles embarking on the British gunboat *Gwendoline* at Alt Langenburg, a German town at the northern end of Lake Nyasa, occupied by the British forces on June 13th, 1916. In the early part of the East African campaign various miniature naval battles were fought on the three great lakes.

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GERMAN EAST AFRICA AND SURROUNDING TERRITORIES
Showing railways, and also German names, as before 1918.

Specially drawn.

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colony with regard to Indian troops. For years past native Indians had immigrated into East Africa ; there they had provided the labour for building the Uganda Railway, and had been appropriating a number of trades and professions, including that of money-lending, a fact which had not endeared them either to the European settler or to the native African. The slightest reverse sustained by Indian troops must therefore entail a further severe depreciation of their credit.

From the outset the movements of the expedition were far too dilatory. Moreover, the German authorities at Dar-es-Salaam had entered into some sort of unofficial agreement with the British by which they undertook not to molest British ships so long as the latter did not fire on any coast town. This arrangement had, so it turned out, covered Tanga. Consequently, at dawn on November 2nd H.M.S. *Fox*, flying a flag of truce, steamed into Tanga to inform the German commissioner that the truce was at an end ; he was given one hour to haul down his flag. This was not done, so at 9.30 a.m. it was decided to land. Even then, owing to difficulties due to pilotage and doubts lest the harbour be mined, the better part of the day went by before any troops were put ashore.

Now Tanga stands on the shore of Tanga Bay, an inlet of the Indian Ocean, and is a good two miles from the shoreline of the Ocean itself. Where the town is built the coast forms a right-angle—and at the point of that angle there projects a headland known as Ras Kasone. The force was now to disembark at three landing-places : the first on the ocean beach, at a point south of Ras Kasone and two miles east of Tanga ; the second at Ras Kasone ; the third at a landing-place in Tanga Bay itself, inside the shelter of Ras Kasone.

Reckoning Without the Enemy

Little was known as to the nature of the intervening ground between the landing-places and Tanga. It turned out to be densely overgrown with scrub, and broken up by a rubber plantation and fields of maize, which was then standing 8 feet high. But nothing much mattered ; the conviction was held by the British leaders that Tanga would not be defended. They little guessed that the German, von Lettow-Vorbeck, was just as certain that Tanga would be attacked, and equally determined to defend it.

After wasting the greater part of November 2nd, a good proportion of the Force "B" was at length put ashore, though not before 4.30 p.m. The advance from the eastern landing-

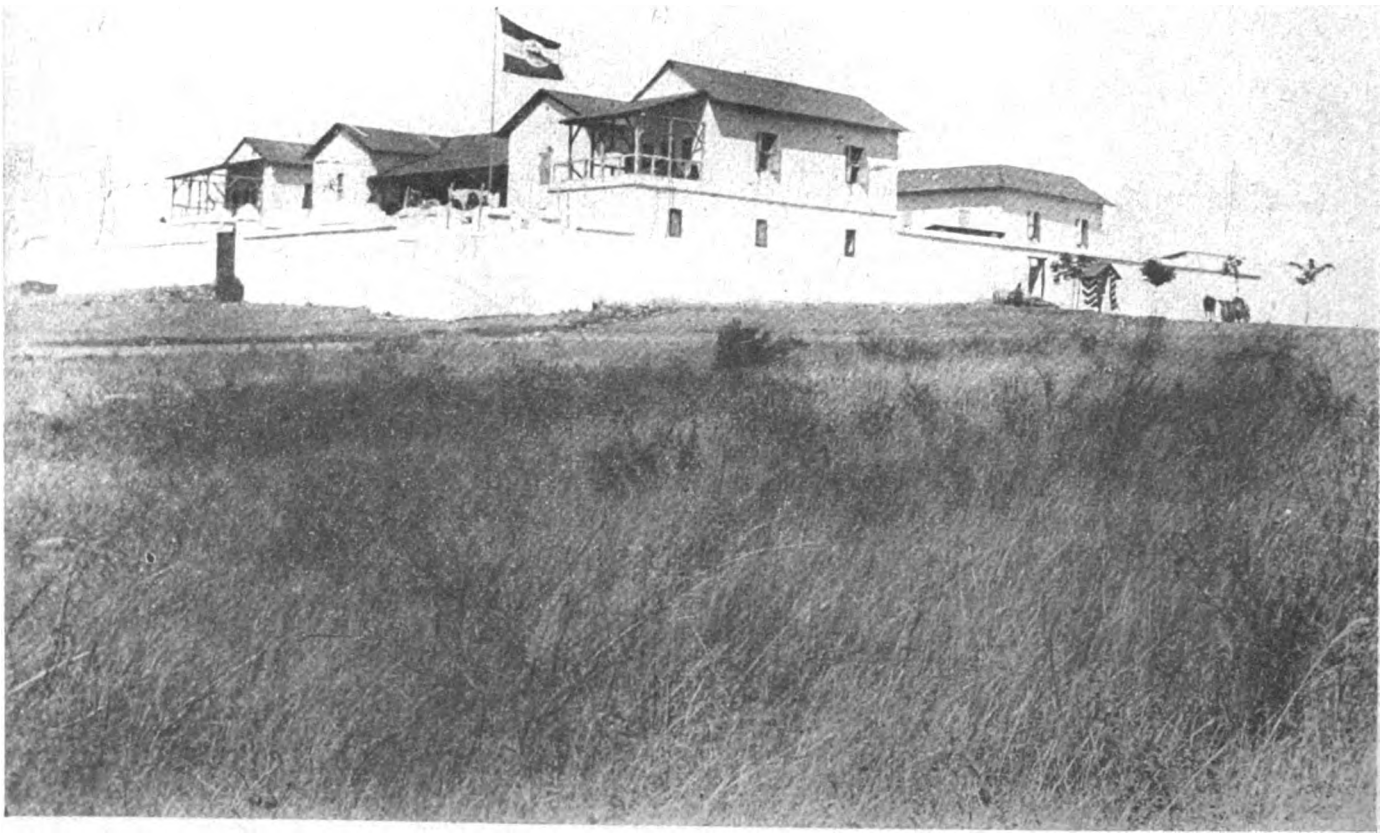

Photo : Imperial War Museum.

A TYPICAL MILITARY STATION IN GERMAN EAST AFRICA

This illustration has been made from one of a few negatives accidentally discovered in a house in Dar-es-Salaam. The latter was formerly the capital and chief port of German East Africa, just as it is now those of Tanganyika Territory. Bombarded three times in 1914 and once in 1915, it was later "fortified" with some of the guns saved from the disabled *Königsberg*. It surrendered to British naval forces on September 4th, 1916.

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From SOYÉCOURT to BARLEUX

Then and Now

Photo: Imperial War Museum

DESOLATION

The village of Soyécourt lies 1½ km. south of the Amiens—St. Quentin road, on the by-road from Estrées-Déniécourt to Chaulnes. It lay in front of the British line after our extension southward in the autumn of 1915, but was soon opposite the French again, upon our withdrawal to the north bank of the Somme. A German counter-attack was launched from Soyécourt on July 21st, 1916; and considerable fighting ensued here between that date and the French capture of the village on September 4th.

Photo: G. T. Watson

RESTORATION

There is, north-west of St. Quentin, another Soyécourt, which the British entered in March, 1917; and readers must beware of confusing the two. Our present village, after its capture in September, 1916, remained in Allied hands until March 26th, 1918, when it was passed by the 8th Division of General Watts's XIX Corps during the day's retirement. The pilgrim will find little of interest in the modern village, nor is there a British cemetery attached to it.

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Photo: Imperial War Museum

POSTHUMOUS VIEW OF BERNY-EN-SANTERRE

This place is 5 km. due east of Soyécourt, on the main Péronne—Chaulnes road. Most of it was captured by the French on September 6th, 1916, and the remainder on the 17th. Fighting dragged on in this locality until the very last stages of the First Battle of the Somme, a German attack being repulsed as late as November 11th. The above picture is dated July 12th, 1917.

BERNY-EN-SANTERRE CHURCH

Early on the morning of August 28th, 19[illegible], the 32nd Divis
opposition, Soyécourt, Ablaincourt, and Dé[illegible]court—the last
Berny-en-Santerre. Here, however, and also further to the
more serious opposition was encountered, which increased a
dusk an outpost-line was established west of

THE CHURCH, BERN[illegible]

The reason why a resistance should have been [illegible]
had been offered at the other villages named, [illegible]
strategical importance. It is placed at the head [illegible]
valley, which runs towards the Somme at St. C[illegible]
Berny would enable a foe virtually to cut in half [illegible]

Photo: G. T. Watson

A CORNER OF THE NEW BERNY

Like Soyécourt, Berny-en-Santerre was reached and passed on March 26th, 1918, by the 8th Division. This division had been established until the evening of the 25th on a south-west—north-east line between Hyencourt, just east of Chaulnes, and St. Christ, on the Somme. The withdrawal to a new line running behind Berny-en-Santerre was ordered late at night, and was carried out before dawn on the 26th.

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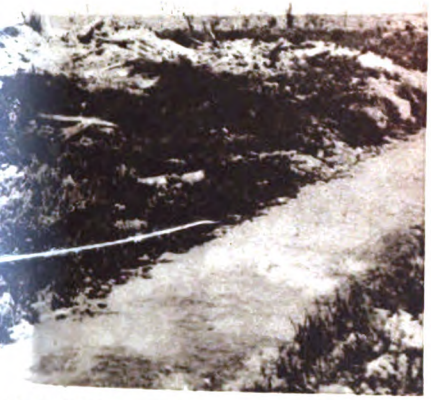
RRE CHURCH

, the 32nd Division occupied, with little
écourt—the last-named 2½ km. west of
so further to the south, at Marchélepot,
which increased as the day wore on. At
tablished west of Bernv.

Photo: Imperial War Museum



ERNY-EN-SANTERRE

een put up at Berny, when none to speak of
ed, is that Berny lies in a position of some
head of, and completely commands, a long
St. Christ. Domination of this valley from
half any line of troops defending the river.

Photo: G. T. Watson

Photo: Imperial War Museum

WHERE A CHÂTEAU ONCE STOOD

Here is the site of the local château of Belloy-en-Santerre, Berny-en-Santerre's "opposite number" on the northern side of the Amiens—St. Quentin road. The two villages are some 3 km. apart. Belloy was taken by the French on July 4th, 1916, although the capture was not properly consolidated until the 9th. This photograph was taken on July 11th, 1917.

Photo: G. T. Watson

A TYPICAL SOMME VILLAGE

In the March Retreat, Belloy-en-Santerre was relinquished during the same retirement (*i.e.* of the XIX Corps) as the two previous villages in this section, but by the 66th Division in place of the 8th. It was recaptured on August 29th. In the above photograph, the site of the pre-war château is to be found among the newly-grown—and growing—wood seen at the far end of the street.

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Photo: Imperial War Museum

FOURTH ARMY H.Q.

A photograph of Fourth Army headquarters at Barleux on October 20th, 1918. The village, which lies on the Péronne—Chaulnes road 3 km. due north of Villers-Carbonnel, and about the same distance north-east of Belloy-en-Santerre, had been recaptured for the Allies by the 5th Australian Division on August 29th. In the Somme programme of two years earlier, its outskirts had been reached by the French on July 9th, 1916.

Photo: Keystone

COUNTRYSIDE NEAR BARLEUX

Barleux came into the battle-zone of the March retreat about 7 a.m. on the 25th. The 2nd Middlesex had been gallantly defending Éterpigny bridge over the Somme, 2 km. to the east. No less than three times they re-established their post after being overborne; at last, however, the bridge was mastered by the enemy, who had meanwhile succeeded in crossing at another point further north. The double success forced the 117th Durham L.I. back to the high ground east of Barleux, and enabled the Germans to push up the little valley leading toward the village. Barleux had to be abandoned some hours later.

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Photo: Imperial War Museum.

IN ACTION NEAR LONGIDO

Men of the East African Mounted Rifles in action at South Longido on September 21st, 1915. Mount Longido is a peak lying to the north-west of Mount Kilimanjaro, and fighting occurred in this important region as early as September, 1914. A British attack launched on November 4th of the same year proved abortive ; and although Longido was occupied by us on the 17th, our dismal failures in other regions—notably before Tanga—rendered the capture of such little worth that after a few months the garrison was withdrawn. In the above illustration, note the coloured flashes attached to the sun-helmets to facilitate recognition during bush-fighting.

place was soon found to be most arduous. Throughout the 3rd progress was slow, and after a protracted action, carried on by the 13th and 61st Indian Regiments, it was clear that Tanga would not be taken without more troops and some stiff fighting. The sole British battalion with the Force, the 2nd Loyal North Lancashires, then landed, dug some trenches, and put out outposts. But it was not until 10 a.m. on the 4th that the force was all ashore. "The enemy's resistance disorganised our plans"—thus runs a naïve entry in the Loyals' War diary![1]

At 3 a.m. on the 4th, the German commander, von Lettow-Vorbeck, himself arrived on the scene. For nearly 48 hours the little Usambara Railway had been busily bringing reinforcements down to Tanga. On the 3rd there cannot have been more than 400 men and 6 machine guns opposing the British. By noon on the 4th these numbers had grown to 1,300 men and 30 machine guns ; and it was only at this late hour that the attack got going again.

[1] Wylly, *The Loyal North Lancashire Regt.*, ii, p. 82.

The Indian Imperial Service Brigade was then on the right, the 27th Brigade on the left. The Loyals were the directing unit on the right of the 27th Brigade, the left flank of which was echeloned to the rear. The main attack was to be delivered against Tanga itself. No guns could be landed, so it was proposed that they should come into action from shipboard. The German dispositions were just the contrary of the British. A thin line of troops was left in front of Tanga, while the bulk of the forces were massed on the right, where the ground, being more open, gave some facility for manœuvre.

Wild Bees Help the Germans

The British advance proceeded slowly. The difficulties of the terrain were enhanced by swarms of wild bees, which, when disturbed, proved as effective as enemy snipers. Not until 3 p.m. was real progress made. The 63rd Indian Infantry then began to hang back, with the result that a serious gap was created between the Loyals and the 101st Grenadiers on the extreme left. The latter closed inwards, and so presented a most vulnerable flank to the Germans.

By 4 p.m. the Loyals and 2nd Kashmir Rifles were in Tanga. House-to-house fighting ensued, and the Loyals lost cohesion in their stubbornly-contested advance. At 4.30 p.m. von Lettow-Vorbeck launched his counter-attack, using every man that he could scrape together against the 101st. By 5.30 p.m. the latter, after suffering quite severely, were virtually out of action, while the 63rd and 98th were retiring. At this moment yet another German company arrived by rail to reinforce the enemy. A final attack was carried out, with great dash, by the new arrivals ; but its effect was chiefly moral, and after it the Germans actually began a calm withdrawal to the west of Tanga for the night.

The British attack had been roughly handled on the left, but the situation was far from hopeless ; the casualties amounted to little more than 800. Yet shortage of water necessitated a move. It was then decided to fall back to the hospital buildings on the shore of Tanga Bay, where such dismal accounts of the

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Photo: Imperial War Museum.

CRATER AT HOOGE

After the first German use of gas in 1915, our front, in conformity with the French retirement about the Yser Canal, was moved back nearly two miles to a line which took in Hooge. Considerable fighting ensued in this new position, the ruins of Hooge village, château, and stables being contested for again and again between May and August. The mine which formed this crater was fired at 7 p.m. on July 19th under an enemy work held by men of the *126th Regiment*, and was at once occupied by two companies of the 4th Middlesex, 3rd Division.

day's fighting reached General Aitken that he ordered a complete withdrawal of the force to the landing-beaches, which had by now been covered by good entrenchments.

On the following day the whole force re-embarked—without suffering a single casualty—and returned to British East Africa; and so ended one of the most deplorable incidents of the whole war. To our initial reverse at Tanga must be ascribed the original cause of the remarkable resistance which General von Lettow-Vorbeck eventually offered to the British forces. Moreover, the fighting qualities of the German-trained native troops, which had come as an unpleasant revelation to the British command, were stiffened by our retreat.

The Only British Troops on German Soil

At much the same time as the attack was being made against Tanga, an attempt was being made toward Longido, a German settlement on the western slopes of Kilimanjaro. The main object of this assault was unsuccessful, but Longido itself remained in British hands, so that a company of the Loyals was able there to spend Christmas, 1914, with the proud boast that they were the only unit of the British Army to celebrate the festive season on German territory.

At length, on November 24th, the control of the East African campaign had been assumed by the War office. But little good came of the change. East Africa was lost to mind in the stress of the fierce struggle on the Western Front; and that "small war" had to look after itself for the time being. So the Indian Expeditionary Force "B" was left to be broken up into detachments fit only to be used for frontier defence.

On January 18th, a serious attempt was made to occupy Jassin, a German frontier-post on the coast close to Vanga, a British settlement. The Germans, fearing another attempt on Tanga, interposed troops between Jassin and Vanga. They next attacked the former place, which was occupied by an Indian battalion. After a fiercely contested action, Jassin was surrendered on the 19th. Fortunately the German losses proved so heavy that von Lettow-Vorbeck seems thenceforward to have been far more chary of exposing his slender forces to such an experience. On the other hand, the prestige of the Indian troops as a whole sank still further in the British colony.

Consequently, during the whole of the year 1915, the British conduct of the war in East Africa lapsed into a condition of inertia in which a passive defence of the Uganda Railway was the main consideration. Once the Expeditionary Force had been broken up into a line of detachments, no operation of any real importance could be undertaken. On rare occasions small columns of two or three battalions, with the single mountain battery, were formed for some more essential operation. Chief among these was a successful attempt to break up the German strong-point at Bukoba, on Victoria Nyanza. But apart from this coup little was accomplished.

He Was Blown Up Every Sunday

On the other hand, the defence of the railway against German raids was not a

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light task. Several times enemy mines were laid—with success—on the track. One officer in charge of an armoured train became well-known as "Dynamite" Brown, owing to the remarkable regularity with which his train ran over a German mine at 11.30 a.m. every Sunday morning; such, so it was said, being the methodical nature of the enemy's raiding exploits!

On another occasion an enemy raiding party effected a lodgement for some days to the *north* of the line, well inside British territory, and there gave much trouble. This again reacted on the unfortunate Indian immigrants, who thereby incurred suspicion, if not actual hostility, on the ground of their being alleged enemy agents, and acting treacherously. Still, generally speaking, it can be claimed that the railway was adequately defended, and never suffered from any prolonged interruption due to enemy agency.

But long before the end of 1915 it was decided in London that the best course to adopt with regard to the East African *impasse* would be to bring the campaign to a close by the complete subjugation of the German colony, although this must entail an invasion of the hostile territory. Such an invasion could be carried out only by one of three routes: the first stretching along the coast, the second and third lying to the east and west of the great Kilimanjaro mountains.

The second of these lines seemed preferable, since it led to Moshi, whence Tanga could be reached from the Usambara Railway, while a practicable route also extended to the Central Railway running inland from Dar-es-Salaam. A branch line of the Uganda Railway was put in hand, which was planned to connect a village named Voi, situated on the main line, with (ultimately) Moshi on the German railway. The secondary road from Nairobi to Longido was improved. But the Germans read the symptoms aright, and promptly took up a position at Taveta, on British territory, to contest any advance.

By the autumn of 1915, all German colonial possessions except East Africa had fallen into the hands of the Allies. A number of troops were thus set free, and quantities of stores could be made available for the East African campaign. In order to ease the burden of the conduct of the War outside Europe, the British Government was desirous of employing South African troops for the

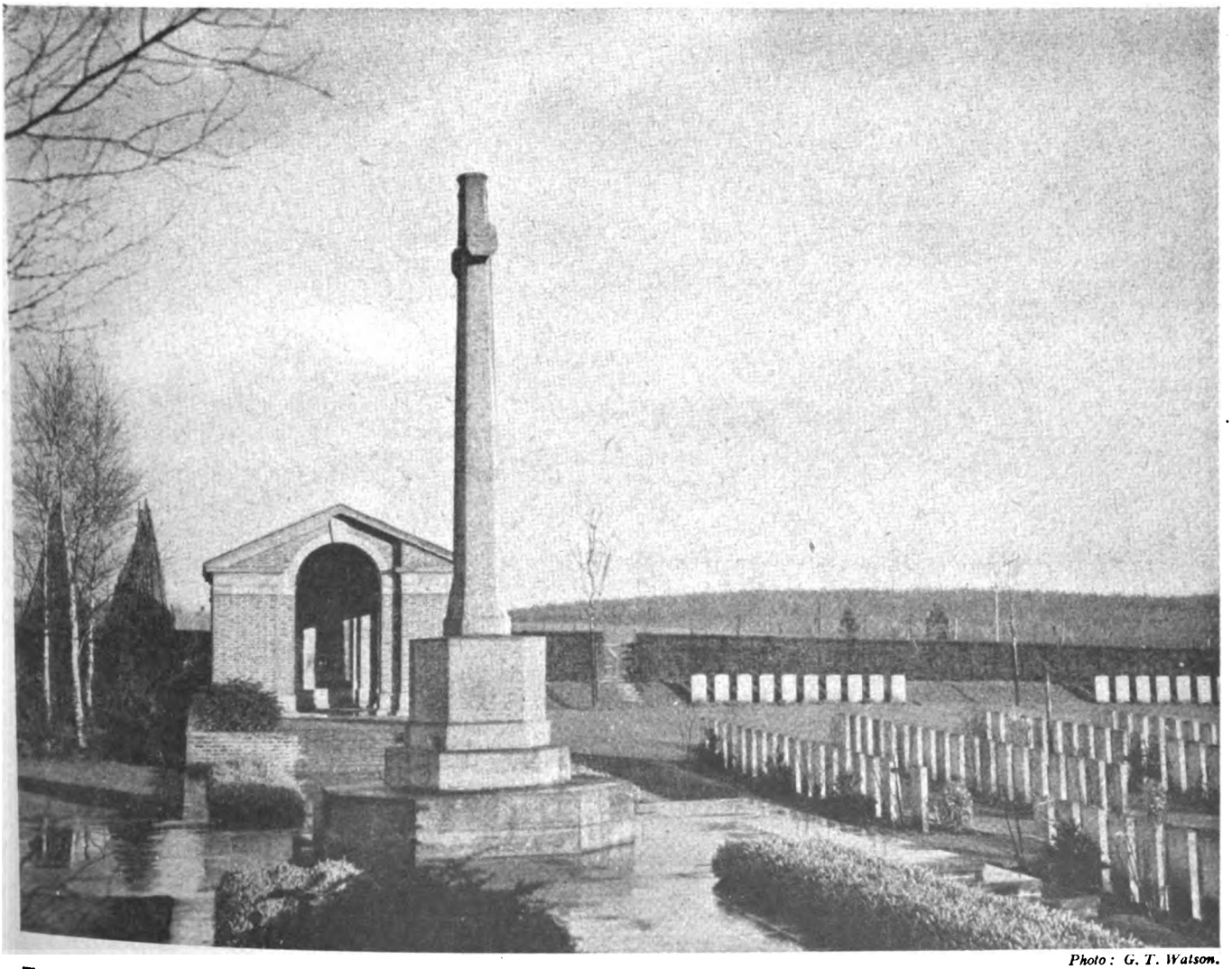

Photo: G. T. Watson.

ON THE SITE OF THE CRATER

The site of Hooge Crater—the mining-operations in connection with which were carried out by the 175th Tunnelling Company—was afterwards filled in, and became Hooge Crater Cemetery, of which a view appears here, with the modern version of Sanctuary Wood in the background. This area, together with Hooge village, was recaptured by 6th Division troops on August 9th, 1915. The cemetery contains 5,153 United Kingdom, 509 Australian, 119 New Zealand, 95 Canadian, and 2 British West Indian fallen.

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task of subjugating East Africa. In particular, it wished to entrust the command of all forces in that region to either General Botha or General Smuts, both of whom had just shared the conquest of German South-West Africa in a satisfactory fashion.

General Smith-Dorrien Appointed

But neither general was then willing to leave the Union; so the Government gratefully accepted the promised aid of South African troops, and looked for a suitable commander for the new expedition. Such a leader they found in General Sir Horace Smith-Dorrien, who had returned home from France during the previous May after being superseded. This apparent disgrace carried so little stigma with it that his selection was welcomed in both East and South Africa.

The South African attitude towards this choice was, in fact, an important consideration, in view of the scale of the assistance which the Union now proposed to place at the Government's disposal. Sir Horace was, of course, no stranger to African warfare. As far back as 1878 he had fought in Zululand, and his work during the Boer War of 1899–1902 was well known, while his participation in many other "small wars" caused him to be an outstanding soldier of the day.

With him went out a remarkable staff with a number of special service officers, all picked for their familiarity with East Africa: "Cunninghame, the best known white hunter in the Protectorate. . . . He had done marvellous things in the course of his career as a hunter of wild animals. . . . He was one of those men, few and far between they are, who can get to the back of the black man's mind. Another was Verbi, a missionary and a Bulgarian. . . . He had an immense influence over the wild men amongst whom he had lived and worked. During the early part of the campaign he had done very good service getting labour from the country round his mission, and as an intelligence officer. . . .

"Two others were ex-officers of British cavalry; one, a settler in British East Africa . . . in earlier days would have won fame as a buccaneer or soldier of fortune. The other . . . just returned from service with the Cossacks in the Carpathians, had served in several other theatres of war . . . becoming, for a change, a regular soldier. . . . And last but not least, there was Major Josiah Wedgwood. Always ambitious, he had left politics temporarily—though he said he had in that sphere just reached a

Photo: G. T. Watson.

THE DUMP, FLANDERS

The Dump was an extensive system of tunnels and subterranean chambers containing stores. The keeper of the memorial on Hill 60, near at hand, who was in this region during the War, told our photographer that he recalled how all the high explosives were brought here to be distributed, including those used on Messines Ridge. The tunnels connecting the Dump with Hill 60 were passable until as late as the winter of 1936–7, when the timber at last gave way. The periodical subsidence of other underground workings, with the consequent surface-depressions, continues to cause immense trouble to the surrounding farmers. The village in the background of this picture is Verbrandenmolen, once a billeting-area; the railway is the Ypres—Comines line.

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position he really liked, that of leader of a party of which he was the only member—to show what armoured cars could do in a bush country."[1]

The Plan of Campaign

Sir Horace's plan of campaign, as far as it could be formed in advance, was first to eject the Germans from British territory round Kilimanjaro, and then to occupy the Moshi district and there establish himself until the campaigning season should begin—that is, until the rainy season, which lasted through late spring and early summer, should be over. There were, in addition, two substantial reasons for delay. In the first place, the South African troops, then due to arrive, would need to become acclimatised and gain familiarity with East African bush fighting. Secondly, the British troops of all races, already in the colony, were suffering from the climate. The health of the forces was far from good.

The new commander left London on December 23rd, 1915, but unfortunately a chill, contracted before his departure, turned into grave illness, and he arrived at Cape Town scarcely able to walk,

[1] Fendall, *The East African Force*, pp. 45–6.

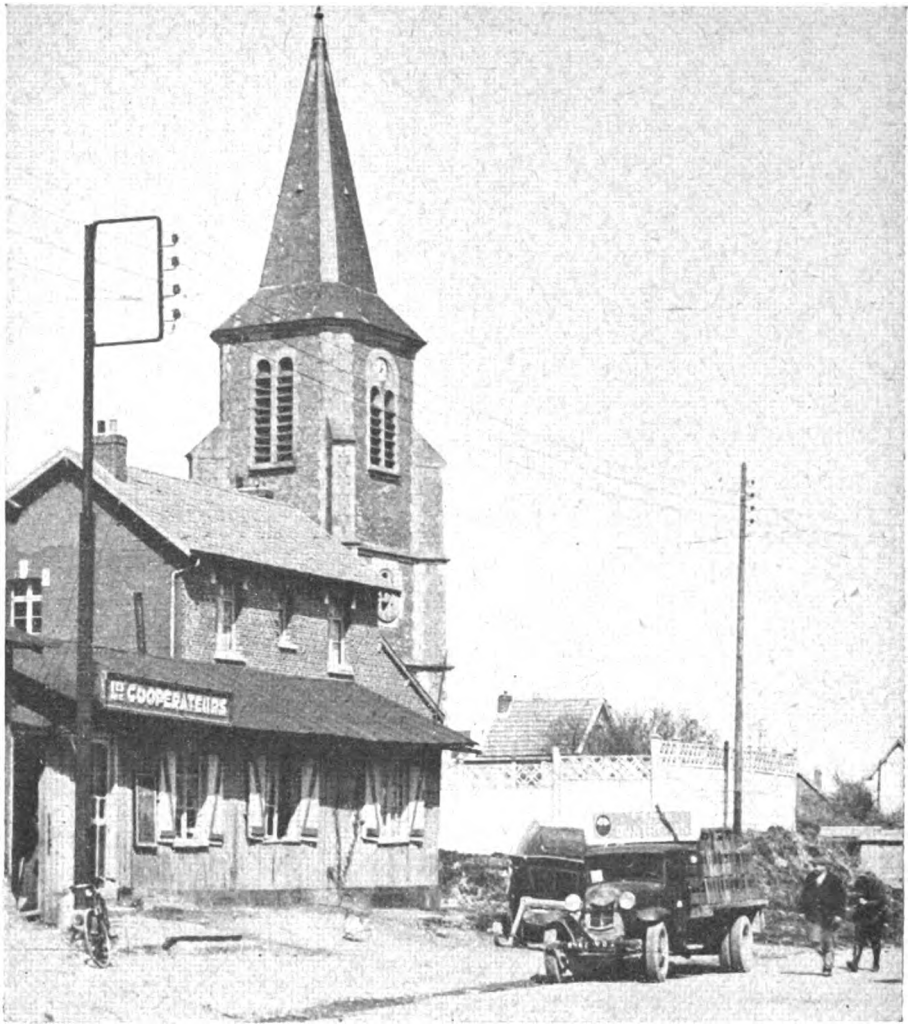

Photo: G. T. Watson.

MODERN MOYENNEVILLE

The village so named lies 10 km. due south of Arras, on a by-road leading to Courcelles-le-Comte from Boiry-St. Martin. Here is a view of the post-war church; but note also the co-operative store, in a place of 260 inhabitants!

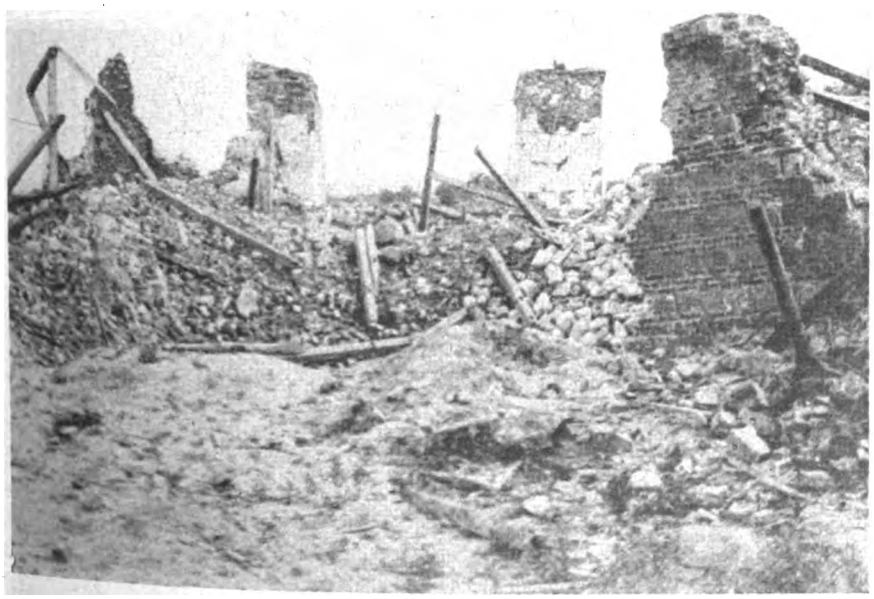

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

ALL FORLORN

A view of Moyenneville's pre-war church as it presented itself to the camera on June 30th, 1917. The village enjoyed (if that is the word) what may be termed a "conventional" War history; early occupied by the Germans, it was abandoned by them on their retirement to the Hindenburg Line, recaptured on March 26th, 1918, and secured for good and all by British VI Corps troops on August 21st following.

much less in any fit state to proceed to East Africa. Accordingly, the new headquarters arrived in East Africa, without General Smith-Dorrien, at the end of January, 1916.

The first task was to amalgamate the various new elements with the old, and to substitute the Imperial administration and methods of work for the Indian system which had hitherto prevailed.

In February it was suddenly announced that Sir Horace Smith-Dorrien was too ill to take up his command; and on the 12th he was succeeded by General Smuts of South African fame. At first the news created some apprehension in East Africa, but this was soon allayed when it became obvious that the new commander had no desire to deviate from strictly Imperial ways of thinking and working.

Among the South African troops, who

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Photo: Imperial War Museum.

AT NJOMBE AERODROME

The aeroplane was not a success in East Africa. Two machines of the R.N.A.S. arrived there in September, 1915, but were prevented by the weather from attempting serious work before the ensuing January. Later these and other aircraft performed some valuable reconnaissance flights, but were badly hampered by lack of landing-grounds. Their effect on the minds of natives, however, was immense.

had now arrived to the strength of one mounted brigade, one infantry brigade, and one brigade of artillery, feelings were mixed. The mounted units, all loyal Afrikanders, welcomed the new general with much satisfaction. But the infantry, composed of British town-dwellers, were by no means so enthusiastic. However, feeling soon subsided.

General Smuts's Mixed Force

It was a very mixed force that General Smuts had now to weld into a serviceable fighting formation. The Indian troops had changed. Many regiments of Expeditionary force "B" had left when relieved by a few of the better Indian regiments sent home from France in 1915. The Loyal North Lancashires, in spite of heavy losses in action and from disease, was still fit for service. There were the South African units; a European regiment from Rhodesia; one squadron of Indian cavalry; two Indian mountain batteries; an Indian volunteer heavy battery; a battery formed of Europeans resident in East Africa; and others, amongst whom special mention must be made of the British battalion known as the 25th Royal Fusiliers, which had been raised by Colonel Driscoll, better known for his command of Driscoll's Scouts in the South African War. This unit had been formed out of the Legion of Frontiersmen, and was often known as the "Sportsmen's Battalion"; and a remarkable collection of splendid fellows it was!

Soon afterwards, the South African troops were exactly doubled by the arrival of three more brigades. There were many Irregular corps, too, that were raised as time went on. Perhaps two of these need mention: the first was formed by a famous elephant-hunter of East Africa, Pretorius by name, of Boer descent, who became known far and wide for the daring nature of his raids on the German communications. The second was the "Skin Corps," the creation of one Drought, a rival of Pretorius in daring.

This corps was raised from the wildest of the tribes living east of Victoria Nyanza, who scorn the use of any clothing; their only uniform or equipment was a rifle and bandolier—normally acquired by the killing of a German native soldier. Their hatred of the Germans was due to the fact that the latter had once carried off their herds of cattle, for which act the "Skins" nourished a fervent desire not only of revenge but of recovering their lost flocks.

Two divisions, already more or less in existence, were now gradually organised; the first under Major-General Stewart, the second under Major-General Tighe, who was replaced in March by Major-General Hoskins, an Imperial officer. During the early summer, when further South Africans arrived, General Smuts

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

AT MALANGALI

This photograph shows the German position at Malangali which was successfully attacked by us on July 24th, 1916. The place lies on the Neu Langenburg—Iringa road, and the object of the German defence had been to prevent the junction of our southern forces, under Brigadier-General Northey, with our main body under General Van Deventer. The enemy, who were commanded by Count Falkenstein, included many survivors of the crew of the *Königsberg*.

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re-arranged his command and organised three divisions. The 1st, commanded by Major-General Van Deventer, and 2nd consisted mainly of South Africans, while the 3rd, under Major-General Hoskins, was composed of the British and Indian units.

The first task of General Smuts was to drive the Germans back from the position they had taken up in the British colony on the lower slopes of the Kilimanjaro mountains. The enemy's main force centred round Taveta, but he had established a strong point eight miles to the east at Salaita.

Drive into the Kilimanjaro Region

On February 12th, Salaita was attacked by the 2nd Division. A stubborn action ensued, at the end of which the Germans fell back. A halt was then made, so as to prepare a further advance. The latter was ordered by General Smuts to begin on March 7th. The 1st Division on that day was to cross 35 miles of waterless bush from Longido,[1] and then to pass between Mt. Kilimanjaro and Mt. Meru in order to cut the German communications and the Usambara Railway between Moshi and Arusha. The 2nd Division was to dislodge the Germans, and then to move through the gap between the Kilimanjaro and Pare mountains; and finally to march down the Pangani valley.

[1] This place is situated well to the north-west of Mt. Kilimanjaro.

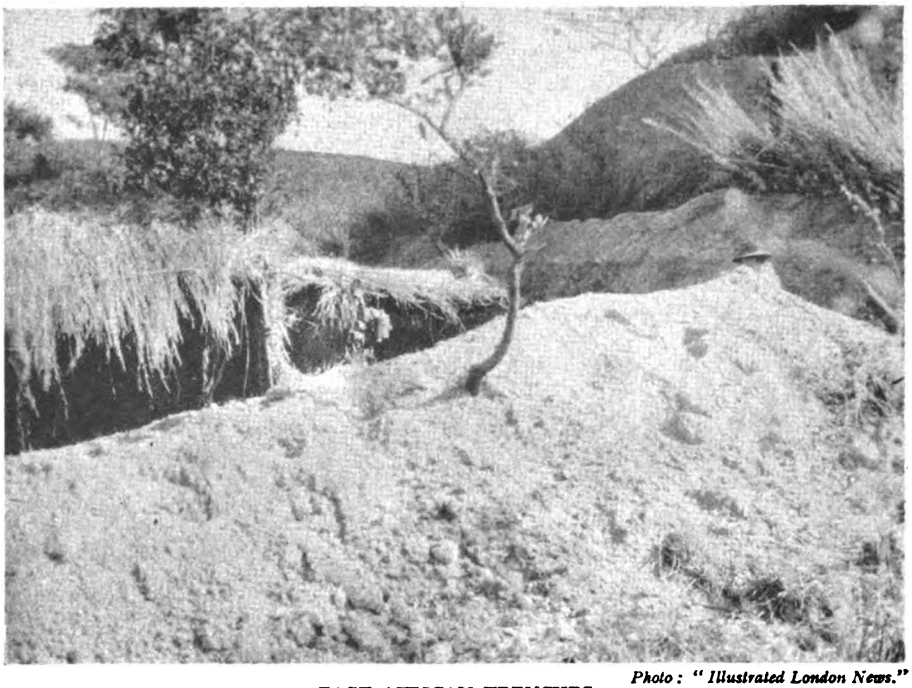

Photo: "Illustrated London News."

EAST AFRICAN TRENCHES

Here are some of the trenches occupied by General Northey's troops. Neu Langenburg is about 45 miles north-west of Alt Langenburg, and is therefore not on Lake Nyasa. Iringa lies 170 miles, as the crow flies, north-east of the former settlement, Malangali being midway between. These names may mean little to the soldier who fought on the Western Front, but the immense distances make interesting comparison.

The operations, which were conducted across most difficult country, proved very arduous. The enemy had fallen back from Salaita to take up a strong position on a pass and ridge known as the Latema-Reata Nek. The attack on the Nek, carried out mainly by the 2nd Rhodesia Regiment, 130th Baluchis, and 3rd King's African Rifles, proved a most stubborn affair. The Rhodesians lost heavily. Finally the Germans withdrew, but they had been neither demoralised nor defeated.

The entire Kilimanjaro region now fell into British hands, Moshi and Arusha being occupied. The first act of the campaign had been brought to a close; it had been successful in its main object, but had wholly failed to destroy the enemy's forces.

A pause followed; the rainy season set in; and the question arose as to what should be done. In the meantime the health of the 2nd Loyal North Lancashires grew so bad that they were withdrawn and shipped to Cape Town for a complete rest.

The full difficulties affecting the conduct of an invasion of German East Africa now began to be felt. In addition to the enemy's activity in an ably-conducted defence, the British were faced with three terrible handicaps. These were climate, black cotton-soil, and East African bush. A considerable part of the area in which fighting was about to take place was malarial;

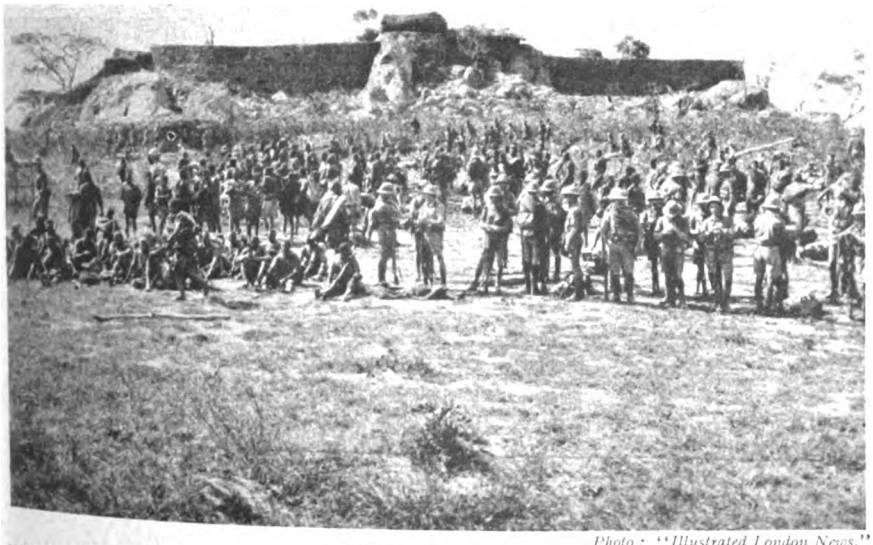

Photo: "Illustrated London News."

FORT NAMEMA

This was one of the frontier forts on the border between German East Africa and Rhodesia, and lay near the southern extremity of Lake Tanganyika. When, at the end of May, 1916, a British force under Colonel Murray invaded the German colony from Abercorn, Rhodesia, Namema was the only fortress which did not surrender. The garrison broke out on the night of June 2nd/3rd, but suffered heavy casualties, and the stronghold was mastered.

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Photo: Imperial War Museum.

FLAME-THROWERS IN ACTION

The German flame-thrower consisted of a steel cylinder containing an inflammable liquid, and six feet of rubber hose. In the lower part of the cylinder was a chamber filled with gas under pressure, which on release forced the liquid along the hose. In the nozzle of the latter was the igniting device.

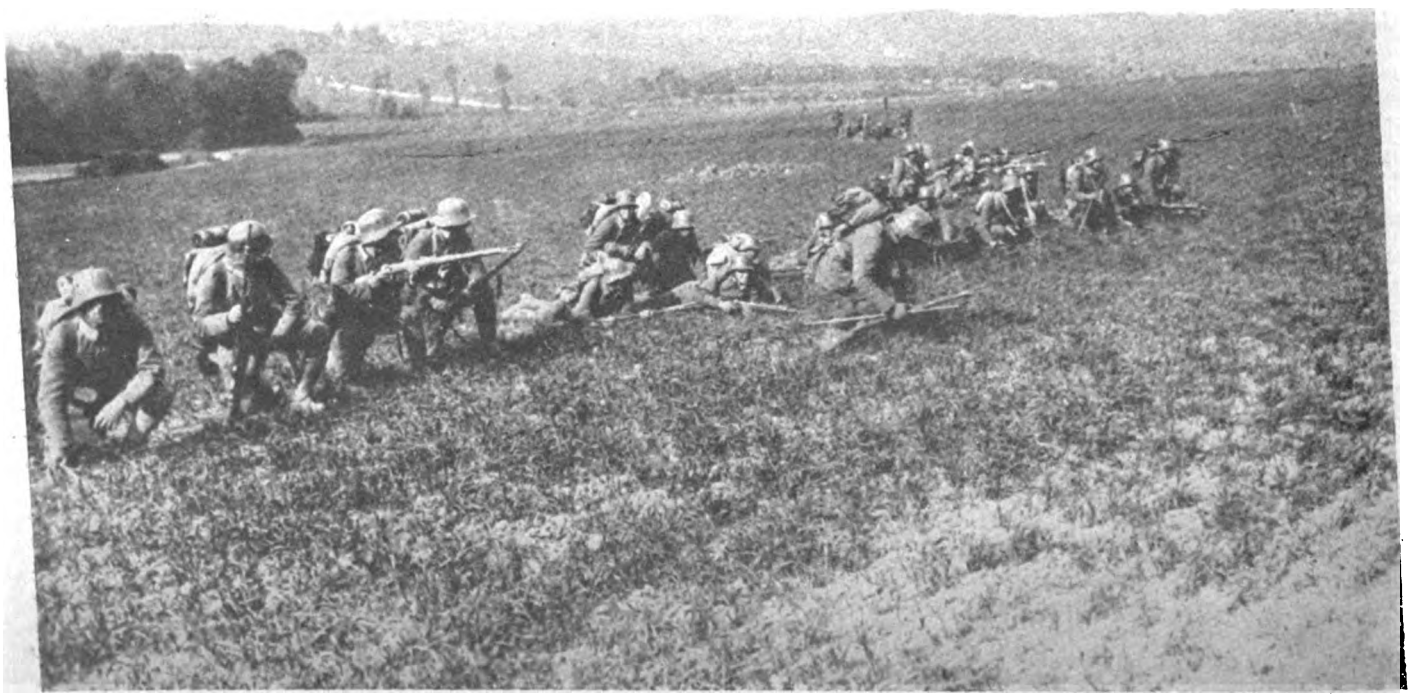

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

GERMANS IN THE OPEN

A photograph taken during the last year of the War—May 27th, 1918—showing German troops in extended order in the open, just before their successful attack on Fismes, halfway between Reims and Soissons. Note the unspoiled country.

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CAREFUL, STRETCHER BEARERS!

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

German infantry advancing over a captured trench during the attack on a 22-mile front between Montdidier and Noyon, June, 1918. This offensive began on the 9th, and met with stubborn resistance, notwithstanding which the enemy claimed many prisoners and made considerable gains of ground.

THE WORK OF A *POILU*

Photo: A. P., Paris.

We venture to call this one of the most remarkable illustrations in *Twenty Years After*. It shows the handiwork of a French infantryman stationed at Bellacourt, Somme, during 1915—a striking sculpture of the Kaiser behind prison bars.

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particularly the river valleys and coast districts. No amount of such preventive measures as were possible under active service conditions seemed capable of putting a stop to the wastage from fever, which assumed grave proportions as time went on, although in the more settled areas, especially round Dar-es-Salaam, an admirably-managed sanitary campaign succeeded in overcoming the plague.

Mosquito-nets of Small Avail

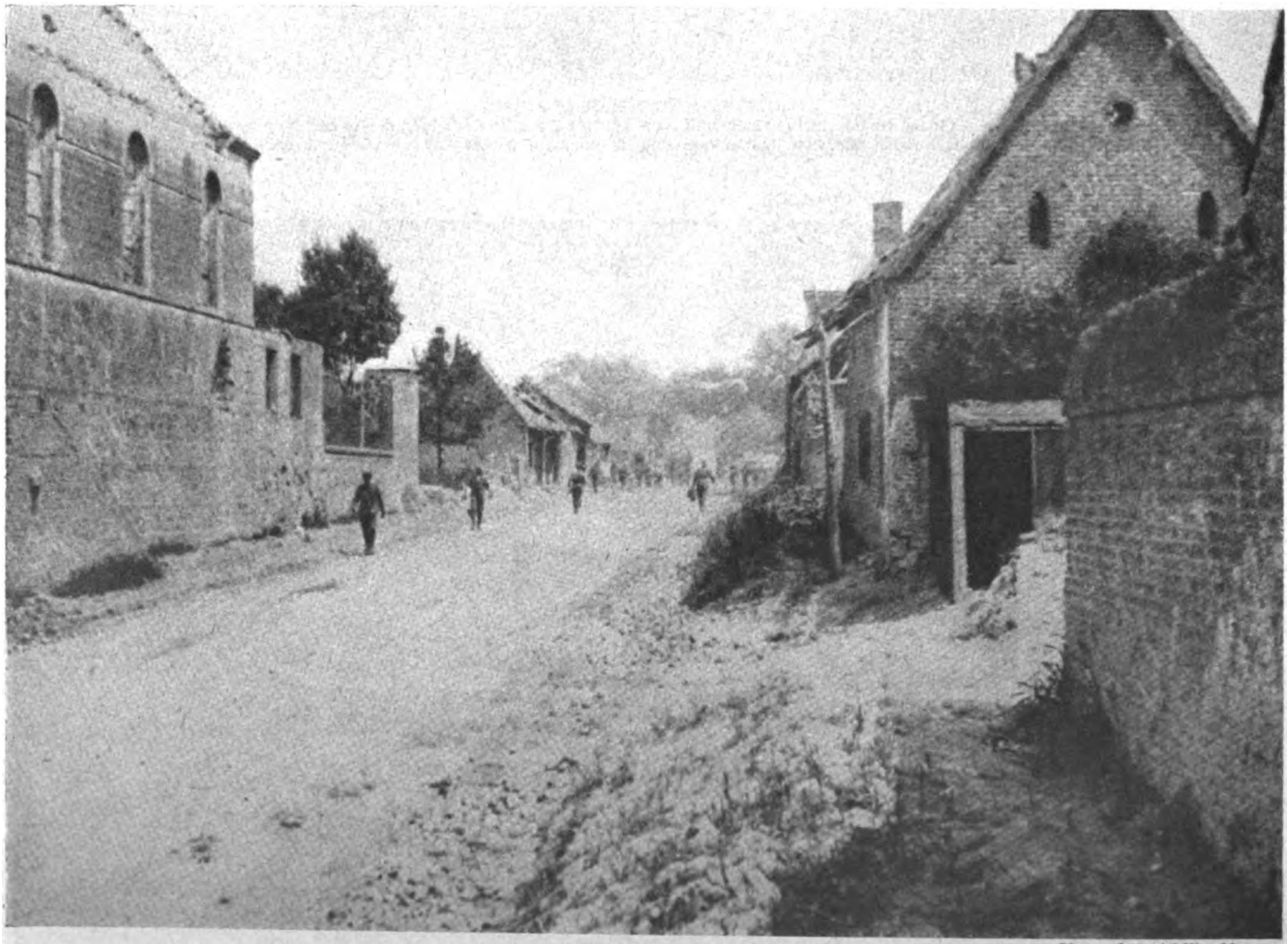
In the field it was otherwise. From the outset mosquito-nets had been made a compulsory article of equipment, but these seemed to be of little avail. After all, seeing that the malarial mosquito becomes active at about sunset and remains out until sunrise, it was virtually impossible to provide for the use of nets at times when troops on active service must be up and about, and unable to lie under their protection. And what of men employed on outpost or sentry duty? What of night marches, or even of early morning starts? Even if precautions were taken—and these were, in fact, found feasible to a much greater extent than had been hoped—the risk of infection could only be reduced, not eliminated.

Then, too, it was unfortunate that the first troops arrived with an Indian-pattern net which proved somewhat unpractical, and was, in addition, too cheaply made. This net was promptly condemned and replaced. Still more unfortunately, however, new medical authorities arrived and condemned pattern No. 2! By that time the troops had begun to lose faith in mosquito-nets, and in some units the net—in strips—found a more popular use as a rifle pull-through.

The sun also proved a source of trouble, since after a time the solar heat began to exercise a lowering effect on the European soldier. The Indians, and still more the Africans, were less affected, but on all sides tempers began to grow frayed; the stamina of the troops became more or less undermined, while, in serious cases the effects ended in complete nervous breakdown, sometimes in heat-stroke.

The harm that the mosquito could inflict on human beings was matched by that which the tsetse-fly, or simply "fly," wrought upon transport animals and cattle. In certain areas of German East Africa, no animals except wild game could live on account of "fly." A curious and vexatious fact, moreover, is that any area which is clear to "fly" in one season may be infected the next.

The risks incurred by crossing "fly"-infected country may be very greatly reduced by clearing away the bush to a considerable way back from the road. But in a campaign of the type now



THE GRAND' RUE, FRÉMICOURT *Photo: Imperial War Museum.*

Frémicourt lies just south of the Bapaume—Cambrai road, 3 to 4 km. out of Bapaume. It is also less than 1 km. south of the Bapaume—Cambrai and Bapaume—Roisel—Péronne railway, upon which it is represented by a halt. The above photograph was taken during the comparatively quiet Somme days of July, 1917, when so many battlefield villages were recorded by the camera.

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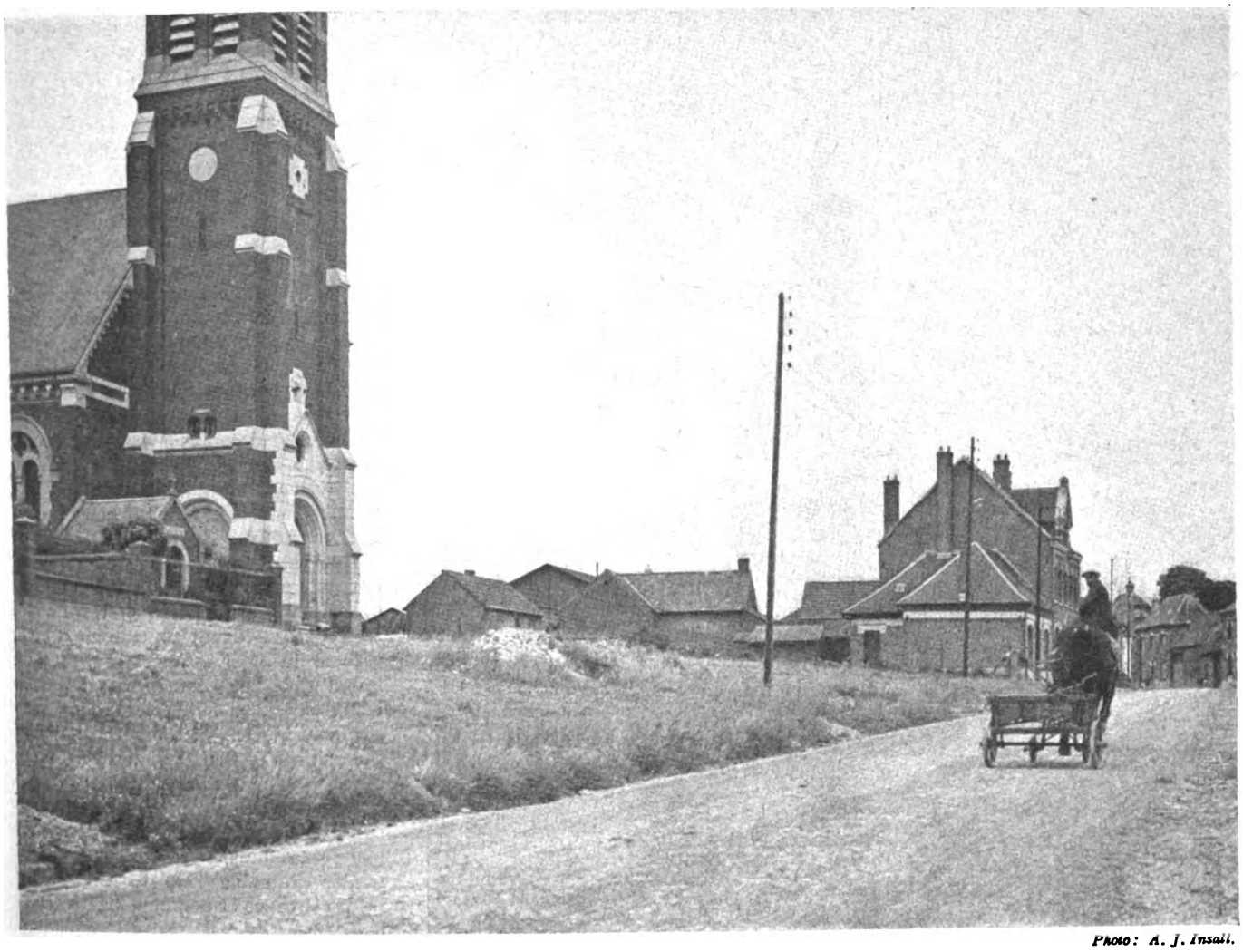

Photo: A. J. Insall.

WELL BACK FROM THE ROAD

The new church at Frémicourt has been built so much farther back from the road than the old one (the western wall of which may be seen on the extreme left of the wartime view opposite) that a few remnants of the latter are still to be discerned as a cairn of stones surrounded by grass. After being lost by us in the March Retreat, the village was reached again on August 29th, 1918, and secured the following day.

under consideration, the labour and time required to effect such work over the great distances involved were prohibitive. In certain areas, therefore, there was no alternative to the employment of human porters, who could use existing narrow tracks through bush and jungle.

A Terrible Type of Soil

The destructive effect of the tsetse-fly on transport animals was equalled, again, by the fearful obstacles, in the shape of the patches or belts of "black cotton-soil" so frequently encountered in the German colony, which faced the use of any mechanical transport. In dry weather this soil would bake quickly, and might then offer no great impediment to wheeled traffic. But even a slight rainfall would render it unfit for the passage of a motor vehicle, while heavier rain would reduce it to the state of a morass entirely prohibiting the use of any wheeled transport at all. In very bad cases the ground became impassable even for human porters, who would sink into the sticky black mud up to their waists.

An effective remedy against this soil was found in the construction of corduroy roads; but, as in the matter of clearing away the bush to counteract "fly," in so vast a territory it became impossible to contemplate undertaking the huge road-building works which would probably be needed to meet the changing phases of the campaign.

The transport and supply problems grew worse as the campaign proceeded. Ox-waggons and horse-vehicles could be employed where "fly" permitted. Motor transport was tried wherever possible, and many times when it was virtually impossible. But the supply of the troops was an anxious task, and the men were constantly on half rations or even less! From the outset, the possible rate of wastage of all kinds of transport, and especially of motor transport, was never properly appreciated. Accordingly the amount of vehicles provided, although barely sufficient in 1916, grew totally inadequate as the war dragged on.

Latterly a large workshop was established at Dar-es-Salaam, where strenuous efforts were made to recondition all broken-down vehicles. But no such measures were really sufficient to meet the terrible strain imposed on the transport services during the rainy season or in crossing evil tracts of black cotton-soil.

The transport drivers proved an even greater difficulty. The efficient personnel originally sent to Africa rapidly dwindled. They were replaced by drafts sent from home, of men who were either

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Photo: G. T. Watson.

THE ORNATE CHURCH AT HINGES

As its somewhat ambitious new church implies, Hinges is not, as French villages go, among the tiniest, its inhabitants just topping the four-figure mark. It lies 4 km. north-north-west of Béthune, but not upon any of the important roads radiating from that town, for it is reached by a country route turning eastward off the Béthune—Hazebrouck highway. The place was yet another favourite billeting-spot prior to April, 1918.

of low medical category or not highly skilled at their job. Such drafts never lasted long, and served only to fill the hospitals. Recruits from South Africa or India, and even from China, were found and trained. But how few of them turned out to be first-class drivers equal to the task of managing a lorry over the hideous tracks that passed for roads!

Skilful German-trained Bush-fighters

Lastly, there was the purely military difficulty of fighting in the bush. This bush, in fact, was of infinite advantage to the defence—that is, to the Germans; and the resourcefulness and defensive skill of the German native soldiery in this bush-fighting increased as time went on.

Artillery in such country could, as a rule, lend but little assistance; although at certain places, and in more open country, it might prove effective. Aircraft were tried in East Africa, but their tale is soon told. Two machines of the Royal Naval Air Service arrived at Maktau in September, 1915, when conditions rendered flying all but impossible; not until January did some aerial work become practicable.

The moral effect of the aeroplane on the native mind was greater than the military value of its work. The natives "considered the aeroplane as a supernatural being—*Muungu*. This Muungu was endowed with great power. The route which he followed had now become spirited, and the land was unproductive. The people over whom he flew were now possessed of evil spirits. . . .

"It is quite comprehensible that the natives, seeing the aeroplane, were shaken in their belief in the power of the Germans. According to their belief, the War-Lord is with the conqueror and not with the vanquished. The War-Lord (aeroplane) has now come from the English side, and has visited the Germans by sending the evil spirits (bombs). Fate has consequently turned in favour of the English."[1]

But these rudimentary efforts were not adequate to assist the military operations. On January 31st, 1916, No. 26 (South African) Squadron, R.F.C., arrived in East Africa. It was soon found that the country was far from being suited to flying operations, particularly in view of the unreliability of the engines of that day, and even more owing to climatic difficulties.

Nevertheless, the machines, although badly hampered by the scarcity of landing-grounds, were able at times to render valuable help to G.H.Q. by reconnaissance or bombing flights. During 1916 No. 8 (Naval) Squadron arrived at Zanzibar, and participated in the closing operations. But in January, 1918, No. 26 Squadron left for Egypt, whilst No. 8 Squadron returned to England.

Bush country is always without landmarks; by far the greater part of German East Africa was unsurveyed; maps hardly existed, and even the courses of rivers were not properly known. Much of the country, in fact, was totally unexplored.

Fighting over such a terrain entailed more than just physically hard work. There was the strain of never knowing what lay ahead, of never encountering any tangible sign of the enemy until a shot betrayed his presence perhaps only a few yards in front, or, worse still, to a flank, or even behind. "To march day by day, and week by week, through the African jungle in high grass, in which vision is limited to a few yards, in which danger always lurks near but seldom becomes visible, even when experienced, supplies a test to human nature often in the long run beyond the limits of human

[1] From von Lettow-Vorbeck's personal diary.

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endurance."[1] It was here that the German-trained and German-led native soldier developed into so formidable a fighting man.

Through this country—and in this climate—General Smuts was about to send his forces. It was now the end of March, and the rainy season was well established. Sir Horace Smith-Dorrien had planned to make a halt before attempting any further move. But General Smuts thought it essential to establish a post on the Masai Highlands to the south-south-west of Kilimanjaro, in order to strengthen his hold on that region and—subsequently—to facilitate his main advance. To that end the South African mounted brigade was sent forward to Lol Kissale, some 40 miles south of Arusha, where it destroyed a small enemy detachment.

[1] General Smuts's valedictory order, December, 1916.

Tempting Fortune

Then it was believed that a further advance must be made for another 60 miles south to Kondoa. It is arguable that such a further advance might have been advisable; but certainly from the supply standpoint it was tempting fortune to leave a detachment in so forward a position during the rains. In fact, it was only the chance discovery of an unsuspected track that rendered possible a very precarious system of supply for the maintenance of a small force at Kondoa; and even with the help of this track, an all but intolerable strain was imposed on the transport resources of the force. In the end, this strain cost the expedition very dear.

In the meantime, von Lettow-Vorbeck, with true soldierly instinct, saw his chance, and determined to overwhelm the isolated brigade at Kondoa. But the concentration of troops necessary to achieve this end, hampered as it was by rains, grew very slow; and this lucky circumstance enabled British G.H.Q. to send the South African Infantry to the rescue of the place.

In spite of the awful state of the roads, the brigade struggled through, and arrived in the nick of time. "The transport had to be helped along, and seldom arrived until quite late in the evening, often after dark. For twenty-three of the twenty-six days they were on the march it rained almost continuously round the twenty-four hours."[1] The rations were unsuited for such conditions, since they needed cooking—a physical impossibility. So the troops went hungry throughout this dreadful march; while, to add to the discomfort, their boots had given out.

Then, in order to ease the situation at Kondoa, Smuts ordered a diversion to

[1] Fendall, *The East African Force*, p. 70.

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

COMPLETELY UNHINGED

This is what 1918 did for the original church at Hinges (the photograph was taken in 1920). The capture of the village in the German spring offensive was a matter of touch-and-go, for the enemy were almost in the outskirts by the end of April. They did not, however, get any further. Hinges Château had in earlier days been used as a headquarters by a number of corps, including the I and XI. There are two British cemeteries attached to the village, containing in all 216 United Kingdom, and 26 Canadian fallen.

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be made down the Usambara Railway towards Handeni. Still, if the force at Kondoa was able to hold out, it endured some weeks of severe privations. Once no supplies reached it for fourteen days. Fortunately it managed to subsist on some herds of cattle and a stock of bad rice left by the enemy. Finally, in order to relieve Kondoa for good, Smuts decided to begin, before the date first contemplated, his general advance southwards towards the German Central Railway.

Enemy Strength Over-estimated

In a despatch dated April 30th, he estimated the strength of the Germans throughout East Africa at not less than 16,000, of whom 2,000 were Europeans. With them it was stated were no less than 60 guns and 80 machine guns. Their native troops were organised into companies varying from 150 to 200 strong, with a cadre of about 10 per cent. Europeans. There were two machine guns per company. Von Lettow-Vorbeck had, in fact, received unexpected reinforcements—as, for instance, the crew of the *Königsberg*, the German cruiser which had been scuttled, or reduced to a wreck by British gunfire, in the mouth of the River Rufiji. From that ship had also been removed some 4-inch guns and much war material.

By various means the enemy received considerable further reinforcements, and sorely-needed material, as time went on, without which it is possible that von Lettow-Vorbeck must have surrendered. In spite of the blockade which the Royal Navy was maintaining, two supply ships, at least, reached German African harbours. The story runs that one of these vessels was sighted off-shore by a British patrol-craft, fired on, and then run ashore by her own crew, who promptly lit a large fire of straw and other combustible on deck. Tricked into believing that the ship had been hit and hopelessly damaged, the British patrol vessel made off, fully satisfied at having completed her task.

In spite of such reinforcements, however, von Lettow-Vorbeck himself in his *Reminiscences* would make it appear that Smuts's estimate of the German strength is too high, even if it includes all men who were recruited throughout the four years of war. The enemy leader himself places the figure at about 3,000 Europeans and 11,000 natives.

In any case, it must be remembered that no very large number of men could have been assembled by the Germans at a single spot during any period of the campaign: supply difficulties alone would have surely ruled out such a possibility. Moreover, the Germans, especially in the early stages of the war, had numerous detachments, officials, and others, scattered up and down their colony. Von Lettow-Vorbeck's immediate following fluctuated in numbers throughout the campaign. It may be

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

EN ROUTE FOR THE RUFIJI

Lorry-loads of Indian sappers on their way to the Rufiji, December 31st, 1916. The road here looks easy enough; but no track in East Africa was ever easy for long, and this particular convoy experienced immense trouble in getting through a place called Tulo. The valley of the Rufiji—the river in which the *Königsberg* had been bottled up and destroyed—was not finally abandoned by the enemy until May, 1917.

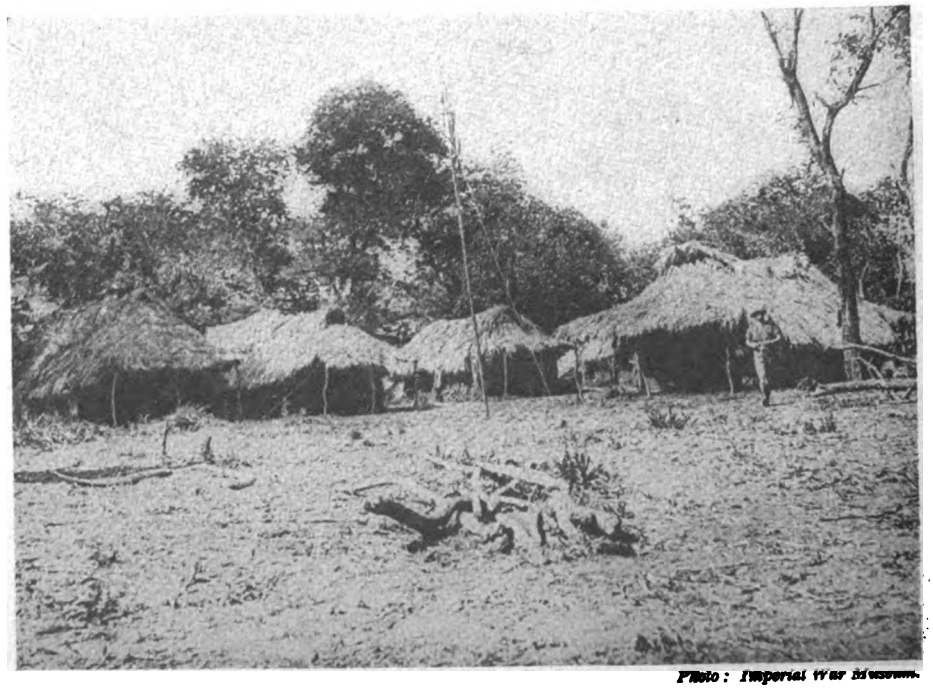

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

GENERAL SMUTS'S H.Q.

In this far from static campaign H.Q. occupied a good many sites; the one shown here is named Dutumi, where Big Chief Smuts was presiding over a fine collection of grass huts in January, 1917. The new year was marked by a fresh advance against the German positions, a three-months' lull having previously afforded rest to all Smuts's army except Van Deventer's division. The only action ever fought at Dutumi itself occurred on September 10th, 1916.

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Photo: Imperial War Museum.

A NIGERIAN FIELD AMBULANCE

The photograph shows the ambulance in camp near Dar-es-Salaam, shortly after its arrival in German East Africa. Disease, especially malaria, was more rife in these parts than in any other battle-area of the War; and an efficient medical unit was the most valuable asset of a military body. The continued vitality of the small German force, with its scant opportunities for renewing medical supplies, is therefore truly remarkable.

assumed that he never had with him more than the equivalent of two brigades well below any British establishment in strength.

Converging Columns

The British advance began as soon as the ground had recovered sufficiently to permit the passage of wheeled transport.

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

SHEPPARD'S PASS

So called because General Sheppard, who superintended the building of the road seen in the photograph, experienced great difficulty in carrying it through this region. The pass leads to Tulo and Dutumi from a height known as Summit Camp. The picture is dated June, 1917, during which month the principal event was the driving of the Germans from the estuary of the Lukuledi into the interior. On the 30th an action was fought at Lutende.

The movement was in a roughly southerly direction, making straight for the German Central Railway. One part of the force, about a division strong, headed for Morogoro, the most important point on the railway behind Dar-es-Salaam, from which it was distant nearly 100 miles. While this main advance was in progress, a division from Kondoa was converging on the same spot. Each group had some 200 miles to march. In between them lay von Lettow-Vorbeck with the bulk of his troops.

The British object was to catch the Germans between their two forces. The German general, however, although not unwilling to fight, had no special wish to be brought to action, nor did he give the British any opportunity to get within the distance necessary for provoking a decisive battle. Meanwhile, our troops from Kondoa moved slowly. Thinking that they had before them the whole enemy force which had been threatening them during the past weeks, they treated the foe ahead of them with considerable respect. In point of fact von Lettow-Vorbeck had withdrawn all but a very effective rearguard from that quarter.

Moving slowly, then, towards Kilimatinde and Dodoma, two German settlements situated on the railway, the troops from Kondoa reached that line, and then wheeled eastwards on Morogoro. Meanwhile the progress of the other division, which was moving down the Pangani valley, entailed strenuous efforts. The Pangani itself was crossed on June 7th; on the 24th an action took place at Kiva di Rewa, from which the Germans succeeded in breaking away, though not without loss, nor until they had given the attackers some anxious moments.

The enemy was skilfully delaying the British, not only by his methods of fighting, but also by his clearance of all supplies in the country through which he retired. On more than one occasion it seemed as though greater energy, particularly on the part of the mounted brigades, might have brought him to a stand. But he slipped away every time.

A Quadruple Occupation

In July it was found possible to send some troops down the Usambara Railway, and finally to capture Tanga. After the occupation of that town on July 17th, when the Royal Navy lent valuable aid, Pangani, Sadani, and Bagamoyo on the coast were occupied in succession before August 15th.

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Specially drawn.

OVERSEAS BADGES : FIRST SERIES

From left to right, beginning at the top row, the sketches represent : 1—Canadian General Service Badge. 2—Royal Canadian Regt. 3—Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry. 4—4th Canadian Mounted Rifles. 5—8th Canadian Mounted Rifles. 6—Canadian Remount Depôt. 7—2nd Canadian Divisional Cyclists. 8—4th Canadian Divisional Cyclists. 9—1st Canadian Tank Battalion. 10—Canadian Machine Gun Corps. 11—Canadian Engineers. 12—Canadian Army Service Corps. 13—3rd Canadian Pioneers. 14—Canadian Armoured Battery. 15—Canadian Railway Troop Depôt. 16—1st Bn., Ontario Regt. 17—5th Bn., Western Cavalry. 18—6th Bn., Western Canada. 19—8th Bn., 90th Winnipeg Rifles. 20—10th Bn., 10th Canadians.

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At Bagamoyo a column was formed, and joined by the 2nd Loyal North Lancashires from Cape Town, where they had been convalescing since May. On August 31st the march on Dar-es-Salaam began, but on September 3rd the town capitulated to the ships, so the troops were able to enter the town quietly the next day.

After the clearing of the Usambara Valley, the 2nd Division continued moving southwards, and on August 13th made an attack in two columns on the Germans at Tuliani. The enemy once more fell back. But in the interval the Kondoa force had been approaching Morogoro, and von Lettow-Vorbeck, seeing himself definitely threatened with encirclement by superior forces, gave up that place and withdrew to the south of the railway.

Much was also happening in the west. From the very beginning of the war some activity had been maintained in the north-western district of German East Africa—indeed, ever since the German settlement and military station of Bukoba had been destroyed by the original Expeditionary Force "B" on June 23rd, 1915. At length, when the main advance to the Central Railway began, a joint force consisting of British and Belgian columns marched down from the River Kagera (between Lakes Victoria and Tanganyika); while the British also employed a small flotilla on Victoria Nyanza.

The German station at Muanza, at the south extremity of that lake, was taken by a well-managed *coup-de-main*.

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

LEWIS GUNNERS

If not the most conventional posture for firing a Lewis gun, this certainly looks one of the most comfortable. The above is another scene from East Africa. Note the heavy boots. Some of the South African mounted troops had a carefree habit of repairing these with pieces of leather cut from the saddles of fallen horses.

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

FEMALE LABOUR

Coal-black mammies to the rescue; or, how roads were made in war-ridden East Africa. A native labour corps, including a large proportion of women, toils at clearing away some of the "fly"-harbouring bush by the roadside. The tsetse-fly, that scourge of the animal world in this region, made many routes literally impossible for horse transport.

But further progress was delayed by transport difficulties, as well as by faulty co-operation between the Allies. Still, in spite of some resistance, which retarded the Belgians more than the British, Tabora, the important German station on the Central Railway, fell into Belgian possession.

Repairing the Central Railway

The entire Central Railway was now in Allied hands; and when the railway workshops at Dar-es-Salaam were reopened in September, a beginning was possible on the task of restoring the track and working it for the benefit of the East African Force. The line had been extensively damaged by the Germans before they gave it up; but by dint of extemporising bridges and repairing rolling-stock, good use was made of it until the end of the campaign. Much of the rolling-stock had been destroyed, but some was actually in Belgian possession at the terminus of the line on Lake Tanganyika; and a portion of this was obtained from them.

By the winter of 1916–17, the whole of the enemy territory to the north of the Central Railway could be regarded as definitely occupied by the Allies. With the fall of Dar-es-Salaam it was thought that a long halt would be made, since sickness was taking a heavy toll, particularly of the Europeans. But Smuts was now anxious to push on

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Photo: Imperial War Museum.

FROM GREY KASHMIR

A Kashmir Mountain Battery on the march near Lindi. This little port is situated in the south-east corner of the former German East Africa, and is only 50 miles from the Mozambique frontier. It and its vicinity were the scene of several actions during 1917, notably on August 3rd, September 21st and 25th, and October 1st. It had been shelled by British naval vessels on March 20th, 1915.

to the River Rufiji, thus making good another belt of the German colony. With a view to surrounding the enemy, he then sent the whole 2nd Division to Iringa. Their line of communication was to run back to Dodoma on the railway.

There is little doubt that the South African general, in common with all the British authorities, held it certain that once the greater part of the German colony had fallen into British hands, the war would virtually come to an end. Von Lettow-Vorbeck, however, had other views. He realised quite clearly that the ultimate fate of German East Africa must depend on the result of the war in Europe; should his country lose in that field, no efforts on his part could ever retain this colony under German sovereignty.

What he did see and feel very strongly, however, was that it lay in his power to keep the British fully occupied with the campaign in East Africa, thereby diverting troops, material, and money to a somewhat excentric "side-show." Having decided to act accordingly, it remained for him to put his plans into execution. He therefore determined to fall back well beyond the River Rufiji, and to prolong hostilities for as long as he had any means left to do so.

Indeed, after Dar-es-Salaam had fallen, and the German hold on the Central Railway had come to an end, there could be little inducement for von Lettow-Vorbeck to remain in those parts; so he withdrew into the Uluguru Mountains. But he was not there long; having formed a large depôt of stores at Kisaki, to the south of these mountains, he soon began to evacuate the area for a move still further south.

The Enemy Fights Clear

He then found that Smuts was initiating a pursuit. The South African troops attempted to seize Kisaki, but were severely handled and withdrew. By September 9th the enemy had concentrated at Dutumi, where a three-day action was fought with but little result—except that the British encircling moves had definitely failed.

The German retirement to the south of the River Rufiji opened up an entirely new set of problems. In the first place, it was imperative that the whole of German East Africa now in British hands—that is, to the north of the Rufiji—should return to a normal existence, and be submitted to an orderly administration. Consequently it was essential to prevent von Lettow-Vorbeck from breaking back northwards across that river, and even to prevent any serious raids by his followers into the newly-secured territory.

These circumstances clearly compelled the British commander to maintain his troops in the Rufiji valley, and, further, to attempt once more to bring von Lettow-Vorbeck to battle, with a view to destroying his forces. But the policy had the serious drawback that it meant maintaining the troops in a most unhealthy part of the country, while the supply problem must grow yet more difficult.

South of the Rufiji, the enemy concentrated his forces mainly in the district of Mahenge and Liwale, to the south, and about Songea and Tunduru in the south-west. The British troops were more-or-less in touch with the Germans over a wide arc of territory. In the west stood the Nyasaland Force opposite Songea. Beyond and further north there was a column at Iringa. To the east of the latter came the Nigerian Brigade at Mpangwas. On and near the sea there were detachments at Kilwa and Lindi.

But any further British movement was out of the question until the rainy season should be over, since the transport of the East African Force was now in a truly desperate plight. One year's hard work had placed a far greater strain on it that it could stand. It would need some months before any systematic advance could be undertaken. General Smuts, in his own des-

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patch had stated: "The mechanical transport was in a seriously damaged condition in consequence of the strain of continuous work over appalling roads, or trackless country, and extensive repairs were essential. . . . As men dropped out (from disease), increasing strain was thrown on those able to keep going, until the loss of men threw scores of vehicles out of work."

Fewer and Fewer Porters

And this, if anything, was really an under-statement of the case. Neither does it take into account the condition of the animal transport, which had all but melted away, nor the fact that the porters were nearly all broken down by disease and overwork. A serious difficulty, moreover, was arising out of the dwindling supply of porters. Only certain African tribes will fulfil this rôle satisfactorily, and these tribes were now no longer furnishing sufficient recruits for the various corps of porters. From every point of view a period of quiescence was inevitable.

In January, 1917, General Smuts returned to South Africa. He was succeeded by Major-General Hoskins, who had then spent about one year in East Africa, with credit to himself. The new commander's position was not easy. He found the East African Force all but worn out as the result of an exhausting year's campaigning. Stores and supplies badly needed to be renewed and collected, while the health of the troops as a whole demanded attention. In short, there was no prospect of any operations for some few weeks, if not months.

General Hoskins's task was not rendered any simpler by the statement, made by General Smuts on his departure, that the campaign was virtually over. The situation was not dissimilar to that which had prevailed in South Africa, in December, 1900, when Lord Roberts left the command of the forces, after the nominal occupation of the whole of two Boer Republics. On that basis he had found it possible to declare that the war was over; and appearances doubtless justified such an assumption. Yet there was close on another eighteen months of fighting before hostilities drew to a close in 1902. So it was in East Africa, where nearly two more years of campaigning were to pass before the end; and even then it was to be only the Armistice in Europe which caused von Lettow-Vorbeck to surrender.

Shortly after General Smuts, the South African contingents returned to the Cape. These troops were now completely played out, and utterly unfit to go further. One British unit reports meeting a South African Brigade in September, 1916, and describes most of the men as wearing no more than a solar topee, a ragged shirt, and a battered pair of boots.

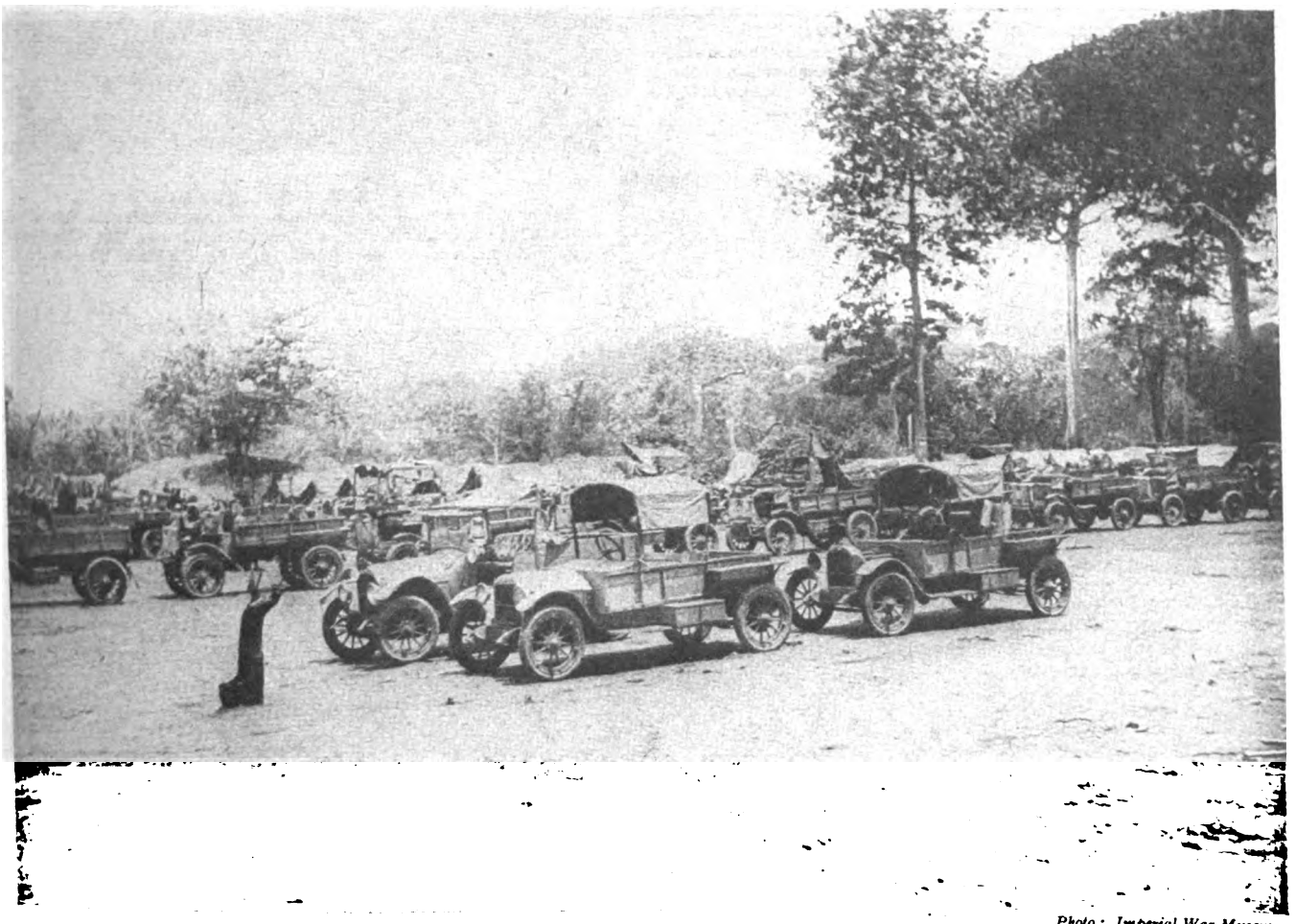

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

CAR PARK, NDANDA

All kinds of cars were used over the rough roads of East Africa, but the humble Ford managed time and again to get through when all other makes had failed. The "Tin Lizzie" was here nicknamed the "Jigger," after the jigger flea, which is supposed to be able to go anywhere. Ndanda, of whose car park this photograph was taken in January, 1918, was formerly a German mission station in the valley of the River Lukuledi, between Lindi and Masasi, and is now served by the 80-mile railway which has been built between those two settlements. It was occupied by the British on November 10th, 1917.

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Photo: A. P., Paris.

HARD WORK AT WINNEZEELE

Winnezeele, a spot typical of our northern back-areas, is a French village 6 km. north-east of Cassel and 4 km. north-north-east of Steenvoorde, on the road from the latter place to Herzeele. The above scene of light-railway construction is dated June 1st, 1918.

THE RURAL TOUCH

The very "local" line on which Winnezeele now stands runs parallel with the Belgian frontier from Hazebrouck to Bray-Dunes. The village, which is not a small one, escaped serious damage in the War. There are a few British graves in the churchyard.

Photo: A. J. Insall.

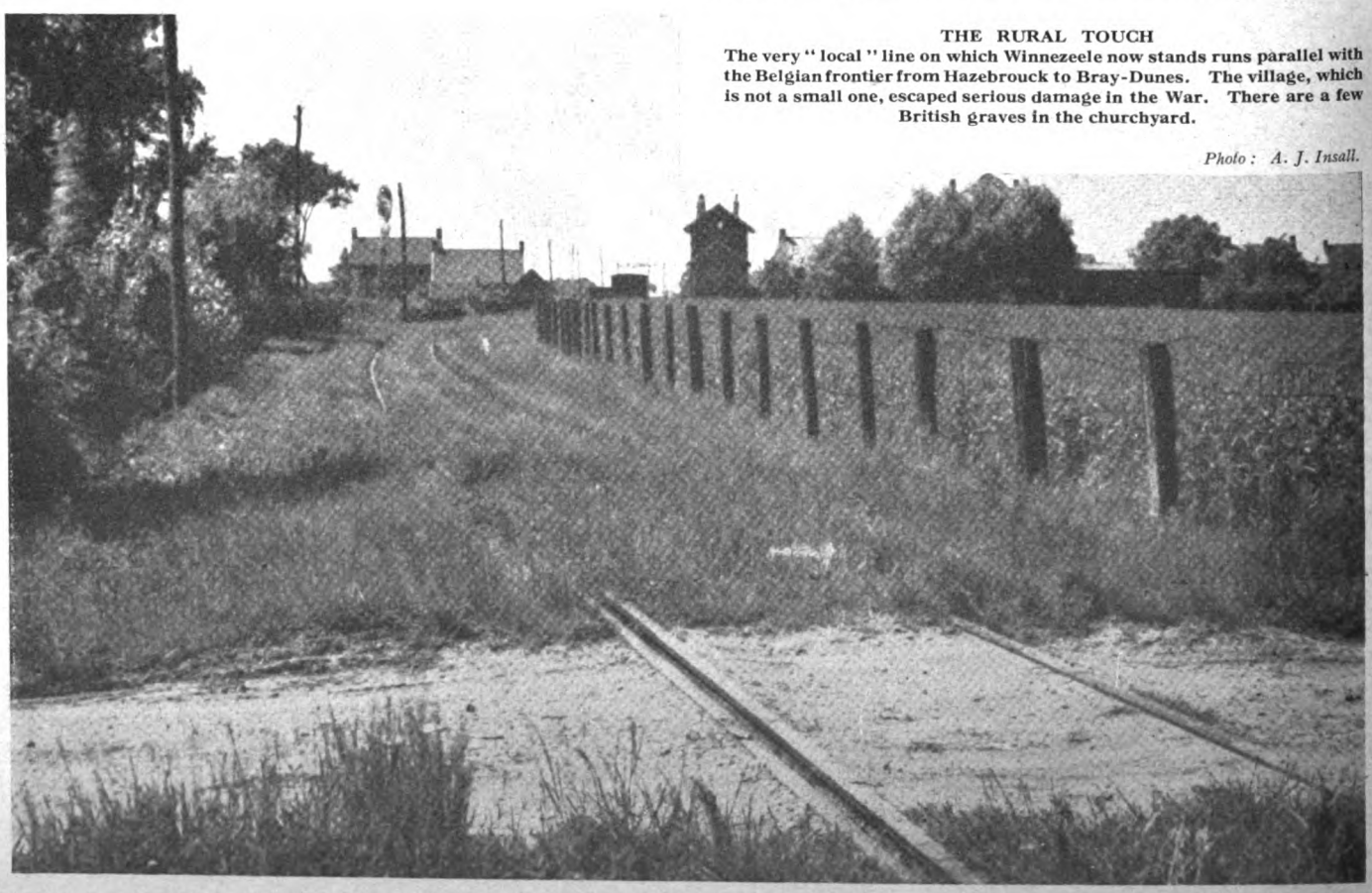

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Photo: A. P., Paris.

A STREET IN ZUYDSCHOOTE

The Belgian village of Zuydschoote (which must be distinguished from Zuydcoote, near Dunkirk) is situated 7 km. north-north-west of Ypres, just off the road to Dixmude. The above photograph is dated July 15th, 1916.

WITH BUNTING OUT

The flags are in celebration of a national fête day. Zuydschoote never fell to the enemy, but in April—May, 1918, our line, apart from outposts, ran less than 2 km. to the east of it; and in May, 1915, the Germans had come even closer.

Photo: A. J. Insall.

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A Thoroughly C3 Lot

It is a curious fact that the South African troops should not have accommodated themselves better to this class of fighting. Perhaps this is to be accounted for by their origin, for the infantry came from towns, and were not the superb material that went to fight in France.

The South African mounted brigades were infinitely better, but their horsemanship proved singularly poor. Their calls on the remount branch were incredibly heavy; twice in the first five months of 1916 they wore out their entire supply of horses. Moreover, they proved a sad trial to the ordnance, for they never attempted to salve the saddlery of a fallen horse. They would simply cut up the saddle-flaps to re-sole their boots, just as the officers cut up their tents to provide material for their uniforms. It was no easy task to keep South African units supplied! Finally, there seemed to be among them the impression that "the object for which they were fighting was not worth the loss of South African lives." [1]

The Loyal North Lancs had already left East Africa for the more healthy climate of Egypt, there to recover from the evil effects of two years' campaigning in the bush; and most of the remaining Europeans were being sent away from Africa altogether. The Indian battalions were being relieved by fresh units from India, while newly raised battalions of King's African Rifles were being recruited and trained. The East African Force was in the melting-pot once more.

Apart from the question of the troops themselves, there was the yet more serious matter of the supply and transport required for any operations south of the Rufiji. It was clearly imperative to utilise water transport as far as possible. The mouth of that river afforded certain facilities, poor though they were. Motor craft could be employed in the river delta, and, at times, as far up the river as Utete (50 miles). Later the very mediocre harbour of Kilwa, further south, was put to a like purpose; while after another interval the lesser harbour of Lindi was similarly employed. Both these unsatisfactory ports had to be utilised to the fullest possible extent.

[1] Fendall, *The East African Force*, p. 86.

Maintaining L. of C. Under Difficulties

It had been hoped to use water transport up the rivers, but in practice this was not found to be feasible, since the currents rendered navigation impossible

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

THIS IS A ROAD

Now you know just what the word "road" in East Africa could sometimes mean. This example has a history attached to it, for it was conceived during the campaign by Lieutenant L. A. W. Powell, of the Nigerian Brigade, who, since he was attached to the 2nd Road Corps, also supervised its cutting. Its course lay between Dutumi, General Smuts's headquarters for a time, and Summit Camp; and it is estimated to have saved, in aggregate, 100,000 miles of porterage. This photograph was taken in July, 1917.

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except in very rare cases. It was, therefore, decided to lay down a light railway track inland from Lindi, and this undertaking was successful. Light motors were converted at Dar-es-Salaam to work on rails.

The Central Railway from Dar-es-Salaam to Tabora ran east and west, but did not extend to the south; and from the stations at Mikesse and Dodoma lines of communication had to be maintained to Mpangwas and Iringa. Both these lines were kept going only by incredible efforts. Continual makeshifts had to be adopted to circumvent floods, and break-downs of all kinds; in addition, the inevitable mistakes that were made in managing these precarious lines of supply often meant that the troops were virtually without subsistence, except for what they could scrape up on the spot. In the valley of the Rufiji itself human transport was alone possible, and "Human transport is the devil," writes Fendall.[1]

"A carrier eats his own load in twenty days, and so it needs the greatest care to calculate the longest and most profitable 'lift' that can be obtained from porters. When the Belgians were supplied by porters south of Kagera the problem grew acute, for the limit of human transport was reached. It was then said that there was no need for anxiety, since, should the porters reach the Belgian force, having consumed their load on the road, the Belgian native troops would eat the porters because they were recruited from the cannibal tribes of the Congo. However, although they filed their teeth, and the Uganda native was terrified of them, it turned out that they were not 'practising' cannibals: so the plan did not work."[2]

To make matters more difficult, there now took place during the spring and summer of 1917 a serious raid by the Germans into their former colony—the very contingency that it had been hoped to avoid. One Major Wintgens, at the head of some 600 natives, broke away past the Nigerian troops near Songea and headed north. Owing to the exercise of the usual German skill in destroying all supplies as he went, he managed to leave his pursuers behind. He succeeded in reaching the railway, crossed the line, and headed north towards Muanza on Victoria Nyanza.

An Astonishing Enterprise

The Belgians, who had been requested to assist in rounding him up, attacked him at Ikoma, but were beaten back with loss. Wintgens himself had by this time been captured, but his place was admirably filled by a Captain Naumann. The new leader made for Lake Magadi, intending to raid British East Africa. But opposition threatened to become too strong, so he turned south-east towards Arusha, where he encountered some South Africans. There beaten back, he followed the Usambara Railway towards Tanga, holding up a train on the way. But he was now coming to the end of his tether. He turned south yet again, and made towards the Central Railway. Finally, he was caught at Mpapwa, near that railway, and forced to surrender.

The raid had lasted some months, and had been entirely effective in causing the British command to detach large bodies of troops to intercept the raiders, while absorbing a quantity of transport sorely needed elsewhere. In addition, the enemy had created a considerable disturbance throughout his former colony.

In spite of Wintgens' feat, however, things took a turn for the better. The reorganisation of the Force was proceeding satisfactorily. The War Office had found means of sending out to East

[1] *Fendall, op. cit.*, p. 207.
[2] *Ibid.*

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

AFTER THE RAINS

No. 1 Section of the 2nd Road Corps reconstructing a bridge over the River Ruvu after the heavy rains. The Ruvu is another name for the Pangani, which, after rising a few miles south of Mt. Kilimanjaro, flows across the north-east corner of the former German colony to the seaport of Pangani, which is midway between Tanga and Zanzibar Island. Along the river's northern bank stretches a range of hills known as the Pare Mountains; and it is close to one of the peaks, called Ruvu Top, that this photograph was taken in June, 1917.

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Photo: Imperial War Museum.

A CAPTURED GERMAN GUN

British soldiers near a German 4·2-inch howitzer taken at Ilembule. This former German mission station lies 50 miles north-east of Alt Langenburg, and was captured in November, 1916, when an isolated force of 54 Europeans and 249 Askari, under Colonel Huebener, took refuge there, but was forced to surrender. The weapon shown, of whose existence the British had known for some time, had been described by rumour as a "big gun captured from the Belgians."

Africa a quantity of suitable motor transport, chiefly American. Above all, the rains were coming to an end without having occasioned any real disaster to the supply service.

Whilst things were thus assuming a more favourable shape, in May Major-General Hoskins was unexpectedly superseded in his command by General Van Deventer, a South African officer who had spent the best part of 1916 in East Africa, where he had commanded the South African troops at Kondoa, and later a division. On the surface there might seem to have been little necessity for a change in the command; but behind the scenes, it may be presumed, there was some political motive for the return of Van Deventer to the East African theatre.

General Van Deventer Takes Over

The new commander-in-chief was a big, shy man, who spoke little English in official dealings when he could avoid our language. He had acquired a good reputation as a fighting commander, although he was said to be lacking in skill or knowledge of the administrative side of warfare—a serious drawback in this campaign. But he was open-minded, and showed competence in his handling of a difficult and thankless task.

The first decision taken by General Van Deventer related to the line of operations to be followed in a new attempt to catch von Lettow-Vorbeck. He first visited Kilwa and Lindi in person, for it was clear to him that such an attempt could scarcely be made except from the coast. That being so, the question resolved itself into which of the two small ports should be selected as the base. Since there was a strong likelihood that the German commander might move further south, it seemed preferable to work from Lindi.

Now Lindi was far from an ideal port or base. Ships put in at the harbour, but had to discharge into lighters, which then proceeded 10 miles up the river to unload at Mingoyo, whence a light railway had been laid for some miles inland; after this the cargo was conveyed by light lorry until porters had to be employed. Kilwa was, therefore, retained as a secondary base, so that another group of columns working from that point might be supplied simultaneously with troops from Lindi.

A great effort was now made to round up von Lettow-Vorbeck and his column. Nevertheless, little was achieved, since the climate, particularly at Kilwa, was bad, and sickness rampant. Moreover, the Germans showed no intention of moving; rather, they manifested some activity. The summer went by, and still nothing was done by us, until finally, by the middle of August, it was possible to move. The Nigerian Brigade had then been brought round to Kilwa, while fresh troops had arrived from India. Some slight encounters took place, and the Belgians were engaged near Iringa.

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

DIGGING TRENCHES

Nigerian troops digging trenches for a fortified post on the Kilwa—Mssindyi road, September, 1917. Kilwa, or Kilwa Kivinje, a historic port with some fine old buildings, situated midway between Dar-es-Salaam and Lindi, was occupied by us on September 7th, 1916. Its neighbourhood was the scene of severe fighting in both July and September of the following year.

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Photo: Imperial War Museum.

CROSSING COTTON-SOIL

Porters and troops of the 3rd Battalion Nigerian Brigade marching toward the River Rufiji between Tulo and Dutumi, December 31st, 1917. The men are passing across a six-mile belt of the notorious black cotton-soil which a fall of rain renders impassable to motor traffic. The method was for a train of porters to carry the load of supplies half-way along the route, there handing them over to another train dispatched from the opposite end.

Nigerian Brigade in Trouble

As soon as the columns moved out from Kilwa and Lindi, they encountered hostile resistance. Some stiff fighting ensued, as a result of which von Lettow-Vorbeck drew off to the south. The Nigerian Brigade then succeeded in catching him on the march, and inflicted some casualties on his force. His movements first appeared undecided, but he suddenly altered his march and headed straight for the column coming from Lindi, whereupon the Nigerian Brigade was sent to assist the Lindi troops. Unluckily the Nigerians had a terrible march, outran their supplies, and consequently arrived on the scene in a state of exhaustion. This was a real calamity, for, had they been in a fit condition to intervene, the two forces might have got the better of the Germans in no undecided manner. Two further columns were about to arrive on the scene, and between these various forces the total destruction of the enemy might have been achieved.

As it was, a three-day battle ended with von Lettow-Vorbeck holding his ground against the attack of the Lindi force, while the Nigerians were so worn out as to be unfit to go into action. The remaining columns arrived in time to see the enemy slip off once more. Nevertheless, the German casualties had been so high that their commander, who could now scarcely reckon on obtaining reinforcements, was well content to slip away.

For the rest of the autumn he was not again brought to a fight. He gradually worked his way down to the River Rovuma, the boundary between German and Portuguese East Africa. There he reached Ngomano, where the Portuguese had a post occupied by a force of several hundred men. Very quickly von Lettow-Vorbeck dispersed these Portuguese troops, and promptly appropriated a mass of machine guns, rifles, and ammunition—truly a windfall to him.

Meanwhile, he had left a strong detachment near Mahenge, with orders to join him ultimately on the Rovuma. Shortly afterwards a column of King's African Rifles came on this detachment while on the march. Although unable to deal with it, the Rifles maintained contact and were able to summon further reinforcements. The Germans were driven south-eastwards, and finally were so effectively encircled that their commander surrendered with 300 Europeans and 1,000 natives—an irreplaceable loss which, added to casualties incurred as the result of the Wintgens raid, must have reduced the enemy forces very considerably during 1917.

A Bold Zeppelin Flight

During the autumn of 1917, the German Government in Berlin conceived the bold plan of sending von Lettow-Vorbeck a supply of urgent medical stores and explosives by airship. In October, 1917, one of the latest Zeppelin airships, *L.59*, then just completed, was specially

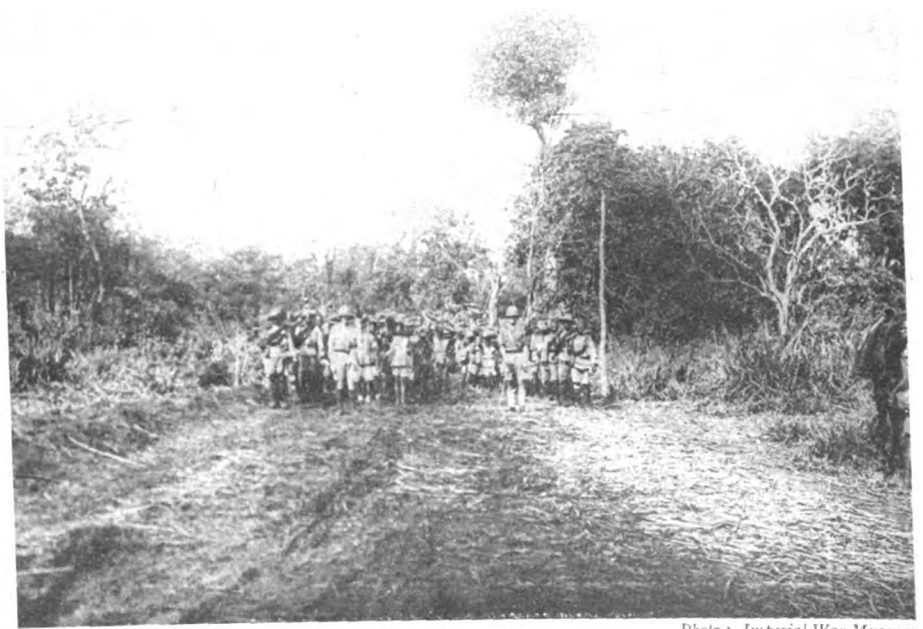

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

NIGERIAN GUNNERS

The personnel of the Nigerian Battery on its way to the coast during January, 1918. The photograph was taken near Ndanda, and shows the commanding officer, Major Tavise, M.C., in the foreground, with Lieutenant Blackmore. The date is shortly after that on which the Germans had taken the bold step of crossing into Mozambique.

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fitted out for this expedition. Starting from the airship shed at Yamboli in Bulgaria, she crossed the Eastern Mediterranean, and flew due southwards, well to the west of the Nile, until she was just to the south of the latitude of Khartum.

At this point she was recalled to Europe by radio-telegraphic orders. The reasons for this sudden change of plan are ascribed to the fact that the airship might have found it extremely difficult to find von Lettow-Vorbeck. But it is said that it was the craft's impending arrival that caused him to try to prolong his stay in the Lindi region by dint of hard fighting.

At the end of November, 1917, the German commander, feeling that he ran some risk of being caught by failing supplies and stores on the one hand, and the pursuing British on the other, took the momentous step of abandoning German East Africa and crossing into Mozambique, or Portuguese East Africa. By so doing he naturally altered his own position; he could no longer be regarded as commander-in-chief of a German colony, and sank more-or-less to the level of the head of a filibustering expedition.

Still, the Portuguese were belligerents and enemies of Germany; he was therefore justified in attacking them. Moreover, the Portuguese colony had not been ravaged by war, and there were areas that offered attractive resources in food. Von Lettow-Vorbeck also knew that the native population in Mozambique was not friendly to the European authorities administering the colony. Portuguese methods of "farming" the taxes, and also of recruiting labour for the Rand, had not tended to enhance that nation's popularity. There was a condition almost of open rebellion in parts of the colony. Last but not least, von Lettow-Vorbeck may have had a shrewd suspicion that he would open up a remunerative supply of arms and war material by the simple method of attacking the Portuguese native forces and of raiding their stores.

Germans in Mozambique

Having reduced his direct following to some 1,800 men, all picked Europeans and natives, he disappeared south of the River Rovuma, the frontier dividing the German and Portuguese colonies. The Portuguese authorities, in spite of their previous bold words, were not slow in appealing to London for help. The East African forces, which might otherwise have rested content with preventing the return of the Germans into their former territory, now found themselves ordered to continue the chase and to cross on to Portuguese soil.

This new campaign was to be conducted with African troops only. The last of the Europeans, now mere remnants, were repatriated to Europe or to South Africa, there to be made available, if possible, for service elsewhere. The last of the Indians went back to India, while the Nigerian Brigade was also sent home to its own country. The war was therefore carried on by the new battalions of the King's African Rifles, and, also, for a time, by the Gold Coast Regiment.

Once across the Rovuma, the Germans were in a belt of arid country that offered few resources, and there all trace of them was soon lost. But it was not so very long before news of them came in. The Portuguese were greatly alarmed lest von Lettow-Vorbeck should raid Port Amelia. The Gold Coast Regiment was therefore sent by sea to that spot in order to assist them. The transport, however, had the misfortune to run aground at Minkindini, not far from Lindi. It thus became a question of hours whether the ship could be refloated and land her troops at Port Amelia before the appearance of the German column. In the end the Gold Coast men arrived ahead of the Germans, who finally left the place well alone.

The Germans were now making a halt in the Medo region, to the west of Port Amelia. It was therefore decided to send a force after them from that port. This was not a satisfactory base, since all stores landed there had to be transported across the bay, a distance of eight miles, before reaching the road leading inland. A concentric operation was now planned to surround the Germans, two columns coming from Port Amelia combining with another force coming from Nyasaland.

Another Scheme Falls Through

But the attempt came to nothing, for the difficulties of planning a delicate movement of this nature in such country, without an elaborate radio or telegraphic system and any adequate maps, proved insuperable. In the end, too, the failure was partly attributable to the fact that there were found to be several native villages bearing identical names.

Another base was then opened at the port of Mozambique, it being desired to form thereby two parallel lines of supply running west—one from Port Amelia, the other from Mozambique. These lines were to be fed either from the sea or from Nyasaland, whence British native forces were to advance and combine with those landed at the two ports. By this manœuvre it was hoped to pen von Lettow-Vorbeck in a known area, and then to operate against him somewhat after the manner employed during the South African War, when lines of blockhouses were built in order to isolate the enemy in known areas. But again the scheme proved utterly unworkable, because the country was too difficult, and the troops were hopelessly inadequate.

Von Lettow-Vorbeck, never in difficulties, headed south, clearly making for Kilimane and the mouth of the River Zambesi. Soon he was within a short march of the little railway terminus above Kilimane, having come 1,000 miles from Moshi as the crow flies. The Portuguese once more clamoured for assistance; so a detachment was sent to Kilimane, and there disembarked. These troops were then sent up to railhead, where they entrenched.

Von Lettow-Vorbeck promptly attacked the neighbouring Portuguese detachment, took their field guns, used them against their owners, and then sent the Portuguese in wild flight straight on to the British. The latter, overrun by their allies, broke badly, and thus the whole Allied force was virtually put out of action.

In spite of his success, the German leader hesitated and seemed to avoid Kilimane, possibly imagining that he might find it strongly protected by the Royal Navy. He therefore turned north again, with some King's African Rifles behind him. At a place called Namirroya he found a company of African Rifles entrenched, and learned of another column coming down to its assistance. The relieving force was weak in numbers and exhausted by forced marches. He therefore turned on these troops and handled them all most severely.

And Still the Enemy Slipped By

Had he elected to do so, the German could now have gone north and tried to raid his former colony. But at first he preferred to move westward toward the Nyasa country, where there was an abundance of supplies. Once more, however, various columns from the south and from Nyasaland began to converge on him. Yet his resourcefulness still stood him in good stead, and every time that he was in danger of being surrounded he succeeded in slipping away by night.

By this time the command on the

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Photo: Imperial War Museum.

IN PORTUGUESE TERRITORY

Troops fording the River Lujenda, a tributary of the Rovuma, in the north of Mozambique, or Portuguese East Africa. British forces first entered the Lujenda Valley in December, 1917, reaching the chief town, Mtarica, in January following.

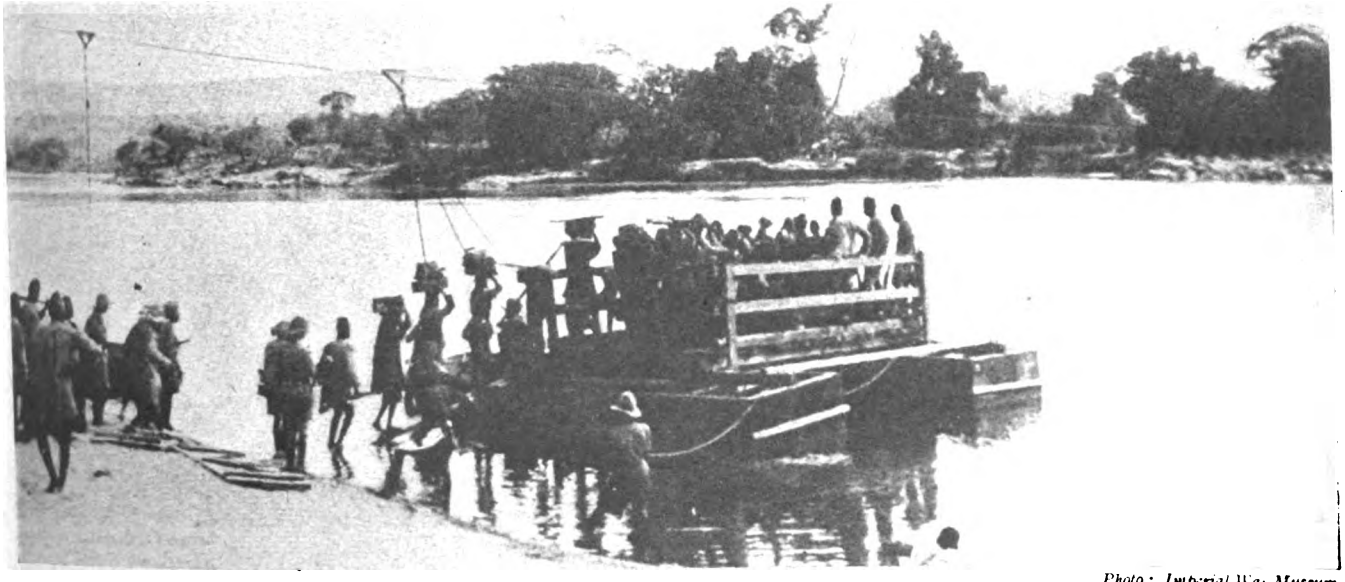

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

ON THE ROVUMA

The River Rovuma constitutes the boundary-line between the Portuguese and former German colonies. Here Nigerian troops are seen crossing on pontoons. Toward the end of the campaign von Lettow-Vorbeck successfully recrossed the river, between two British columns, exactly where it had been foreseen that he might try to do so.

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British side seemed incapable of acting with sufficient vigour, while, in contrast, the German native troops were now hardened veterans, and remarkably skilful in bush-fighting. Von Lettow-Vorbeck proved more than a match for his pursuers; and at the same time fortune seemed to favour his every move. At length, after one remarkable escape, he was slowly headed north, until he was back on the River Rovuma. On September 9th, eluding all his pursuers, he crossed the river between two British columns, one from Nyasaland on the west and another from Lindi on the east, at a point due south of Songea, precisely where General Van Deventer had foreseen some months earlier that he would make the attempt, if ever he returned to the former German colony.

The end was now approaching. The British, as soon as they had heard that the enemy was coming north, had reinforced all the important posts, first at Iringa and Mahenge, and then as far north as Tabora. South of Songea von Lettow-Vorbeck was engaged by a battalion of North Rhodesian Police, and was forced to turn eastward. But he did not go far; hearing of the British moves, he turned rapidly north-west and then west, thus crossing out of German East Africa into Northern Rhodesia, to the south of Lake Tanganyika.

He next attacked the frontier station of Fife, though without success, and was then caught in open country by a column of King's African Rifles. In this action he suffered some loss; and it also became obvious that in the open veld his native troops were by no means such terrible opponents as they had been in their native bush. November had now set in. Von Lettow-Vorbeck was heading further into Rhodesia, when news of the Armistice was got through to him. After some discussion as to the precise significance of the terms, he surrendered at Abercorn on November 25th, was brought to Dar-es-Salaam, and thence was repatriated to Germany. With him there were 155 whites and 1,166 natives. Such was the conclusion of what may justly be regarded as the most astonishing of all the campaigns that went to the making of the World War.

A Very Fine Commander

Of the many German commanders whom the British encountered during that long struggle, no one showed greater resourcefulness or determination than General von Lettow-Vorbeck. By his own strength of will he had kept the campaign in East Africa alive down to the very end. His great reputation was gained, moreover, without leaving a trace of feeling in his opponents' minds that he was anything but a brave soldier and an honourable opponent. The regard in which he was held was best shown when, a few years ago, he was invited to attend the annual dinner of the East African Force as their guest of honour. There he was accorded a remarkable welcome, at the instigation of no other than General Smuts himself.

But the highest compliment that could ever have been paid to von Lettow-Vorbeck was the amazing fidelity of his native troops. All through the four years of war these men, who, it must be remembered, had no ties of blood or nationality with Germany, served their leader in a manner which astounded, and continues to astound, all who have had dealings with black troops.

This can have been due only to two things: to his great military skill and insight, which convinced the natives that they had in him a first-class commander; and to the tact with which he handled his men under the most trying conditions. Without exaggeration we may say, "Truly a great soldier."

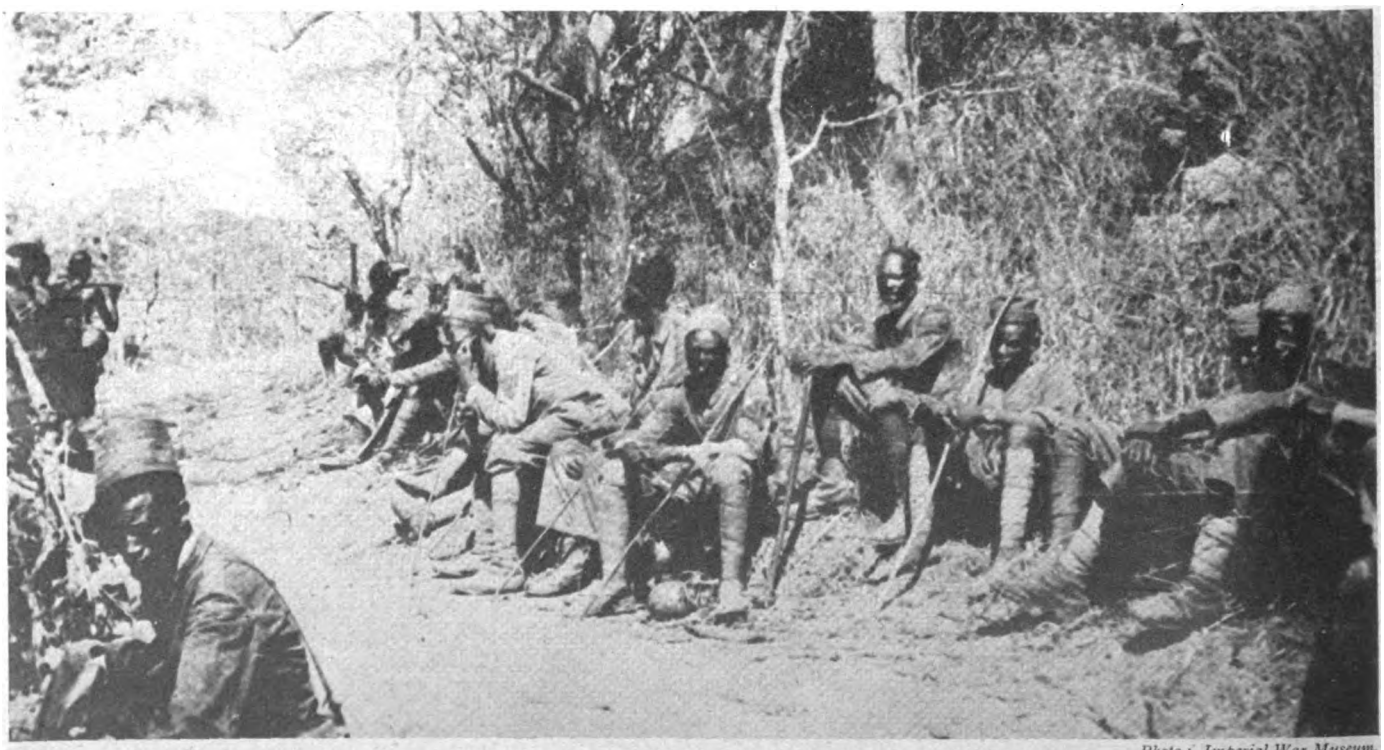

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

MEMBERS OF A FINE FORCE

The tale of the closing phases of the East African campaign reads like the history of some mediæval *condottiere*. Several columns were trying to converge on the small German force, whose leader, by dint of fine courage and the performance of such bold and masterly exploits as his recrossing of the Rovuma, successfully eluded them all. It is ironic indeed that this little company, far from home, entirely surrounded by enemies, and without hope of reinforcement, should have been the one "army" in the service of the Central Powers which at the close of the War was still holding its own. Not the least astonishing feature of this remarkable campaign, and not the least important tribute to General von Lettow-Vorbeck, is the high skill and even higher fidelity displayed by his coloured soldiers. Above is seen a group of these men—German-trained Askaris taken prisoner by the British.

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CHAPTER III

SLANG OF THE BRITISH SOLDIER IN 1914–18

The British soldier in France and Flanders and on the other fronts as well speedily acquired a large and expressive vocabulary. Many of the words and phrases then in common use are quite unprintable in a work such as this. The vast majority of old soldiers can, however, recall such to mind without much assistance. Apart from language that in times of peace many would describe as "bad," both the Navy and the Army had a rich store of slang words and phrases which members of both Services employed with much frequency. In the following chapter many of these expressions are recalled to mind, together with their derivations and meanings.

LAURENCE STERNE once remarked that Marlborough's soldiers swore mightily in Flanders. Marlborough's soldiers were not the only ones.

The Slang of Former Wars

No doubt they used much slang, too. But we have very few records of it. Indeed, we know little of the soldiers' slang used in the Napoleonic wars and during the Indian Mutiny. Some superior persons go so far as to say that we know precious little of the Tommy's slang in the South African War: that is untrue, though we possess far fewer records than might at first thought seem probable.

In relation to the Great War of 1914–18, however, we are rather differently placed, for many of the survivors of that maelstrom are men (and women, let us not forget) still on the sunny side of middle age. Moreover, two books on the subject have been published: Fraser & Gibbons's *Soldier and Sailor Words and Phrases*, and John Brophy's and my own *Songs and Slang of the British Soldier*—books that set forth the wealth of word and phrase employed by the British soldier on the Western and Eastern Fronts. His vocabulary was pretty extensive.

Nor is it surprising that it should be so. Professor A. Carnoy, in his admirable (though far from "popular") book, *La Science du Mot*, has excellently said, in words that we paraphrase:

"The army, like every other body of men bound together by a well-regulated constitution, having its own life and snatching man from his normal existence, has always had a peculiar and private speech that is highly developed; a speech and a vocabulary which, naturally enough, have, like those of the sailor and particularly the bluejacket, served to designate a great number of ideas beyond the purely military."

Already in the years before the War there were many slang terms in use in the Regular Army, and these formed a useful starting-point and a valuable and helpful basis. New needs produced new words and phrases; and many elements were welded together. The Army's vocabulary, therefore, increased rapidly, until at the end of the War it amounted to something over 2,000 words, if we include catch-phrases. It is worthy of note that the vocabulary of the British soldier, although it equalled in extent that of the French *poilu*, was smaller, by about one-quarter, than that of the German soldier.

Poilu, Jerry, and Tommy

It is perhaps even more informative to mark the characteristics of the soldier-slangs of these three combatant forces; and I take leave to quote from the essay entitled "Soldiers' Slang of Three Nations" in my *Words, Words, Words!* published a few years ago:

"It is unsafe to generalise on the differences of the slang employed by Poilu, Jerry, and Tommy, but one can at least say that the first was the most witty, mocking, and realistic, the second the most technical, blasphemous, and grim, the third the most direct, the most obvious and the best humoured. In all three, the influence of the Regular Army was somewhat less powerful than that of civilian Paris, Berlin, London; thieves' slang, like rhyming and back slang, was much less operative in German than in the two others; all three were, in fact, less cynical and Rabelaisian than they appeared to be; all three frequently harked back to home-life in their figures of speech; all three stressed food, drink, civilian comforts; all three tended to materialise the spiritual and to brutalise the material, though the exceptions are many; and all three were sly or deprecatory in their references to military superiors, as they were to politicians and other noisy stay-at-homes, the French being the most biting, the German the most pessimistic, and the English the most tolerantly contemptuous.

"Companionship, solidarity, patient courage, and the tendency either to ironise or to belittle one's fears, sufferings, and discomforts: these qualities were common to, and equally characteristic of, the soldiers of France, Germany, England. Moreover, these soldier-slangs contain no slanderous, no insulting names for the combatant foe; such amenities being reserved for politicians, profiteers, pressmen, and for the subtler barbarism of peace."

If we concentrate on the slang of the British soldier, we find that its salient features were these: It was, on the whole, both brave and cheerful; and where, as was occasionally inevitable, bitterness entered, that bitterness was usually ironical, sometimes even playful. Alongside the pre-War Regular Army words, mostly from India (with a few from Egypt and South Africa), there were re-births and popularisations of old civilian slang terms, and of terms from the various dialects.

Old Words in New Guises

Dread and discomfort were ridiculed, and were turned into a racy jest or a vivid phrase; coinings "out of the blue" were rare, but many old words were clothed in strange garments—given new senses. Many French and a few German words on the Western Front, and on the Eastern a few Turkish, Greek, and Bulgarian, were freely and often amusingly adapted, sometimes most ingeniously! Irony or sarcasm, or a typically British understatement, occurred in almost every third word or phrase. Authority was mocked at. Metaphors were graphic and clear-cut.

But it may be asked: What *is* military slang, and how did it arise? A word belongs to military slang either because of the object it denotes, or by the constant use to which the soldiers

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Photo : A. P., Paris.

ROOFLESS RAMSCAPPELLE

Ramscappelle lies 3 km. south of Nieuport, on the road to Dixmude, and the most stirring part of its history belongs to the early months of the War. In October, 1914, engineers of the Belgian Army, whose outpost-line ran through this village, dammed up the lower reaches of the River Yser, opened the sluices between Dixmude and Nieuport on the 28th, and flooded the whole area between the canalised stream and the railway embankment.

put it. For instance, terms descriptive of the fighting, whether dynamic as in attack, or static as in most trench warfare ; terms designating the instruments and means of war ; equally, the many synonyms for eating and drinking and working, as also for all those categories of men (and women) who go to make up the Army and its auxiliaries. In this paragraph I am indebted to one French soldier-lexicographer ; in the next I paraphrase another :

" The isolated existence of a group of men, the communion of sentiment and feeling, and occupations in common, form the ideal conditions for the birth and for the continued life of a slang. Then what a multitude of new things, actions, and sensations to describe : what a dearth of ready-made words ! The soldier coined or found words for the new facts, and enriched or varied old words for changed conditions ; he gave a new meaning to words from long-established or recent slang, from dialect, and from the standard tongue. When, as soon it did, the War became trench warfare, the soldiers' slang grew and spread." The combatants reacted verbally as well as emotionally to the conditions and changes of active service.

The movements of troops from sector to sector, or from front to front ; the increasingly large proportion of Empire forces, especially of Canadians, South Africans, Australians, and New Zealanders ; encounters with sailors on furlough ; the advent of poison gas, and the tank ; the increasingly important part played by the Air Force : all these factors, and yet others, helped at once to increase the amount of slang, and to make it quickly known to larger and still larger bodies of men.

The Mixing of the Classes

In the resulting mass of soldiers' slang, we notice that the contribution of foreign languages is interesting and picturesque—but much less important than the contribution made internally. " The mixing of the classes," as I have said elsewhere, " has been far more influential than the mixing of the nations. This mixing has been more profitable to the educated than to the uneducated : for the latter picked up little more than some arresting or grandiloquent journalese and some useful officialese ; the former gained immensely by their acquisition of vivid popular words and phrases, and by their perception of the vitality and immediacy characteristic no less of dialect than of slang—indeed, many cultured men " and a few cultured women " that had been in danger of becoming effete, pretty-pretty . . . were revivified by contact with their less ' respectable ' fellows."

But whatever their social class, the soldiers were spurred by the rapid and often rather bewildering changes of

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Photo: A. J. Insall.

RESTORED TO SELF-RESPECT

The Germans reached and took Ramscappelle on October 29th, 1914, but two days later were thrust out again. By then the flood was rising, and men and guns were trapped in a disastrous situation, large numbers being drowned and many weapons lost. To-day there is between the village and Nieuport a lonely British cemetery, created after the Armistice from isolated graves and small burial-grounds on the neighbouring battlefields, and containing 804 United Kingdom, 7 Australian, 2 Canadian, 1 South African, and 2 German dead.

scene, by the alternations of danger and safety on the one hand, and of discomfort and comparative comfort on the other, and by their sense of apartness, to speech more striking or pungent or picturesque than had been theirs in the time of peace.

Acquaintance with foreigners and foreign countries, association with Colonials deemed hardly less odd, and face-to-face contention with unprecedented problems and difficulties, sharpened the faculties and diversified and coloured the speech both of the combatants and, to a lesser extent, of those, such as nurses, who came into close contact with them.

Such considerations as have been stated or implied in the preceding paragraphs suggest, very clearly, that the slang words and phrases of the soldier in 1914–18 fall into numerous groups. These groups are interesting in themselves; so, too, are many of the terms comprising the groups, although not a few have to be omitted because, fittingly included in *Songs and Slang of the British Soldier* (which stops short of hardly anything), they cannot well be allowed in a publication read by children as well as grown-ups, by girls as well as fellows, by respectable women as well as by respectable men.

The following is the classification made by Professor W. E. Collinson, a very close and acute observer of everyday speech. He is, however, not to be held responsible for all the examples, or for any of the comments.

A Detailed Classification

1. *Regular Army words.* Most of these originated with the Army in India, and naturally, therefore, derive from Hindustani; some of the Hindustani words have, by a process known as "Hobson-Jobson," been twisted into strange and wonderful shapes. *Blighty*, which the Regular soldier has long used for England, and in the Great War for a wound that took one to England, is a "Hobson-Jobson" of the Hindustani *bilaik*, foreign country, or of the Urdu *belait*, itself from the Persian *vilayat*, strange or foreign.

Almost equally widespread in 1914–18 were *pawny*, water, and *rooty*, bread; from the latter comes the derisive *rooty gong*, a Long Service medal, earned by the consumption of Army rations for a number of years, or, as the wags have it, "eighteen years of undetected crime." Dating from the late 18th century is *wallah*, a fellow, a chap: chiefly in combination, as "He's the Lewis-gun wallah." Of the numerous other words from Hindustani, we need select only two: *arsty*!, go slow!, from *ahisti*; and its opposite, *jildy*! (often in the form *jillo*!), get a move on!

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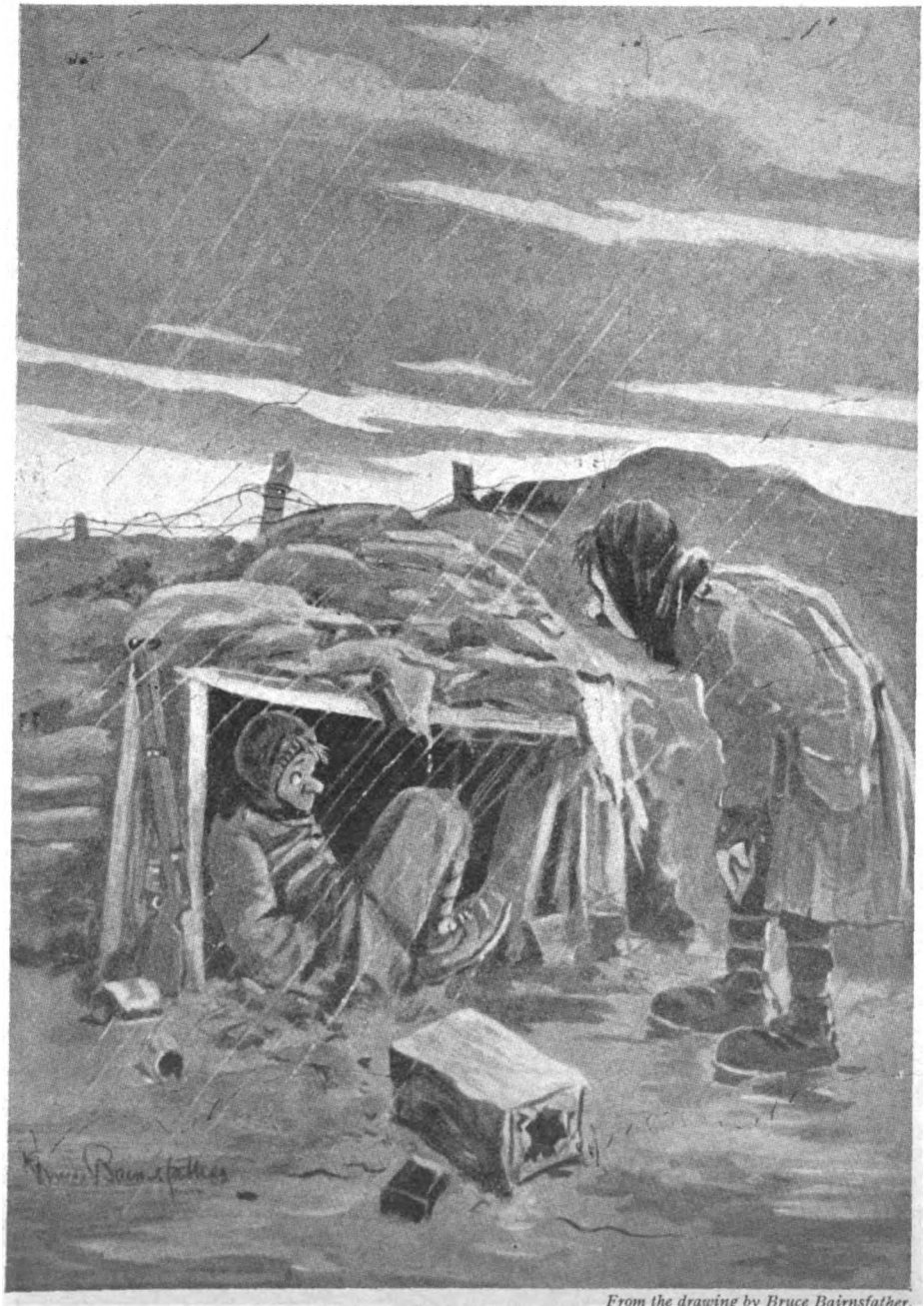
From Persian or Arabic—though generally *via* Hindustani—is the soldiers' *buckshee* or *bucksheesh*, of which the cynical have said that it is easily the most popular word in both India and Egypt. In South Africa the soldier learned *scoff*, to eat, whence *scoff*, food. But a few Regular Army terms are of British manufacture. *Swing the lead*, to malinger, is a perverted form of a nautical phrase; and naval in origin is *chew the fat*, to grumble. *Come the old soldier*, to "throw one's weight about," to attempt deception, probably dates from the Peninsular War; indeed, *old soldier*, an habitual schemer or wangler, was a civilian phrase at least as early as 1650.

2. *Officers' and instructors' words of command.* The most notable of these were so freely used in a slangy way during the War that they are now almost as freely employed by civilians; and the first two have actually become colloquial, while the first of all is now almost standard English: *Carry on!* "proceed as you have been doing up till the present!"; *as you were!* "disregard the last word of command!" (but among civilians often equal to "my mistake!" or "forget it!"); and the synonymous *jump to it!* "it" being the the word of command—the phrase now being equivalent to "Hurry!"—and *put a jerk into it!* originally a "physical jerks" instruction.



From the drawing by Bruce Bairnsfather.

THE INNOCENT ABROAD

Out Since Mons: "Well, what sort of a night 'ave ye' ad?"
Novice (but persistent optimist): "Oh, alright. 'Ad to get out and rest a bit now and again."

The Nicknames of the Nations

3. *Nicknames. Aussies*, Australians (from *Aussie*, Australia), the term being taken over from the Australians themselves (the latter were also, along with the New Zealanders, named *Anzacs*, though properly the term belongs to those who, like the present writer, were on Gallipoli at Anzac Cove); *Canucks*, Canadians, the term having originally meant French Canadians; *Teddies*, and more generally *Doughboys*, Americans; the former from "Teddy" Roosevelt, the latter from a bunnish sort of cake much eaten in the United States; *Pork and Beans*, Portuguese (also called *Portugeese*), by the process of "Hobson-Jobson," and with reference to a prevalent military tinned food; *Dagoes*, Italians, this being a very old name; *Frogs* or *Froggies*, the French, from the fact that they eat a specially-reared kind of frog.

The Germans were *Gerries*, which became *Jerries*, *Fritzes* (from *Friedrich*, a very common Christian name in Germany), *Huns*, and *Boches*, these last two being rare among soldiers after 1915. A Russian soldier was often referred to as *Ivan*, a name which is as frequent in Russia as its English form, John, is with us. Perhaps we ought to mention *Big Willie* and *Little Willie*, the Kaiser and the Crown Prince, from artist Hazelden's cartoons in *The Daily Mirror*.

4. *Words connected with civilian activities.* These form the least important group, though they were well known to and often used, generally in a mildly derisive manner, by the British soldier—especially by the Tommy. *Cuthbert*, a slacker; *funk-hole*, a Government office; *comb out*, to send (a man) on active service and specifically to the front line; *land girls*, always rather to be considered as a colloquialism than as slang; and *C.3*, which from the medical classification of persons absolutely unfit for active service, came to mean "inferior."

5. *Air Force terms.* Some of these are rather abstruse and technical, but the following have all been subjected to a use so intensive that they are common currency among civilians—and have been ever since 1918 or 1919: *ace*, a first-class airman, especially one who has brought down numerous enemy aero-

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AROUND ABLAINCOURT

Then and Now

Photo: Imperial War Museum

RUINS AMID THE UNDERGROWTH

A general view of Ablaincourt during the summer of 1917. The village is situated 5 km. due south of Estrées-Déniécourt, in the northernmost angle formed by the crossing of the Estrées–Hyencourt and Berny-en-Santerre–Chaulnes roads; Chaulnes, indeed, is only 4 km. distant. Ablaincourt was one of the points forming the line to which the XIX Corps retired late on March 25th, 1918. Troops of the 8th Division had to evacuate the village on the 26th.

Photo: G. T. Watson

PLODDING THROUGH THE MIRE

Modern Ablaincourt is a primitive little place, as this picture implies. Retaken by the Allies at the end of August, 1918, it was duly rebuilt after the Armistice, but to-day contains less than 200 inhabitants, and has not even a post-office to its name. In the First Battle of the Somme, 1916, the French reached and carried its outskirts on October 10th, but did not master the rest until November 7th.

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Photo: Imperial War Museum

PRESSURE UPON PRESSOIR

This tiny commune of 66 persons was a pretty country hamlet before the Somme campaigns, but after even the first of them its condition was approximately that illustrated here. Its position is due south of Ablaincourt, from which it is distant only 1 km., since it lies in the opposite fork of the same cross-roads. The French took it, during the First Battle of the Somme, on November 7th, in the same operation as enabled them finally to clear the enemy from Ablaincourt.

Photo: G. T. Watson

GOOD WEATHER FOR DUCKS

But scarcely good for camera-men, so that our photographer is to be congratulated on this clear-cut picture of Pressoir during rain. In the March Retreat, and also in the final Allied advance, the tiny village shared—somewhat inevitably—the fortunes of its immediate neighbour, Ablaincourt. Nowadays there is little in either place to appeal to the pilgrim uninspired by direct personal associations, nor is there a British cemetery within several miles.

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Photo: Imperial War Museum

PLENTY OF FIREWOOD

Here we have an attractive view of wartime Fresnes, photographed during a balmy spell of summer weather in July, 1917. Fresnes-Mazancourt, to title it correctly, stands on a lane connecting two main roads, about 4 km. east-north-east of Ablaincourt. The roads are respectively those from Péronne to Chaulnes and Péronne to Roye, and the lane runs from just east of Génermont, west through Fresnes into Miséry, and then on to the Somme bridge at St. Christ.

Photo: G. T. Watson

SPACIOUS AND SERENE

It will be seen from the above information that, in so far as roads existed at all in the battle-churned Somme country, Fresnes-Mazancourt in March, 1918, lay on one of the direct paths of retreat from the Somme. The 8th Division—with which, by the way, were also two battalions of the 150th Brigade, the 15th and 490th Field Companies R.E., and a company of divisional Pioneers (22nd Durham L.I.) —passed through the ruins late on the 25th, on its way back to the line Ablaincourt–Estrées.

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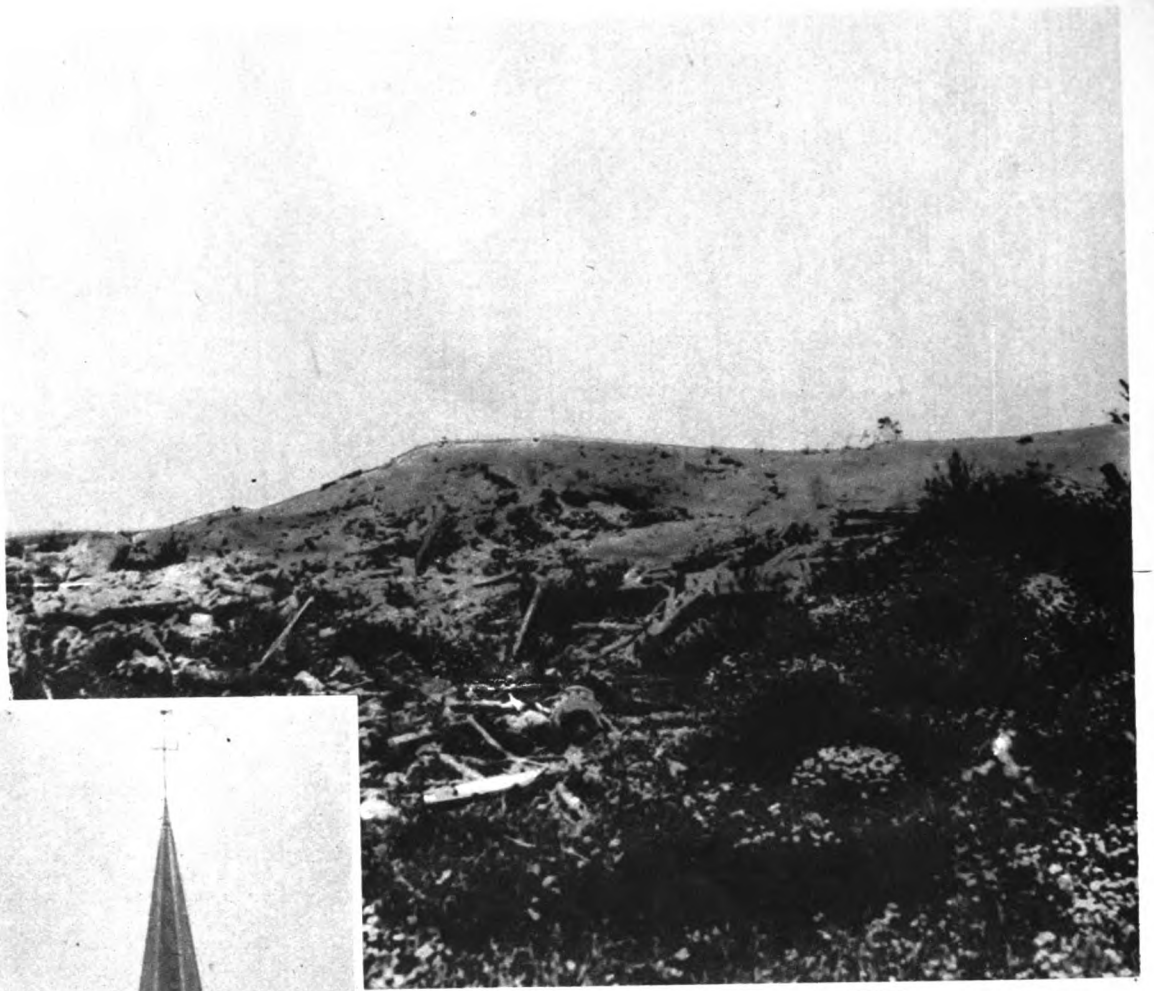

SITE OF A CHURCH

All that was left of Fresnes-Mazancourt church in July, 1917. It is photographs of utter desolation such as this which bring home to one the dogged courage of the men who, though weary, disorganized, and desperately few in number, in March, 1918, defended sometimes for many hours these forlorn remnants of cover.

Photo: Imperial War Museum

Photo: G. T. Watson

REBUILT

It is interesting to note that on an average the cost of reconstructing one of these battlefield churches amounts to about a million francs — no small sum for a tiny community to find, even with state aid (from the Reparations Account), and perhaps a contribution from some "foster-parent" in Great Britain. Even to-day many a building stands incomplete, and the sight of a wooden "bung" filling the hole destined one day to house a clock is far from rare.

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planes; *bus*, an aeroplane; *conk out*, to fail, applied originally to the engine—a sense still prevalent among motorists; *crash dive*, which is self-explanatory, as is *nose-dive* (both noun and verb); *pancake*, to drop flat; *sausage*, a "sausage" balloon, i.e. one used for observation; *taxi*, to roll along the ground before mounting, still applied only to an aeroplane; *zepp*, a zeppelin; and *zoom*, to soar vertically, still confined to aeroplanes. Since the War, the Air Force slang vocabulary has grown tremendously: but that fact calls for no further mention in this place.

Drinking—and Women

6. *Stories that went the round of the Army.* These are only just eligible, and are far too long for inclusion here. Much the fullest and most readable account of them is to be found in Stephen Southwold's article, "Rumours at the Front," in that valuable and entertaining book, *A Martial Medley*.

7. *Terms connected with drinking.* Most of these arose before the War and among civilians, but they were popularised during the War by soldiers. *To go on the binge* or *the razzle(-dazzle)* or *the ran-tan*, to indulge in either a drinking bout or a spree that involves more or (rarely) less drinking of some liquid stronger than tea or coffee; to *have a blind*, to get blind drunk, and not by accident, nor unwillingly; *blotto, canned, jagged, squiffy*, all meaning drunk, and the first, very drunk—perhaps from the porousness of blotting paper; *chin-chin!* a toast coming direct from the Chinese.

8. *Companionship with women.* The most picturesque terms are unfortunately the most indelicate, but we can, without bringing the flush of shame or the blush of embarrassment to the cheeks of the most proper, mention at least three:—*Ring money* is a soldier's wife's allowance; *square-pusher*, a young woman that is being courted, though not necessarily with a view to marriage: the term probably arising from "the habit pre-War soldiers made of escorting nursemaids as they pushed perambulators around a city square"—although *square* often implied that the young woman was respectable; and the related *square-pushing*, which meant either going out to court, honourably, a particular girl, or, less scrupulously, going out in the hope of meeting a friendly female, which process was known as *clicking*.

9. *Sergeant-majors' jokes and catch-phrases.* The majority of these are quite unprintable masterpieces of invective, which must have required years of experience and soulful meditation to achieve and to polish—though "polish" is hardly the first word that one would connect with these gems of racy eloquence. Still, we can safely mention such milder examples as *thank God we've got a Navy!* which was adopted by the men among themselves for application to any set-back or other untoward incident or circumstance; and *you broke your mother's heart but you b—— well won't break mine!*—and you didn't.

Punishments and Penalties

10. *The soldier's names for his punishments.* A prison, a detention-cell, a guard-room, had many names, but the commonest was *clink*, which is of a hoary antiquity, arising as it does in the 16th century as the designation of a specific jail in London; very likely it was originally suggested by the clink of handcuffs and the clank of fetters. Perhaps of similar origin too is *jankers*, confinement in a military prison—from

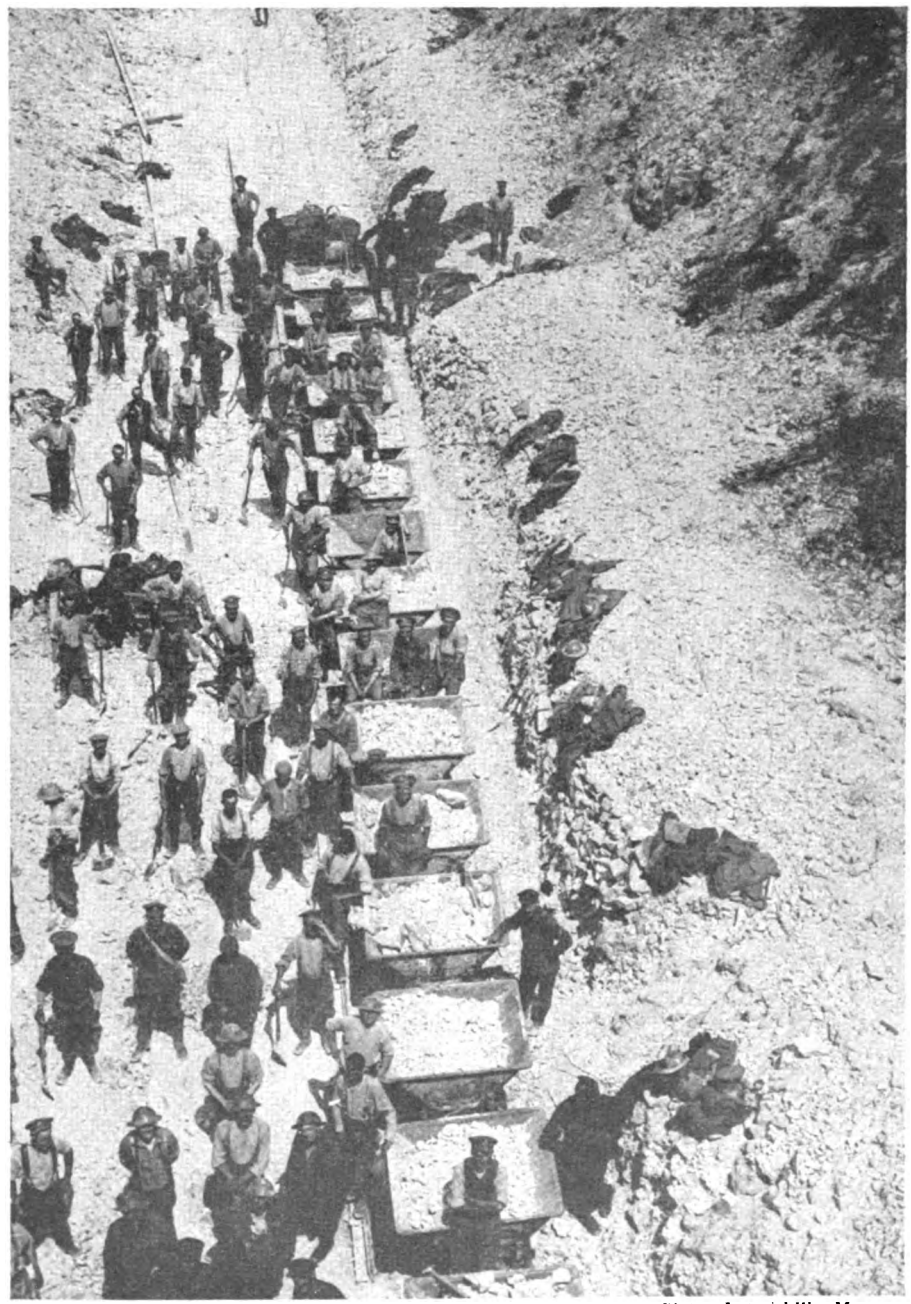

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

RAILWAY WORK

Making a new light railway near Arras, June 28th, 1917. The chief activity on this date was in the Lens region, where the British made progress on a two-mile front across the Souchez river. Avion was entered, the enemy forward positions were captured over a 2,000-yard extent south and west of Oppy, and 247 prisoners were taken.

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Photo: A. J. Insall.

ON THE EDGE OF POLYGON WOOD

Considerable reference to the wood's chequered history has been made in the preceding volumes of *Twenty Years After*, beneath the illustrations which appeared on pages 1010-11 and 1096. The modern photograph reproduced above is of interest for the two old pill-boxes to be seen.

the jangling of manacles and leg-irons; whence *jankers men*, defaulters, and *the jankers king*, the provost-sergeant. *To be strafed* is to receive official punishment; *to be jugged*, to be put into prison, a term arising early in the 19th century among criminals.

11. *Guns, shells, and other instruments of warfare.* A *pip-squeak* was properly a shell from a small trench-gun, loosely a "whizz-bang"; *whizz-bang*, a shell from a German ·77, the equivalent of our 18-pounder and the French ·75; a *crump* and a *coal-box*, a shell from a German 5·9, a noisy, deadly gun if ever there was one! Shells still larger usually received nicknames, such as *Jack Johnson* or *granny*, less happy and expressive than the quartette just mentioned.

A *dud* was a shell that failed to explode; hence a person that does not create much stir, either intellectually or in the way of common sense or efficiency. This word was, and still is, also an adjective. *Fairy lights* were Very lights; not, by the way, *Verey*, *Véry*, *Vérey*, as so often printed. There were many other kinds of light, and *Brock's benefit* (from Crystal Palace firework displays) is the collective term for "the usual nightly illuminations sent up from the opposing front lines, both for the detection of foes in No Man's Land and for the 'signalling' of messages" or warnings.

12. *Borrowings from outside England.* These, if we omit the borrowings from Arabic and Hindustani already treated in class 1, were not so numerous as might have been expected. *Bonza* was originally Canadian, though the form *bonser* is Australian, as also was the corruption *bosker*; meaning "very good," it probably comes from *bonanza*, a very rich gold-field, itself from the Spanish. Another very common Australian adjective was *dinkum*, genuine or honest, which corresponds to the Lancashire *jannock*. The etymology of *dinkum* is too difficult and obscure for these pages, but it may be noted that *the dinkum oil* is a synonym of *the straight wire*, authentic news.

From the German and the French

Germany gave us *minnie*, a *minenwerfer* or mine-thrower; but *Minnie* was applied equally to the bomb so clamorously cast at our blasphemous heads; *strafe*, to bombard, like the derivative *strafe*, a bombardment, derived from the German *strafen*, to punish, and came to be used of a severe reprimand; *hate* is obviously not German, but in its sense of bombardment (e.g. *the morning hate* at stand-to time) it refers to Lissauer's *Hymn of Hate*, which, fulminating against England, was composed in August, 1914, and was mercilessly cartooned by *Punch*; *kamerad!*, "stow it!" or "have mercy!" is from the German's cry as he surrendered.

From the French came such tags as *napoo*, finished, exhausted, dead, from *il n'y en a plus*, there is no more of it; *apree la guerre*, after the War, i.e. never, or at least in the extremely remote and problematic future—a phrase that reminds us of that stock French explanation of any deficiency in accommodation or refreshment, *C'est la guerre!*, it's the

Photo: G. T. Watson.

NEAR ARRAS

Another pill-box relic, this time in a field at Beaurains, near Arras. The village, which appears in the background, was entered by the British on March 18th, 1917, during the German retirement. In March, 1918, it was behind the lines of the 15th Division. Note small girl consuming banana.

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war!; *boko*, much or very, from *beaucoup*, much or many; *san fairy ann!* it doesn't matter! or, in modern phrase, "what the hell!" with its variations *san fairy* and *san fairy Anna*, from *ça ne fait rien*, itself colloquial for *cela n'a aucune importance!* it makes no matter!

Some of the adaptations of French were still more drastic, and were mildly amusing: for instance, the immortal warning given by a soldier in a farm billet, "Madame, madame! dulay promenade," which being interpreted meaneth, "the cow's got loose!"

13. *Miscellaneous words and phrases.* That is, such other terms as the present writer has been too lazy to classify: and anyway, thirteen groups are quite sufficient! Since its origin is probably Hindustani, *cushy* might well have been considered in group 1; but it is included here because it is not absolutely certain that it does not represent a shortening of *cushiony*, for its primary meaning is "comfortable" or "agreeable"; its secondary, "safe." For example, "This is a cushy sector," or "He has wangled a cushy job."

Wangle is a pre-War slang term, but it was originally confined to printers. Of dialect origin, it signified—and still signifies—"to procure goods or an advantage of some kind illicitly but without punishment, by the exercise of cunning, moral pressure, blackmail, or bribery. Almost everything could be wangled in the Army by certain people." C. E. Montague wrote one of his most acrid yet most entertaining stories on two officers who specialised in wangles on a large scale. *Asquith* was Tommy's name for a French match, for, during the War, French matches were slow of ignition; the jest was at the expense of that English statesman who popularised the phrase, *wait and see*. *Wonky*, defective, was an extension of the pre-War *wanky*, spurious or counterfeit; it was probably suggested by a dialect word meaning "weak."

Photo: A. J. Insall.

ON THE YPRES CANAL

Another photograph of the now dried-up Ypres-Comines waterway, showing, like others which we have reproduced, the notorious stretch in the vicinity of the Bluff. Here the latter—much lower than in war-time—appears in the distance on the left; in the foreground is Lock No. 8.

The Classical Touch

In *going over the top* (or *the lid* or, in a wet sector, *the plonk*) or *hopping the bags*, as leaving the comparative safety of the trench for the superlative hazards of No Man's Land was called, a man was likely to *cop a packet*, to be wounded (the *cop* being ultimately related to Latin *capire*, to take), or to *get his*; for, if his *number was up*, he was fated to *go West*, or die.

That most poetical and lastingly beautiful of all our military phrases arose in "the image of the sun setting in the west, the metaphor of the day there going to its death." It was enriched by the 17th-century signification, to travel westwards, as a condemned criminal, from Newgate to Tyburn, where stood the great gallows known as Tyburn Tree; and in the 19th century by the idea of gallant American pioneers journeying to the west. "And in the 20th century we have seen too many of our friends and our people meet their death like a gallant sun dipping over the western horizon that a better day might be born: westering to the dark that light might come."[1]

Defying classification, and much less

Photo: A. J. Insall.

ON THE ROAD TO BOESINGHE

This is a long-distance picture of Rose Cross-roads, on the way from Ypres to Boesinghe; the latter's railway station may be distinguished in the far distance. Boesinghe, sacked by the Germans in 1914, was afterwards for nearly four years the northern boundary of the British front.

[1] *Words, Words, Words!*

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beautiful than *to go West*, are the catchwords and catch-phrases that abounded in the Army. *Kitchener wants you*, from the most famous of the earlier posters—excepting always *remember Belgium* (" As if I could ever forget the —— place ! ")—meant " you're wanted for a job " that was either difficult or dangerous, or both. *Before you came* (or *come*) *up* was the usual retort of an old soldier to a new one, and it had many variations, some being drastically ribald.

Curse (or ——) *you, Jack*, I'M *all right !* expressed indifference to another's ill-luck ; *roll on, duration* expressed sympathy with one's own lot ; *a soldier's farewell* cannot be explained in decent company. *That's the stuff to give the troops !* denoted approval ; it became so hackneyed that novelty-seekers despairingly coined *that's the give to stuff 'em*, which actually caught on with the uniformed crowd. But for a full collection you must go to *Songs and Slang of the British Soldier*, in which, by the way, there appears some of the best of John Brophy's always distinguished writing.

Since the War

And what are the post-War fortunes of War slang words and phrases ? In September, 1920, Professor Ernest Weekley, most entertaining and instructive of all writers on words, said of the " neologisms due to the Great War " that " a certain number . . . may successfully resist that demobilisation of the war-words which is now actively proceeding." Some of the survivals have already been touched on in this article.

Now, it must be remarked that in the speech of the British soldier in 1914–18, the old civilian vocabulary " not merely subserves the demands of the new, but often it is so interwoven with the new that one has to relate the War-time word or phrase to the War itself : one has, in fact, to put oneself in the place of the soldiers. Otherwise, these domestic or vocational terms would mean only what they meant before the War : such slang has been the quickest to disappear from general speech. It is the War-mintings (new either in form or, far more often, in sense only) which have worn best ; many of them have become incorporated in the normal spoken language ; some few have even acquired rights of literary citizenship." [1]

Some of the War-slang words, then, may, like old soldiers, never die.

" Old soldiers never die,
Never die,
Never die ;
Old soldiers never die—
They simply fade away.

Old soldiers never die,
Never die,
Never die ;
Old soldiers never die—
Young ones wish they would."

But this wish is not, if we substitute " words " for " soldiers," shared by those of us who, however humbly, participated in that greatest experience which mankind has ever had : an experience that was not wholly evil, not wholly uninstructive, not always brutal, by no means always degrading.

1 *Words, Words, Words !*

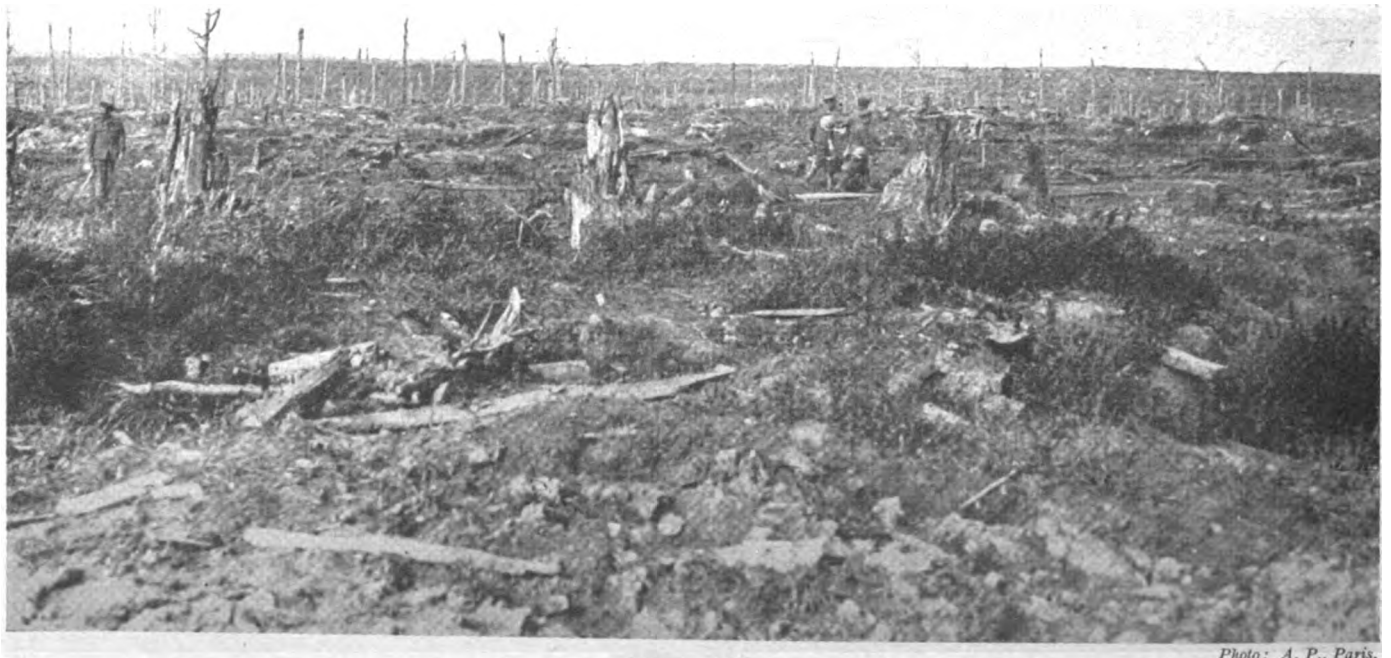

Photo : A. P., Paris.

HOOGE WOOD

Or rather, as the French caption on the back of the original photograph succinctly puts it, " what remains of Hooge Wood." The importance of Hooge, and one of the reasons why it was the scene of such fierce and prolonged fighting in 1915, was that it stands on a low ridge of about 160-feet altitude. The wood, of whose remnants this picture was taken on October 1st, 1918, extended north and east of the village.

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Photo: A. J. Insall.

WHERE HOOGE WOOD GROWS NO MORE

As may be seen, there are now scarcely any trees, even young saplings, on the land once covered by Hooge Wood; for the youthful thicket in the background of the present photograph is the western end of Inverness Copse. The severe enemy attacks of June, 1916, having resulted in the wresting of Hooge from the Canadians, it remained in German hands until recaptured by us on July 31st, 1917. In the Lys offensive of 1918, the Germans once more gained possession of the ruins by driving back troops of our 49th and 6th Divisions on April 15th.

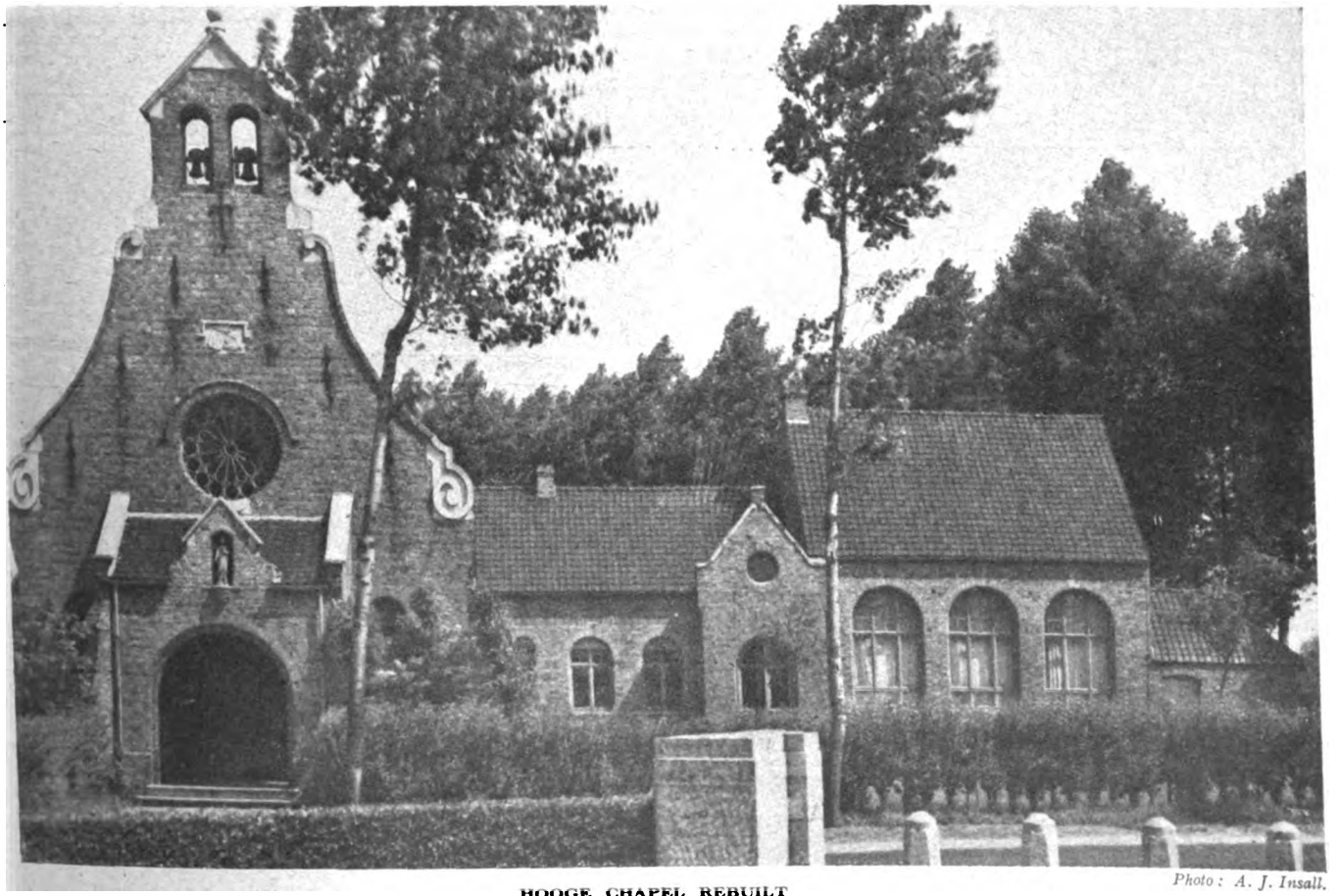

Photo: A. J. Insall.

HOOGE CHAPEL REBUILT

Like most of the village, the chapel stands alongside the Menin Road, which here runs between it and the camera. The locality is to be remembered for, amongst other things: (1) the first German use of liquid fire on July 30th, 1915; (2) on August 9th following, the first British trial of steel helmets; (3) also on August 9th, 1915, the first experimental attempt to employ portable wireless communication between divisional and brigade Headquarters.

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Specially drawn.

OVERSEAS BADGES—SECOND SERIES

Beginning at the top, and passing from left to right, the badges signify: 1—11th Canadian Bn. 2—13th Bn. Royal Highlanders of Canada. 3—14th Bn. Royal Montreal Regt. 4—15th Bn. 48th Highlanders. 5—16th Bn. Canadian Scottish. 6—17th Bn. Seaforth Highlanders of Canada. 7—22nd Bn. French-Canadians. 8—23rd Bn. Montreal. 9—25th Bn. Nova Scotia Rifles. 10—27th Bn. City of Winnipeg. 11—31st Bn. Alberta. 12—41st Bn. French-Canadians. 13—43rd Bn. Cameron Highlanders of Canada. 14—44th Canadian Bn. 15—45th Bn. Manitoba. 16—49th Bn. Edmonton Regt. 17—65th Bn. Saskatchewan. 18—67th Bn. Canadian Pioneers (Western Scots). 19—69th Canadian Bn. 20—72nd Bn. Seaforth Highlanders.

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CHAPTER IV

THE SAPPERS IN THE FORWARD AREAS

The services rendered by the Royal Engineers during the period of the Great War were of vital importance to the Army. The conflict had not proceeded more than a short distance upon its course when it began to become apparent that the opposing armies were to rely more and more, as time went on, upon the artillery and the engineers. The infantry, as usual, bore the heat and burden of the day, but without the protection afforded by the gunners and the services of the sappers, the men in the trenches would soon have been in parlous plight. The Royal Engineers performed prodigies of labour and of valour. They came but little into the limelight. It is fitting, therefore, that this very distinguished branch of the Service should have more than passing mention here.

THE work of the Royal Engineers, a *corps d'élite* to which many of the best brains in the Army have for long traditionally gravitated, has always been something of a mystery to their comrades of the less scientific arms. An old pre-war gibe declared that all sappers "were mad, married, or Methodist"; and during the period of trench warfare many a toiling working party, labouring and digging or erecting a wire entanglement, would make a bitter complaint that "this 'ere's sappers' work by rights, this is!"

Gallant, Skiful, and Hard-working

So perhaps some attempt to answer the question, "What did the Royal Engineers do in the Great War?" may be informative to many, as well as no more than justice to as gallant, skilful and hard-working a body of officers and men as ever our Army, or any other army, was fortunate enough to bear on its muster rolls.

In August, 1914, there were in the Corps of Royal Engineers 1,078 officers and 9,171 other ranks. These were organised into various specialised units, the bulk of them being field companies, in the ratio of two to each of the six field divisions of the Expeditionary Force.

In addition, there were field squadrons and troops for the cavalry, signal units of various sorts (inter-communication, now the duty of the post-War Royal Corps of Signals, was then an R.E. function), survey and railway troops, bridging trains, and printing and survey companies. Fortress and coast defence units, whose duties kept them at home throughout the War, also formed a large proportion of the peace-time establishment.

By the time of the Armistice, these units had been expanded to the following gigantic scale: 199 Field Companies, of which all but 40 were in France, 6 cavalry field units, 13 bridging units, 68 Army Troops Companies, 8 Electrical and Mechanical Companies, and 25 Tunnelling Companies. Besides these, there were a number of other specialised units, the nature and work of which cannot here be fully dealt with.

The largest category of these comprised the Transportation Services. These bodies alone, at the date of the Armistice, numbered close on 110,000 of all ranks, of whom, however, nearly half consisted of units raised in the Dominions or overseas. The total strength of the Royal Engineers at the end of the War, exclusive of transportation personnel, amounted to some 230,000 officers and men. The catalogue of units (by categories only) comprised in the corps at this date numbers 157, including such odd-sounding bodies as water-boring sections, foreway companies, war dog schools, G.H.Q. kennels (for messenger dogs), pigeon services, and forestry companies.

Duties too Manifold Even to Name

It would obviously be impossible, in the limited space available, to give even the briefest descriptions of the nature and duties of this vast host of small and highly skilled bodies of men. It must suffice to outline the work and achievements of some of the largest and most important of them, and to pass by the many others with apologies for the omission to do more than mention them, and an assurance that their value, and the skill and devotion to duty of those who served in them, are fully realised and appreciated.

The units which first proceeded overseas with the B.E.F. in August, 1914, found themselves from the first moment plunged into the heat of battle, nor were their members slow to show of what sterling stuff they were made.

On the first day of fighting, at Mons on August 23rd, they were set to work to destroy the bridges on the Mons-Condé canal to prevent their seizure by the advancing enemy. The task had to be carried out under heavy artillery and small-arms fire, and the losses were not light. Here the corps won its first Victoria Crosses—among the earliest won during the War, if not the very first of all. Captain T. Wright, 57th Field Coy., at Mariette, swung himself forward hand over hand under the bridge, despite heavy hostile fire, to connect the charges which were to fire the explosives laid to blow it up; and hard by, at Jemappes station, Lance-Corporal C. A. Jarvis, of the same unit, also gained the Cross by working for 1½ hours at the demolition, though fired on by the Germans all the time, and finally touching off the charges with his own hand.

From Mons southward, all along the route taken by the B.E.F. in its retreat, the way was marked by road and railway bridges blown up by the R.E. to delay the German pursuit. More than once, too, the sappers had to drop their tools, snatch up their rifles, and help to hold some critical section of a battle-line.

At Le Cateau the men of the 59th Field Coy. showed a fine spirit of comradeship by vacating the trenches they had dug for their own protection in favour of the survivors of a regiment which had been driven back with loss, and themselves lying down in the open. The last of the series of bridge demolitions occurred on September 3rd, on the line of the Marne.

Building Bridge after Bridge

Two days later the Allied counter-offensive had begun, and the sappers had to turn their hands to repeated tasks of bridge-building, to enable the B.E.F. to turn on its erstwhile pursuers, and to drive them back in their turn on the two Morins, the Marne and the Aisne.

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The R.E.s' most searching test came at the Battle of the Aisne. On September 13th and 14th, they were called on to throw five pontoon bridges and also to repair an existing damaged bridge and an aqueduct. During the ensuing period of stabilisation in this sector nine more bridges were completed, and three others, which had been too badly damaged for use, were effectively repaired.

" Nearly all the bridges were within known range of the German guns; most of them were constructed and, at different times, all of them repaired, under fire. The rise of the water necessitated constant changes and modifications of level; and the incessant rain made the task of keeping the approaches in order most difficult and trying. Yet the engineers contrived not only to maintain the bridges, but to make bridge-heads, and to prepare positions against the possibility of a retreat." [1]

When the B.E.F. went north to Flanders in October, the R.E. as bridge builders found little opportunity for plying their special craft except on the crossings of the River Lys south of Armentières. But in the crisis of the titanic struggle for Ypres, where every man who could handle a weapon had to be flung into our attenuated battle-line, they proved themselves time and again fighting men of the first order.

The 23rd Field Coy. at Gheluvelt on October 29th and at Zandvoorde on the 30th, the 26th Field Coy. at Gheluvelt on the 31st, and the 54th Field Coy. at Hermitage Château on the 30th, all had to be used to fill crucial gaps at critical moments.

[1] *Official History, France and Belgium*, 1914, i, p. 439.

The greatest feat of all occurred on November 11th, during the final German assault carried out by the world-famed Prussian Guard. The 5th Field Coy. took part in the final counter-attack which expelled the hitherto victorious attackers from Polygon Wood, and it is on record that five cooks and duty men of that unit, who had been left behind in camp, stormed and recaptured a cottage from which hostile advanced parties, having broken right through our defence, were picking off the gunners of our forward batteries at almost point-blank range.

Territorials and Kitchener's Men

The advent of the winter of 1914, and with it the establishment of trench warfare all along the front from Switzerland to the sea, meant more and more varied work for the Royal Engineers,

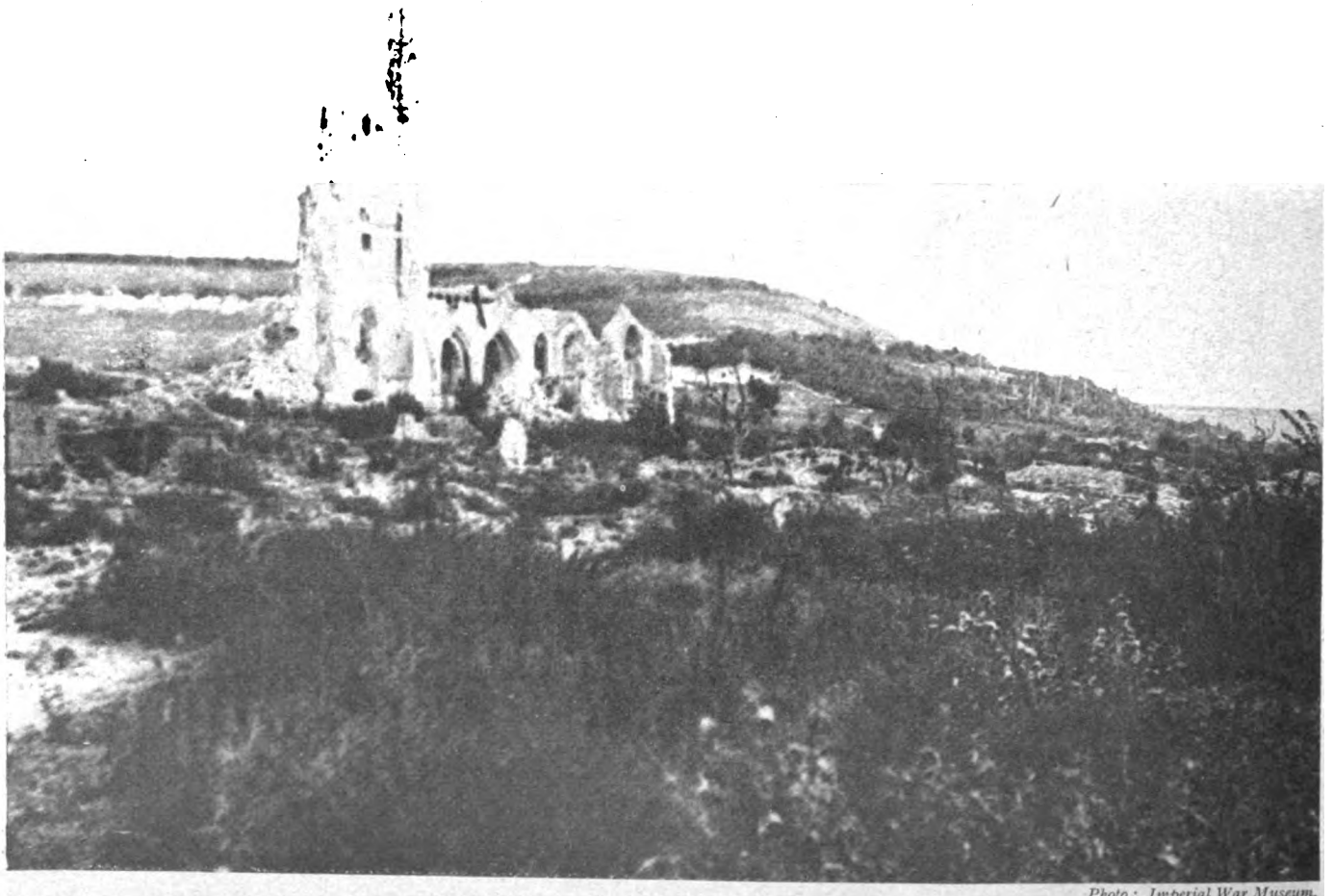

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

THE CHURCH OF ABLAIN-ST. NAZAIRE

The war history of Ablain-St. Nazaire belongs in great part to 1915. The village lies 12 km. north-north-west of Arras and 9 km. west-south-west of Lens, and during the earlier part of the year in question was at the head of a salient, about as big as the Ypres Salient, in the territory held by the Germans opposite the French Tenth Army. Our Allies made progress toward the place early in April, but it was not until their offensive known as the Battle of Artois, which began on May 5th, that they captured it, the enemy being driven out on May 28th.

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and a great and rapid expansion of the corps became inevitable. The Territorial Force units provided a welcome first reinforcement, and beside or behind these came the newly-raised units of the Kitchener Armies.

By August, 1915, a year after the outbreak of the War, the corps had more than quintupled itself, and it went on growing till by the summer of 1917 it had almost attained its peak figure—close on 300,000 men.[1] But not only did the number multiply; so in like manner did the variety and novelty of the tasks on which these troops were employed. Let us glance briefly at some of their duties, confining ourselves here to what was carried on in the Army forward areas in France. The back areas deserve, and will in due course receive, a chapter all to themselves.

One of the most important and vital of the responsibilities of the R.E. was concerned with forward communications. "The extent to which the success of operations is dependent upon the opening up and maintenance of communications is probably not fully realised, except by those upon whom the responsibility of this service has rested; no more than are the difficulties that had to be overcome during at least the first two years of the Great War."[1]

To make a damaged road fit for use, for instance, there were required raw material, obtained either by purchase or by direct labour (which meant labour for quarrying and transport to remove the products), rail transit by train or truck (with more labour for loading and unloading), a rail-head (with yet more labour to construct and work it), means for distributing material at points required, tools for repair work, and labour (once more) for carrying out the repairs.

During the first eighteen months of the

[1] This total is inclusive of transportation units.

Photo: G. T. Watson.

POST-WAR

The grandiose new church of Ablain-St. Nazaire stands a full kilometre from the ruins of the old, and is in the centre of the rebuilt village. Notice the clockless tower—incomplete through lack of funds.

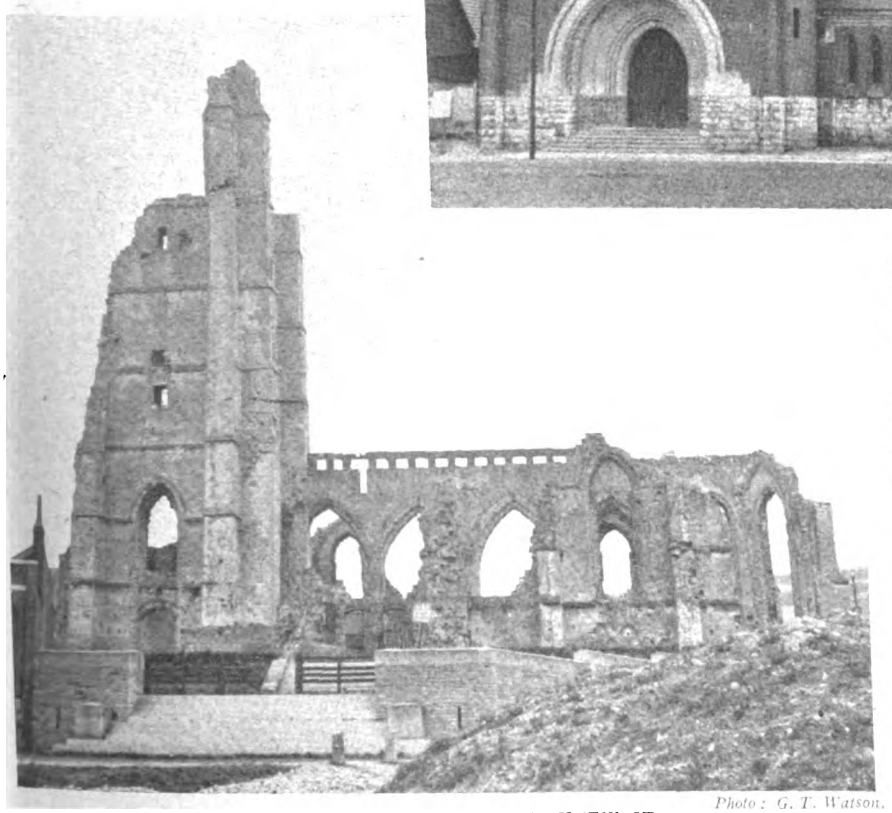

Photo: G. T. Watson.

STILL AS THE BRITISH TOMMY KNEW IT

The old church, on the outskirts of the village, has been left exactly as the Armistice found it, and makes interesting comparison with the war-time photograph opposite, which was taken on August 26th, 1917. A flight of steps now leads up to the ruins, whose preservation is due to the desire to make of them an impressive monument. The spire seen through the centre window is that of the memorial on the ridge of Notre Dame de Lorette.

[1] *Work of R.E. in the European War*, 1914–19, Miscellaneous, p. 185.

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Photo: A. P., Paris.

BETWEEN RENINGHELST AND WESTOUTRE

The road connecting these two villages, and leading beyond Westoutre to Locre and the high ground west of Kemmel, must be remembered by more than the average number of our readers. The route is not, in peace-time, a main one, and even this desolate scene wears a certain air of country seclusion. The date of the photograph is June 12th, 1918.

War local resources of men and material just sufficed for our needs, but with the coming of the period of the great offensives in 1916 these began to fail, and there grew up a series of specialised departments—Railways, Roads, Labour, and Engineer Stores—which by the end of the struggle had absorbed huge quantities of personnel and equipment.

Laying Miles of Tracks

In areas such as Flanders, troops could normally move across country only on roads or tracks; and as the former deteriorated under heavy pressure of traffic and the effects of hostile fire, reliance had to be placed more and more on the latter. Miles and miles of duckboard tracks had to be laid and maintained; often there were up-and-down roads, for the average track was only broad enough to take men in single file; and where double tracks were impossible, passing-places at frequent intervals had to be provided.

In the worst places, the boards had to be raised on causeways; and to save wear and prevent men slipping off them on either side—where, if not rescued, they might easily drown in water-logged shell holes—the boards were, where possible, faced with wire netting. The maintenance of these tracks in heavily shelled areas was a highly unpleasant and dangerous task; but with this, as with everything else they undertook, the sappers never failed to cope with the utmost cheerfulness and efficiency.

Even more difficult to provide for satisfactorily were the pack animals, on which for weeks together the whole supply of ammunition to the guns and of food, water, A.A., and stores to the forward infantry in the battle-swept area, depended. Mules were a source of infinite trouble—their small feet afforded them little foothold, and, as has been unkindly said, "their intelligence seemed to be as small as their feet, and they had an unequalled knack of slipping into inextricable places."

Fascines, hurdles, corduroy tracks, and wooden slabs on runners were among the devices tried for pack roads. Where the country was less waterlogged, cross-country tracks for horse transport were provided by the side of metalled roads; and the work entailed in filling-in trenches, making gaps through wire, forming ramps on and off the roads, and marking the tracks for use at night, was considerable. Similar tasks had to be carried out where special tracks were made to allow of the advance of cavalry.

Existing metalled roads, whether of the ordinary type or of the vile *pavé*, of which everyone who served in France has such vivid and unpleasant recollections, had also to be kept in constant repair. All the roads in France and Belgium had very slight foundations, so that any damage to the surface had far-

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reaching and disastrous effects; huge holes, in which a lorry could easily become embedded up to well above its axles, would appear in an astonishingly short space of time after a heavy rainstorm.

Roads which Suddenly Vanished

On the Somme in 1916 a few hours of rain would cause roads, which in fine weather had looked equal to any amount of traffic, suddenly to disappear completely under the severe and constant pressure to which it was necessary to subject them if the forward troops were to be kept supplied.

Road metal was always a source of anxiety. Stone trains had to be sandwiched in, as and when possible, amid the constant flow of supply, ammunition, and troop trains, and had to be unloaded at a few widely scattered railheads, their contents being distributed by lorry to the places where they were required. So difficult was the whole process that it was often questioned whether the stone carried on these lorries did more than repair the damage to the road caused by the passage of the vehicles themselves.

There was, too, a serious shortage of road-repairing equipment, and it was not till the system grew up of allotting labour units permanently to certain stretches of road, for the maintenance of which they had entire responsibility, that efficiency and continuity of work could be secured.

During the pursuit of the Germans in their retirement to the Hindenburg line in the spring of 1917, the task of repairing the damaged roads which they left behind them, of filling in or bridging craters, and of maintaining the roads in passable condition, was particularly onerous. One division during this period had to deal with close on fifty such craters, and to put and keep in repair 35 miles of road at one time.

The Passchendaele operations, too, strained the road resources of the R.E. almost to breaking-point. Fortunately, early in 1917, large supplies of timber, and transport enough to deal with them, became available, and new plank roads, broad and substantial enough to take wheeled transport, were laid throughout the forward area.

Very heavy casualties were suffered by the R.E. and other units concerned with making and maintaining these roads, for they afforded obvious and admirable targets for enemy artillery; but there was no help for it, for everywhere except along these routes the whole country, which soon became a bottomless swamp, was quite impassable during the later period of this unhappy battle.

Photo: A. J. Insall.

PEACEFUL AND LITTLE-FREQUENTED

Even country lanes in this part of the world are not immune from the ubiquitous *pavé* surface, and this exceedingly rural byway might to all intents and purposes be on the outskirts of a large town. Reninghelst will probably be recollected best by men who served with transport and remount units, but both it and Westoutre are the site of British cemeteries, to the extent of two apiece.

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100,000 Slats to Advance a Few Miles

Much the same trouble was met with a year later, when the Second Army, in its advance in September and October, 1918, had to use 100,000 road slats, as well as quantities of road metal and gravel, to get the troops up to and over the Passchendaele Ridge, west of which there were literally no usable roads at all.

In addition to road maintenance, construction, and reconstruction, the R.E. had to cope, in 1916 particularly, with the provision of rail-heads. Separate rail-heads were usually required for ammunition, supplies, and stores. Large metalled unloading areas, each of which needed the huge amount of 10,000 tons of material, had to be laid out at all of these; and only later in the War was it possible to provide timber as a substitute for the metal.

Another sphere of intense activity during the trench warfare period was the building of trench tramways and light railways, combined under the technical term of "foreways." The full extent of this work may be realised when it is learnt that in January, 1918, there were in the whole area of the B.E.F. over 300 miles of tramway and light railway track in operation, handling over 3,000 tons daily, and that more than 8,000 men were employed in running and maintaining these foreways.

The system grew up rather haphazardly, and not until the First Battle of the Somme was any attempt made to control the lay-out of the lines in a regular system. At the Battle of Messines a series of lines were run forward into enemy territory very quickly after its capture, and this method was even more widely used at Passchendaele, generally for the use of the heavy artillery.

In the first five weeks of the operations no less than eighteen miles of track were laid, over which some 20,000 tons of shells were pushed forward, all by hand, to the battery positions. Immediately after the new British line became stabilised at the termination of the German March offensive in 1918, an immense amount of work was put into the reconstruction and operation of foreway systems; but in the following summer all duties of this nature passed from the sphere of the R.E. to those of the Light Railways Department of the transportation organisation.

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

A SIGNAL STATION
This photograph shows a Royal Engineers' signal exchange in operation in a captured German dug-out underneath the Château de Fricourt, due east of Albert, during September, 1916.

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

PILL-BOX TURNED CALL-BOX
An R.E. establishing telephone communication at an old German machine-gun emplacement near Zuydschoote, August 17th, 1917. This hamlet, of which "Then and Now" photographs appeared on page 41, lies 6 km. directly west of Langemarck, which had been captured by us on the 16th. It was just before this date that pill-boxes were first encountered in Flanders.

Manufacturing Rolling-stock

It must be remembered in this connection that for the greater part of the War all the tramway rolling-stock and equipment had to be manufactured locally in R.E. workshops. 60-cm., mono-rail, and timber-raft track, and "mule walks," portable ropeway gears, two types of tractors, and several types of trucks, were among the principal items of equipment thus turned out by the ingenuity and skill of our accomplished R.E. personnel. At the time of the handing-over of the service in the summer of 1918, there were ten Foreway Companies at work on the Western Front.

By these and other means the heavy tasks of the trench garrisons and of the

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fighting troops all along our front were as materially lightened and facilitated as was possible under the exacting conditions of warfare then prevailing. These tasks were in their very nature onerous, painful, and costly in effort and casualties; but they would have been far more so if the infantry had possessed no marked tracks or roads on which to move when going up or down from the line; if working parties, carrying parties, and

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

POP GOES THE WEASEL
Demolition work by the R.E. on the Somme at Brie on March 25th, 1917, during the German withdrawal to the Hindenburg Line. A charge is seen exploding in the water.

animals had had to move across country; if lorry and horse transport had been hampered by a shortage of good roads and cross-country tracks; or if there had been no tramways or light railways to facilitate supply to the forward zone of the multifarious things its occupants required. That none of these inconveniences and perils ever occurred in any avoidable measure was due in the main to our Royal Engineers.

Another phase of warfare demanded the attention of the Royal Engineers from almost the first to the last day of the War: the question of water supply. "The adequate supply of water is of paramount importance in every phase of warfare. Men can fight and continue to fight, in spite of a shortage of ammunition; for considerable periods both men and animals can subsist for several days on a minimum supply of food; but both men and animals will break down in a few hours, and lose their spirit, condition, and power of resistance, unless they can obtain water in sufficient quantities, and of the necessary purity." [1]

Remarkable Water Organisation

At the outbreak of the War the B.E.F. was equipped for the supply of water to men and horses only in small quantities from supplies available on or just below ground surfaces. By the end of the conflict the organisation had been so widely developed and improved that "concentrations of unexampled density . . . could be successfully undertaken at short notice in any areas, and at the points most desirable for strategical and tactical reasons, without reference to the presence of water at or near the surface." [1]

It was realised as soon as the line became stabilised, at the end of 1914, that the existing organisation would not suffice, especially in view of the steady increase in the size of the B.E.F. with the arrival of Territorials and New Army formations; and though the men in the line that rain-soaked winter may well have felt that anxiety as to shortage of water was somewhat misplaced, a far more extensive and flexible system was devised and put into existence forthwith.

A minimum was laid down for men and animals, and this was to be distributed either by means of regimental water-carts, or by water sections attached to supply columns, and comprising lorries fitted with tanks and other vehicles fitted with purification plant. A number of large-capacity storage-barge units, each equipped with six barges, were also raised to ply on the water-

1 *Work of R.E. in the European War, 1914–19.* "Water Supply, France," p. 13.

1 *Op. cit.*, p. 13.

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

ON THE SOMME AT PÉRONNE
Troops admiring (we hope) a newly-constructed pontoon-bridge across the Somme close to Péronne during March, 1917. This was an era productive of much bridge-building, yet it pales into insignificance when compared with the War's final months, when the total number of structures erected, including large and small, temporary and more-or-less permanent, ran into thousands.

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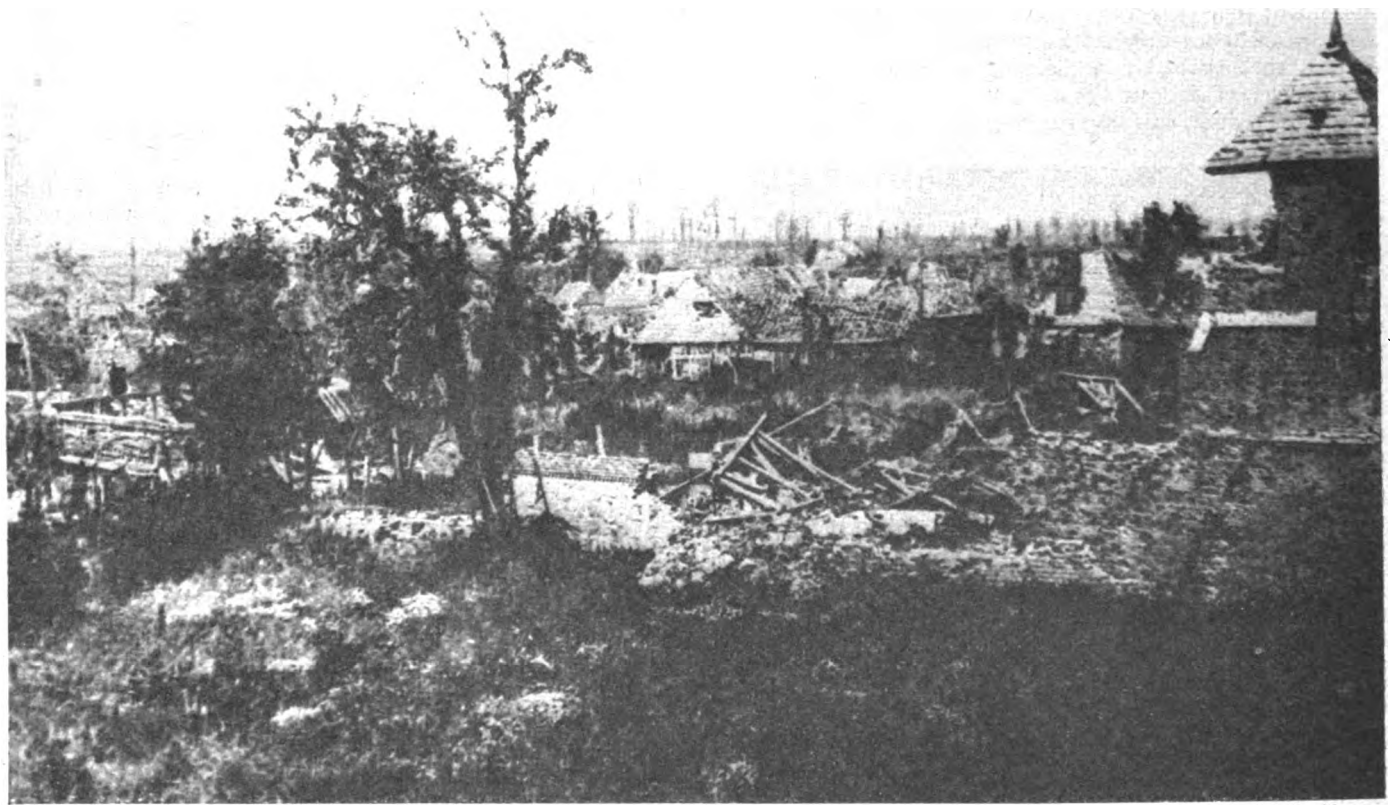

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

THE VILLAGE OF MISERY

The possibilities offered by this singularly apt name have already been exhausted in the captions to the photographs of Miséry church which appeared on pages 1344 and 1345, and the same may be said of the village's meagre War history. Miséry was amongst the many dozen towns, villages, and hamlets vacated by the enemy during the early months of 1917. This photograph dates from the following summer.

ways of Flanders; the first barge unit reached the theatre of war in December 1915, and five others were at work before the end of 1916.

Later, Water Tank Companies, each provided with vehicles of a carrying capacity of 90,000 gallons of water, and capable of sterilising 30,000 gallons per hour, were sent to France in the proportion of one to each Army; these, however, were A.S.C. and not R.E. units. Early in 1916 provision had to be made for power-driven pumping, as it had become clear that in the chalk country in which the Somme operations were to take place, surface water would be quite inadequate for the needs of so large a concentration of men and animals.

Power pumps and pipe-lines were therefore installed all over the assembly area, and provision made for carrying these pipe-lines forward as soon as possible into any ground captured. Water points supplied by Water Tank Companies were established near the forward trench system, and the number of regimental water-carts was increased.

The installation and working of pumping plants, pipe-lines, reservoirs, and distribution systems was entrusted to R.E. Army Troop Companies (of which there were at this time 36 with the B.E.F.) assisted in the forward areas by the Field Companies of divisions.

Miles of Mains

Before the Somme operations began no fewer than 100 power pumps had been installed and 120 miles of water mains laid down. The maintenance of these, and the necessary extensions to keep pace with our advance, threw so great a strain on these units that the duty eventually had to be taken over by specially recruited men formed into Electrical and Mechanical Companies, R.E.; the first of these, however, was not raised until December, 1916.

Eventually there were seven of them at work in France and Flanders. Their efforts were supplemented by those of five Water Boring Companies, the sections of which sometimes worked independently, and sometimes were attached to the Electrical and Mechanical Companies.

Later it was found necessary to provide an advisory geologist to prepare maps showing all existing or likely water supply resources. It seems a pity, if only for picturesque reasons, that no one thought of raising units of water diviners; to have been asked for a return of men qualified for this duty—provided the request did not arise, as so many such did, in the heat of a battle—would certainly have added something to the lighter side of the War!

All things considered, the most serious problem to be dealt with by the water supply service was the supply for animals. Regimental water-carts, if refilled at fairly frequent intervals, could distribute to the personnel what they wanted in the way of water; but horses and mules were more insatiable.

During the trench-warfare period,

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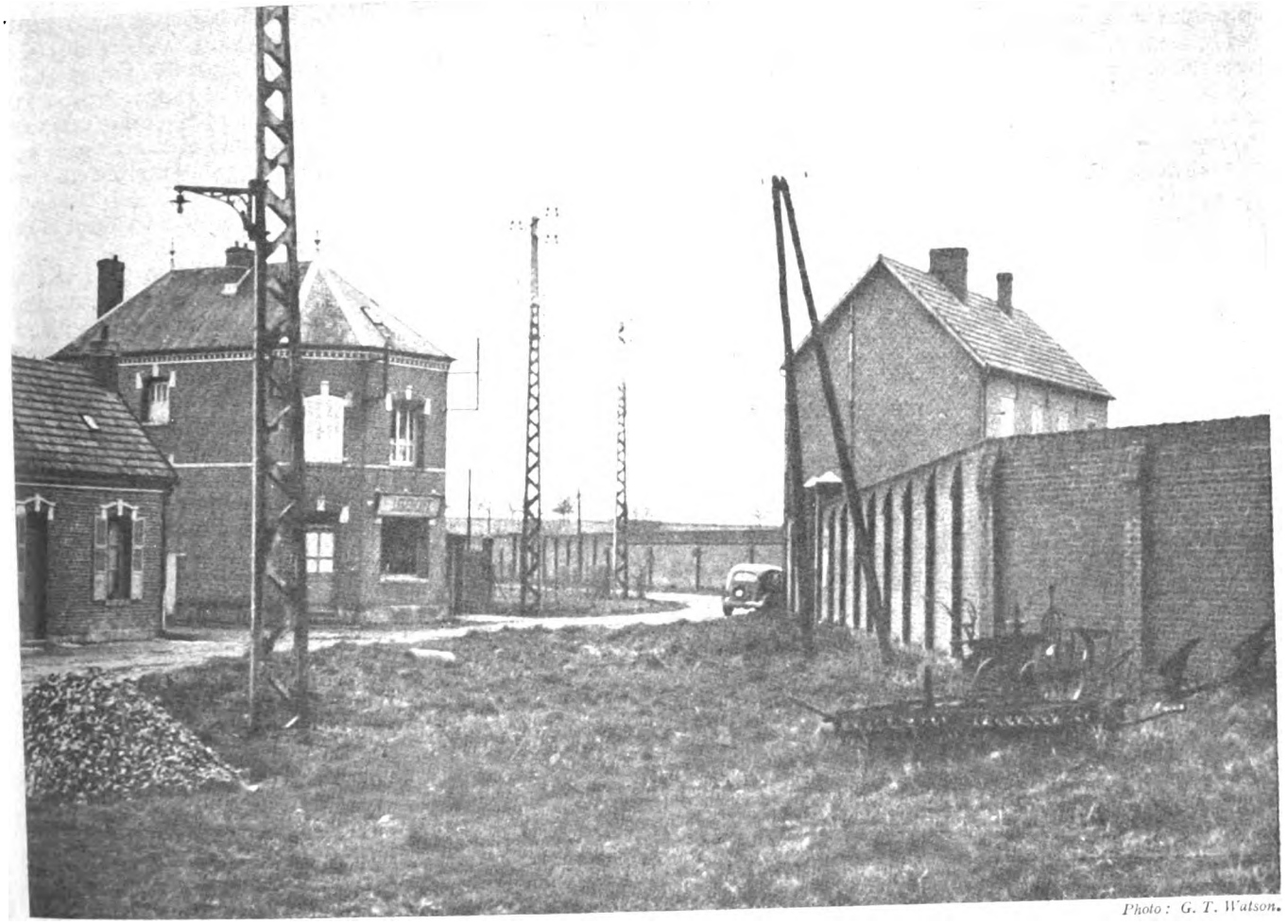

Photo: G. T. Watson.

A HAMLET WIDELY SCATTERED

Miséry to-day is, for some obscure reason, no longer the fairly compact hamlet of pre-War days, but straggles across the Somme countryside in such a manner that our photographer declares the above to be the sole view of "clustered" houses which he could find. The commune, indeed, contains only 148 inhabitants altogether. Airmen may recall the place, for in the early summer of 1917 the IV Brigade R.F.C. had its Headquarters here before moving north.

water points, situated near important roads or cross-country tracks, had to be erected on a lavish scale. Canvas tanks, tarpaulin, sailcloth covers, and sometimes, in more permanent installations, pressed steel-plate tanks, served as storage reservoirs.

Horse troughs, with standings and guard rails, were fed by mains from these reservoirs, and were usually provided on a length sufficient to allow, with good discipline and traffic control, 2,000 animals per hour to be watered. Lorry and water-cart stand-pipes were erected as and where necessary, and local trench filling-points, consisting usually of 200-gallon tanks or, where there was no pipe available to fill tanks, of a dump of 2-gallon tins, were also found most useful. Chlorination of drinking water—what pungent recollections that phrase recalls!—was carried out at these points by means of special tanks. Regimental water-carts chlorinated their own water.

What Chlorinated Water Achieved

This chlorinating, though it did not improve the flavour of the beverage, still less the tea made from it, was necessary for the massacre of any lurking bacteria; sediment had also to be disposed of by means of alum and bleaching powder. Whatever the result on the human palate, these careful precautions for purifying water had at least the good effect that the deadly epidemics of typhoid and enteric, which in the past history of the British Army, even as short a while ago as the Boer War, had taken a heavy toll of its ranks, were entirely avoided in the Great War.

How gigantic this water question became in the later stages of the fighting in the West is perhaps insufficiently realised, save by the comparatively few who had personal experience of the problem. During the fighting on the Somme in 1916, each corps was found to require 200,000 gallons daily, and water had to be provided for 300,000 men and 150,000 horses at the height of the battle. This meant pumping 1,250,000 gallons daily, and carrying over 100,000 gallons up to the forward zone by road. Over 500 lorries and 300 horse-drawn vehicles had to be employed for this purpose.

The following winter months, with the severe cold of January and February, 1917, when the thermometer on several nights fell to within a few degrees of zero and sometimes below it, caused great anxiety and trouble in the shape of burst pipes and strain on pumps and water storage plants. The German retirement to the Hindenburg Line led our troops forward over an area where surface water supply was unusually scanty, and all wells had of course been systematically blocked or destroyed by the enemy as he passed by them.

These had to be found and opened up as quickly as possible by the Field Companies of our leading divisions, and only when the Corps and Army troops

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arrived was it possible to explore for and open up new water resources by boring and pumping. Before long a very large number of new local water points had been made—so many that to work them all became too heavy a strain on the few technical units available. Many were therefore linked up by pipe-lines, and pumping was centralised. Some of the points in the back areas were, indeed, abandoned entirely.

Water for Arras and Messines

The water requirements for the Battle of Arras, though they involved the erection of close on 60 new pumping stations, with a capacity of 155,000 gallons per hour, for the Vimy ridge sector alone, afforded no very severe test for the water supply service ; nor did those for the Battle of Messines, for which the existing storage facilities in the Zillebeke and Dickebusch Lakes and the moat at Ypres were supplemented by new reservoirs in the hills about Kemmel.

From these sources it was easy to supply the 250,000 gallons a day required by the Second Army for the battle period, and to leave an ample reserve in hand. For the Passchendaele battle a number of shallow wells were dug for horse-watering purposes ; five of the existing pipe-lines were earmarked to be pushed forward after the advance had begun, and 40 miles of additional piping were laid down.

It was never possible, throughout the fighting, to get nearer than three miles to the front line with pipes or water-cart points ; forward of that all water had to be sent forward by road or duck-board track—and a most laborious and costly job it was, as all who took part in the battle will well realise.

As a result of the German advances in the spring of 1918, an enormous amount of new work on water supply became necessary. The construction in one Army area alone included 58 new pumping stations, 36 bore holes, 60 water-cart points, 4,000 feet of horse troughing, and 35 miles of pipe mains. The extensive moves of Casualty Clearing Stations, many of which had remained *in situ* for years, also added to the difficulties, and new supplies and storage had also to be provided for the new rear defence lines in case of further retirement.

When the Allied advance began in August, many of our former water points in the reconquered areas were found intact or requiring only minor repairs ; the pipe-lines, too, were quickly mended. But in the later stages great difficulties were encountered ; large quantities of water had to be carried either by railway or on specially fitted lorries and G.S. waggons. Some lorries were equipped with compressor plants, and worked at old bore-holes ; but this was only a palliative measure, and during the last four months of the War, it has been reckoned, some twenty million gallons of water had to be carried forward for the Army's needs by road transport on the southern part of the front alone. In the north there were more ample supplies, and purification was the main problem.

Photo : Imperial War Museum.

FELL WORK

A novel method of tree-felling: an R.E. officer fixes an explosive charge to the base of the trunk in such a manner that the tree will fall across a road. This photograph was taken near Roye on March 27th, 1918. During the desperate fortnight of the Retreat the Royal Engineers divided their time between their regular tasks, such as this, and fighting beside the infantry in the line. It should not be forgotten that they formed the bulk of " Carey's Force."

Repairs in Shattered Towns

Here, too, the R.E. had to face the difficulties of repairing the local water works and supply systems of the reoccupied towns and cities, most of which had been badly damaged by the Germans before their retirement—sometimes so seriously that it was found quicker and cheaper to open up new sources of supply altogether.

With this, as with every other task with which they were faced, the R.E. officers and units concerned managed to cope effectively. The story of their efforts from 1914 to 1918 is hardly known at all to the average soldier for whom they so unobtrusively and efficiently catered. Yet it does not deserve to be so neglected or forgotten.

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Specially drawn.

OVERSEAS BADGES—THIRD SERIES

From left to right, row by row from the top, the badges represent: 1—78th Bn. Winnipeg Grenadiers. 2—85th Bn. Nova Scotia Highlanders. 3—87th Bn. Canadian Grenadier Guards. 4—96th Bn. Canadian Highlanders. 5—97th Bn. "American Legion." 6—102nd Bn. North British Columbians. 7—104th Bn. Jewish Draft. 8—105th Bn. Prince Edward Island Highlanders. 9—107th Bn. Winnipeg. 10—108th Bn. Selkirk and Manitoba. 11—111th Bn. South Waterloo. 12—112th Bn. Nova Scotia. 13—114th Bn. Haldimand (Brock's Rangers). 14—117th Bn. Eastern Townships. 15—128th Bn. Moose Jaw, Saskatchewan. 16—150th Bn. Carabiniers Mont-Royal. 17—158th Bn. Duke of Connaught's Own (British Columbia). 18—163rd Bn. French-Canadians. 19—165th Bn. Arcadiens. 20—167th Bn. French-Canadians.

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Photo: Imperial War Museum.

WIRING A ROAD

Royal Engineers engaged in wiring a road near St. Floris on May 2nd, 1918, during the German offensive in Flanders. This moderate-sized village on the south bank of the Lys, 6 km. west-south-west of Merville, remained just outside the limit of the advance.

Meanwhile, as the routine of trench warfare gave place to periods of offensive action, the Royal Engineers had numberless opportunities for showing that they were fighting men as well as skilled technical craftsmen. From Neuve Chapelle onwards, parties of R.E. drawn from the field companies of the assaulting division accompanied or followed the first waves of troops, and were charged with the tasks of breaking through or throwing up wire entanglements or other obstacles, improving or cutting communication-trenches from our own front lines to those to be taken, and preparing the newly seized positions for defence against the inevitable German counter-attacks.

Thankless and toilsome jobs these always were, and on frequent occasions very costly in casualties to skilled and experienced men whose valuable services could ill be spared. In more than one such attack the sapper parties were decimated—sometimes, as in one or two of our disastrous assaults at Festubert and at Loos, they were wiped out to a man. At Hill 70, in front of Loos, the 73rd Field Company, advancing in conjunction with the 15th Division, lost five out of the six officers who led it forward; the sixth, Second-Lieutenant F. H. Johnson, though wounded, showed such cool courage and so splendid an example in organising the defence of a captured German redoubt, and leading in person several charges to retake it after it had again been lost, that he was deservedly awarded the Victoria Cross.

Again, in September, 1915, the second attack of the 3rd Division at Hooge was led by sections of the 56th and 1/1st Chesshire Field Companies, who thrust Bangalore torpedoes filled with guncotton into the German wire, and fired them to clear a path for the following infantry.

R.E.'s Annihilated in the Line

In May, 1916, when the Germans had swept our troops from their trenches on Vimy Ridge by a surprise attack in force, a battalion of the 2nd Division counter-attacked in conjunction with a section of the 226th Field Company. The greater part of the attacking force, and the whole of the R.E. party, were completely annihilated after a heroic but hopeless effort to get forward and fulfil their mission. Incidents such as these, which are but samples of many similar ones, show how fully, when they were called upon to do so, the sappers shared in the risks and achievements of their infantry comrades.

During the critical days of the German offensive in March and April, 1918, the field companies and many another R.E. unit that became involved in the incoming tide of battle, readily abandoned the tool and the spade for the rifle and bayonet, and gave an admirable account of themselves.

On March 23rd "a particularly fine rearguard action," to use the phrase of the *Official History*,[1] was fought by the 157th Field Company and the 11th Hampshires (Pioneers) in a most important position around Doingt, thanks to which resistance the 16th Division was

1 *France and Belgium*, 1918, i, p. 359.

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

PIPE-LAYING

A water-pipe being laid over a German trench in Wytschaete Wood on June 10th, 1917. The wood, which lies on the west side of the hamlet, was the scene of severe fighting in 1914, 1917, and 1918. The enemy's defences about Wytschaete had been stormed three days before the date of this photograph.

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Photo: Imperial War Museum.

CONSTRUCTING A RESERVE LINE

A photograph taken on February 18th, 1918, at Wieltje, north-east of Ypres. The sappers are erecting the steel supports outside an "elephant" iron shelter before covering it with concrete. Notice the entrance-framework already in place.

enabled to effect its retreat in safety through the bottle-neck of Péronne and across the Somme bridges there.

Two days later the 2nd Field Coy., after holding out all day on the Somme line south of Péronne, in conjunction with two battalions of the 9th Division, found the enemy in occupation of the village of Miséry, right athwart their line of retreat. But, far from being dismayed, they charged the intruders with the bayonet so swiftly and vigorously that the Germans fled in panic, and the engineers won through with very slight loss and made their way back to our lines.

On the same day, further to the north, in the Third Army area, two Field Companies, the 78th and 93rd, formed the backbone of an extemporised unit known as Cubbon's Composite Brigade, which held firmly and securely a vital link in our attenuated line about Fricourt between the V and VII Corps. In this situation it remained fighting gallantly, later retiring slowly and stubbornly until the stabilisation of the line on the Ancre.

Engineers the Bulk of "Carey's Force"

On the 26th the "scratch" detachment known to history as "Carey's Force" was collected to man the last defences in front of the vital town of Amiens. Of the units comprising this force the greater part were engineers—the 144th, 213th, 216th, and 217th Army Troops Coys., the 353rd Electrical and Mechanical Coy., part of the Fifth Army Field Survey Coy., the 4th Workshop Coy., the 253rd Tunnelling Coy., and the Fifth Army Signals Coy., not forgetting 500 men of the 6th United States Railway Engineers.

These 3,000 men, with 92 machine guns, held their place in the line for ten days, and without their presence and the gallant service they rendered, the last German onslaughts would almost inevitably have penetrated to Amiens and thrust a wedge between the B.E.F. and the French, with incalculable but certainly disastrous results.

During the whole course of these operations the services of the R.E. were continually in demand for the blowing up of bridges and the carrying out of other demolitions to hinder the pursuit of the rapidly advancing Germans. One particularly gallant action at Tugny won the Victoria Cross for 2nd-Lieutenant C. L. Knox, of the 150th Field Coy. A steel girder bridge here had been prepared for destruction, but at the critical juncture, when the foremost enemy infantry were actually on the structure, the time-fuse set to fire the charge failed to act.

The young officer tore away the fuse and clambered under the bridge, though knowing well that almost certain death awaited him if he successfully managed to light the instantaneous fuse, as he intended. He lit it; the bridge was shattered into fragments; but he himself, by a well-merited but amazing miracle, escaped injury. Of all the many Victoria Crosses won during the Great War, few, if any, were better deserved than this.

It is time to pass now to some of the

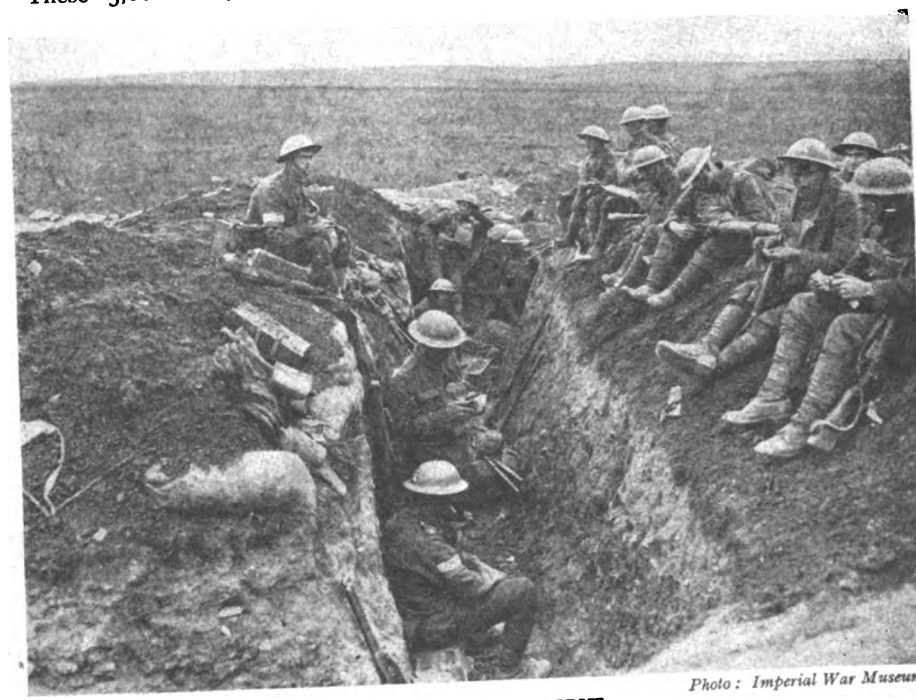

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

COCKNEYS IN RESERVE

Infantry and R.E. of the 58th (London) Division in reserve on August 9th, 1918, after the division's capture of the Chipilly Spur. Chipilly is situated on the north bank of the Somme 6 km. south-west of Bray. The Germans, who had gained the village on March 27th, 1918, put up a fierce defence on August 9th.

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more specialised R.E. fighting branches. It will be remembered that the gas warfare units were from their first institution in the summer of 1915 officered and manned by personnel of the Royal Engineers; but the whole subject of gas is being dealt with elsewhere. We must, however, devote a few paragraphs to another special branch—the Tunnelling Companies.

Tunnelling Companies

These were first formed early in 1915—some months after the enemy had taken the lead in underground warfare—and in little over fifteen months the B.E.F. had 25 British and 7 overseas Tunnelling Companies, in all some 25,000 men, actively engaged in mining operations. The officers were for the most part qualified mining engineers, and the rank and file were specially selected and drew extra-high rates of pay.

The high-water-mark period of mining activity extended from the spring of 1915 to the late summer of 1917. During the first part of this era the activities of the Tunnelling Companies were somewhat sporadic and uncoordinated; but several notable exploits were achieved.

The first action in which mines played a leading rôle was that at Hill 60, in the Ypres Salient, in April, 1915. It took over a month to drive the 300-foot gallery and prepare the mine for blowing, and a total of 5,200 lbs. of gun-cotton were used to fire it.

Just over two years later, a total of eighteen mines, containing in all nearly a million tons of explosive, were simultaneously fired as the first act in the Battle of Messines.

The difference in scale of these two undertakings affords a good illustration of the progress made in military mining work during the two years. Throughout the whole of the period, underground activity on both sides was widespread and intense, and the Cuinchy area in the early summer of 1915, the Hohenzollern Redoubt and its vicinity after the Battle of Loos, and again in May, 1916, and the St. Eloi area in March, 1916, soon became a mass of mine craters.

1,669 Mines in Two Years

A good deal of mining work was done for the initial phase of the first Somme battle. Just before zero hour on July 1st, 1916, nine mines were fired, one in front of Beaumont-Hamel, three at La Boisselle, three in the Fricourt-Mametz area, and one at Carnoy—all with excellent effects. During the latter half of 1916 and the early months of 1917 underground activity was as incessant as ever, and during these two

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

HOPELESS HOUPLINES

Two officers of the 13th Batt. Welsh Regiment, 38th Division, walking through the desolate ruins of this village on March 13th, 1918. Houplines, a dull north-eastern suburb of Armentières, stands on the very brink of France, the Franco-Belgian frontier passing within 500 yards of this scene. It first entered the War news in October, 1914, when the Germans were held here for a while by the III Corps during the "race to the sea."

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Photo: A. J. Insall.

STILL RATHER DINGY

Houplines was lost by us on April 9th, 1918, and was not recovered until the middle of October following. To-day finds it a sombre place, factories alternating with drab dwellings; and no amount of conscientious rebuilding seeming capable of instilling a little brightness into the utilitarian scene. Nevertheless, the people are proud enough of their reconstructive efforts, and especially of the Church of Ste. Anastasie—here seen—which stands on the site of the former Mairie.

years we blew no less than 867 mines, and the Germans 802.

With the German retirement to the Hindenburg Line in the spring of 1917, and the opening of the era of large-scale offensives, mining operations lost much of their importance; and by the time of the March, 1918, offensive, all the thirty Tunnelling Companies then existing were employed on constructing deep dug-outs, machine-gun emplacements, and overhead cover for batteries.

No further opportunity for a return to the work for which they had been specially raised and trained occurred during the remaining months of the War, but in our final advance much valuable service was rendered in the detection of land mines and "booby-traps" left behind for our amusement by the retiring enemy. From August to November, 1918, no less than 7,000 such traps, containing 25,000 demolition charges, were dealt with by the Tunnelling Companies. They also constructed during the same period no less than 187 bridges, so that their sphere of usefulness by no means ended with the cessation of mine warfare.

The general course of such warfare has been described in previous chapters of this work. The usual procedure was to sink two or more shafts, or inclines, well back from the front trench line, and to drive forward from these two or three main galleries, connected by a lateral gallery as far forward as possible for ventilation and greater safety.

From this lateral gallery, fighting galleries, usually in pairs, and listening posts, were dug out towards the hostile line. It was always of the utmost importance to get below the enemy, no matter to what depth he chose to mine; but the maximum depth to which it was possible to dig was usually limited by the water-level of the locality.

Galleries at Different Depths

Where this exceeded 40 feet below surface, it was often found possible and desirable to drive galleries at two or even three different levels, the upper one being used for shallow mines under the enemy's front line and wire, and the deeper for attack well below his mine workings, and in reasonable safety from his counter-efforts.

Disposal of the "spoil," or soil excavated from the workings, was effected in various ways according to local conditions. In flat country it was sometimes possible to spread it over a wide surface, and to conceal it by camouflage nets. In some places dummy breastworks were erected with sandbags filled

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Photo: A. J. Insall.

AT YPRES

As may be observed from the scaffolding in the foreground, restoration-work is still going on inside the Church of St. Martin—commonly known as Ypres Cathedral—even twenty years after the last shells have fallen. The building is—or was—a fine example of 13th-century work, and has been intelligently reconstructed. A service was in progress when this photograph was taken.

with spoil; elsewhere small craters were blown to accommodate the bags, and camouflaged when filled. Disused trenches, shell holes, and dead ground also afforded suitable dumping-places upon occasion.

Ventilation of mine workings had to be effected in the early days of tunnelling by air pumping, either by bellows or, less often, by rotary blower if the resulting noise was of no moment. In 1916 it was found possible to install electric fans, which proved entirely satisfactory. Water had to be dealt with by various types of pumps; these were located halfway down the shafts, and as soon as the sump pit at the bottom became full up, were set to work to raise it to the surface. The great quantity of dirt, mud, and sand which accumulated in the pit with the water usually ended by forming a thick sludge, which often proved most troublesome to deal with.

When the mine was finally completed, the explosive (as a rule, ammonal, blastine, or gun-cotton, gunpowder having been tried and found indifferently effective in the earlier days of the War) was laid, packed in waterproof covering, bags, or petrol tins, primed for detonation, and at the selected moment fired from the surface by electrical exploder.

One offshoot of mine warfare that merits a word of mention was the problem of rescue work. So important was this work that by early 1916 a special school had been started to study and instruct the personnel of the Tunnelling Companies in it; and every unit had a rescue squad of selected men ready to deal on the instant with any casualties resulting from enemy action or from poisonous gas-effects. Equipped with gas masks, oxygen apparatus, and special lamps and stretchers, these squads saved many a life, and restored many another which seemed to have fled beyond recall.

Rescue Squads' Fine Record

Some of their deeds of heroism will bear comparison with any performed either in the War or in civil life, where similar perils and crises are often encountered. In civil cases, however, the rescue squads have not to contend, as had the men of the Tunnelling Companies, with extra difficulties caused by enemy shell fire and bad trenches, or to the same extent with defective rescue apparatus or impure oxygen in the cylinders used for restoration purposes. It speaks volumes for the value and thoroughness of our rescue organisations in the B.E.F. that during the whole course of the mining warfare period our losses from accident or poisoning were so comparatively few.

As a pendant in somewhat lighter vein to this rather grim subject, the following incident may serve. As is well known, it was usual to take down into a mine a canary to give early warning of the presence of gas. One day an officer, bringing up one of these birds from a shaft of which it was vital that the enemy should not suspect the existence, unfortunately let his charge escape.

Delighted to be free, the canary flew to a tree in No Man's Land, and burst into joyous song. The local sniper managed only to frighten him off to another tree even nearer the enemy, and at last the services of the nearest trench mortar had to be called on. Its first shot demolished the tree and—presumably—the poor little canary too; at any rate no more was ever seen or heard of him.

We have not space here to deal with the many little-known departments of the R.E., such as the camouflage service, the anti-aircraft searchlight detachments, or the bodies appointed during the enemy offensives in the spring and summer of 1918 to inundate large areas of our front in order to limit possible hostile gains of ground. The last-named experiment was put to the test of actual practice, between April

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and August, in the case of certain sectors in Flanders. We must pass on to the work of the R.E. during our final advance.

During this period, bridging work, which had been the principal duty of the corps during the first few months of the War, once more came into prominence. But the demands on the bridging companies at this time were far more onerous and extensive than they had been in those earlier and less complicated days.

550 Heavy Bridges in Under Four Months

Not only was the volume of traffic to be carried much greater, but such ponderous loads as heavy artillery and tanks had to be given early priority of passage. The usual recourse was to bridges built of stock spans of rolled-steel joists; of which there was an ample supply; and these, by reason of their simplicity in erection, could be constructed quickly even by R.E. units not specially trained to the task. Close on 550 of such heavy bridges were erected by the engineers of the B.E.F. in the period August–November, 1918.

As regards the temporary bridges which had to be thrown over obstacles such as the Canal du Nord in front of Cambrai, the Scheldt Canal in the Hindenburg Line area, and the River Selle, these as a rule consisted of pontoon or trestle equipment, but were sometimes constructed in less orthodox fashion with cork floats, piles, and even petrol tins. Many of them were built under fire or under cover of darkness within close range of the enemy, and the total number erected on all the B.E.F. fronts during these last three victorious months ran into thousands rather than hundreds.

The bridging operations above mentioned merit a brief description in detail. On the Canal du Nord the ground was difficult, and the approaches to the obstacle were subjected to heavy machine-gun fire. The Canal itself, parts of which were dry, was 100 feet wide and had banks 15 feet high, with water, where it existed, 8 feet deep.

On one corps front seven foot-bridges in all were thrown, and ten crossings for guns and horse transport, five being earmarked for heavier traffic later. Despite difficulties caused by the Germans having cratered the roads of approach and having laid delay-action mines at intervals, the first of these structures to be completed was ready within one hour and ten minutes of

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

HAVOC INDESCRIBABLE

And yet, despite the extensive havoc, it is remarkable that even this much of Ypres Cathedral remained standing on March 31st, 1916—the date of the photograph; for, once the shelling had begun in earnest, on November 22nd, 1914, it continued with little remission for as long as the town remained within reach of German guns. It is interesting to note that the population of Ypres, given to-day as 15,000 or under, numbered almost 20,000 on the eve of war.

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" zero," and practically all the others within from six to nine hours.

On another corps front the usual rôles of infantry and sappers had for a time to be inverted. When the former were held up by heavy machine-gun fire from woods on our own side of the canal, the engineers dropped their tools, seized their rifles, and, managing to work their way round the flank through the woods to the rear of the enemy, forced him back across the canal. They then set to work to build their bridges, and had them erected within an hour of their arrival.

A Record Engineering Feat

At another point a particularly fine and creditable piece of work was carried out on the three nights before the attack, a trestle bridge for guns and horse transport eventually being thrown over the 80-foot span between the canal towpaths in a space of four hours, so as to have it ready well before " zero." The enemy—only 500 yards away—heard and suspected nothing.

The crossing of the Scheldt Canal afforded some equally creditable examples of the sappers' bridge-building work. The field companies of one division, for instance, were continuously employed in bridge construction from the period September 29th to October 11th. On the first day, that of the storming of the Hindenburg Line, two foot-bridges and two medium pontoon bridges were thrown, and three existing but damaged bridges made good for traffic.

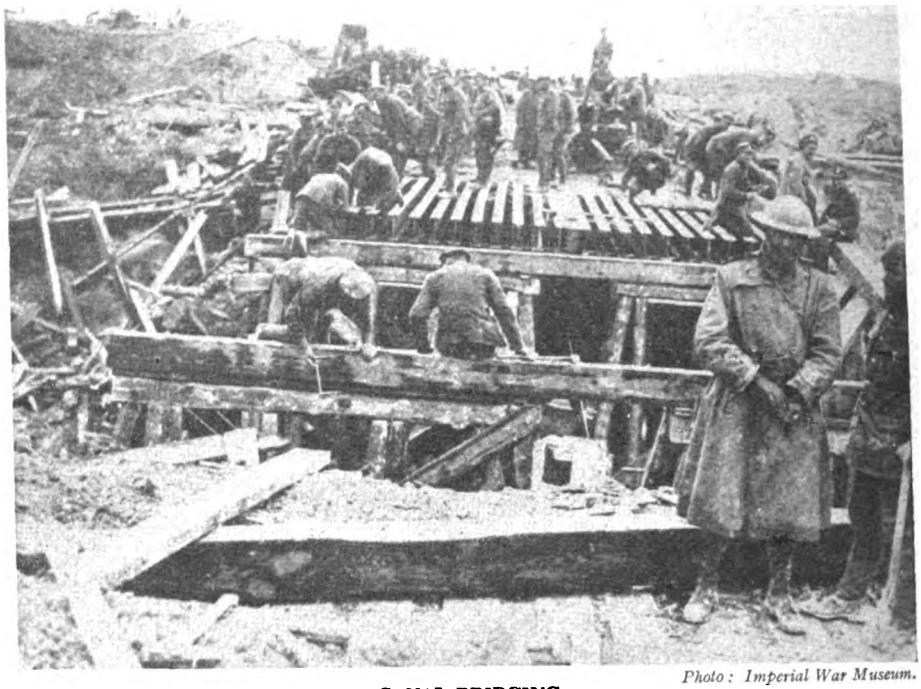

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

CANAL-BRIDGING

The Canal du Nord, whose lower reaches follow the course of the River Tortille, was bridged near Mœuvres, due west of Cambrai, on September 28th, 1918, as shown above. Mœuvres had been taken by the British, but lost, on September 12th, and retaken on the 19th.

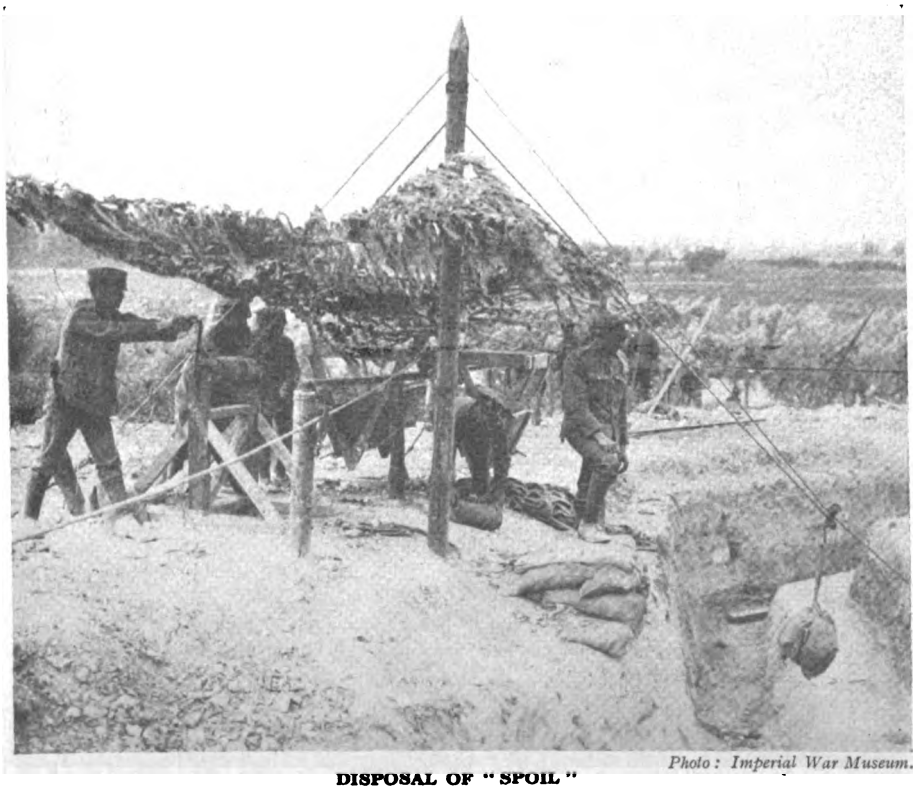

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

DISPOSAL OF " SPOIL "

The disposal of the soil excavated from subterranean workings was one of the sappers' most difficult problems. Above is a photograph taken during the making of strong-points in a reserve line at Basseux, June 14th, 1918. The " spoil " was here raised in sandbags by a windlass screened from aerial observation, and carried off by cable-railway.

On the morrow two new bridges were built, and three repaired or strengthened to take heavy artillery and horse transport. October 1st, 2nd, and 3rd were taken up by the erection of four bridges for mechanical transport, all of which were ready for use by the morning of the 3rd. The next four days were devoted to maintaining and improving the existing bridges; but on the 8th, a report coming in that the water-level in the canal was falling, the two pontoon bridges had to be hurriedly replaced by trestle constructions.

Between the 9th and the 11th, a new heavy trestle and a new steel girder bridge were begun and completed. All the work throughout the whole fortnight had to be done under heavy shell fire, and it was only after nightfall that much of it could be carried on.

The bridging work at the crossing of the Selle was the most arduous of all. During the period October 10th–19th, no less than thirty pontoon bridges were

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Photo: Imperial War Museum.

MINING A ROAD

A close-up of the charge being set in place by two Engineers of the 51st Division at Robecq on April 24th, 1918, when every effort was being made to stem the enemy's Lys offensive. The 24th was a relatively uneventful date, being the last day of the lull which had begun after the heavy fighting of the 18th, and which was to be so rudely broken by the Second Battle of Kemmel on the 25th.

placed in position along the whole front of attack. The enemy was within 50 yards of the river, which he kept under a constant artillery and machine-gun fire, and the field companies suffered severe casualties—without, however, allowing their work to be interrupted thereby. Finally, on the night before the attack, careful and extensive preparations were made for the rapid erection of foot and trestle bridges in the ratio of one to every hundred yards of front to be assaulted.

Bridges Which Surprised the Enemy

On one corps front this meant the throwing of twenty bridges, and on another of twelve. All were duly in position before zero; the infantry passed over them silently and surprised the enemy, who was forced to retire so hurriedly that work on the bridges for heavy traffic could begin before midday that same day.

This fine feat was a worthy climax to the record of a myriad gallant and skilful things done by the Royal Engineers during the course of the Great War in the Western theatre, to which alone we have been able to devote our attention here.

In answer to the question which we asked at the beginning of this chapter, "What did the sappers do in the Great War?" we might, therefore, perhaps legitimately reply with another, "What did they not do?"

But if we had to give an answer, we should say that in every one of the varied and multifarious duties entrusted to them, they fought with a courage, worked with an energy, and contrived with a skill, worthy of the finest traditions of the corps and the army to which they severally belonged. These things are the whole duty of a soldier—and their whole duty was something which the Royal Engineers never failed to perform.

We have no space here adequately to deal with the work of the R.E. in theatres of war other than France and Belgium. But in each of these theatres there were peculiar problems, and with all of them the sappers managed by dint of much ingenuity and hard labour to cope satisfactorily.

Such outstanding features as the great pipe-line which brought the waters of Egypt across the Sinai desert for the Expeditionary Force in Palestine; the establishments at the base ports and on the lines of communication in Macedonia and Mesopotamia, without which operations on those fronts could not have been carried on at all; and the work put in by the R.E. attached to the British contingent sent to Italy in 1917—all these were no less creditable or valuable than the achievements of the corps in France and Flanders, which we have described more fully above. Wherever they went the R.E. acquitted themselves well.

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CHAPTER V

MEMORIES I.—"MONSIEUR LE CLAMS" LOOKS BACK

It is not an uncommon occurrence in war, and especially when an army is campaigning over the territory of an allied nation, for damage to be done to the property of that nation's civilian population. When anything of this sort takes place there begins something closely resembling a round game. The injured civilian lodges a claim for compensation, and it falls to the lot of the Claims Officer to deal with the trouble. Such is the procedure in a simple or petty case. But on occasion there is more serious damage, as a result of which correspondence arises. Charges in writing, and denials, likewise in writing, shuttle to and fro until months have passed away, and there is an accumulation of files thick enough to fill a suit-case.

Of all the great armies of the world and of history, the British armies in France and Flanders were among the biggest, and certainly the most adaptable and adapted. Their size and situation made unheard-of demands upon them, and in response they had to improvise highly unlikely and often apparently unmilitary expedients.

Introducing "Monsieur le Clams"

Thus it happens that in many a village estaminet in the brick-built villages of Flanders, sunk in damp, rich meadows—in many a wind-swept commune of Picardy, when the hard-headed and hard-fisted people of that border-region gather round their *chope* of beer, or their *coupe* of *vin chaud*, and remember the War—they recall a mysterious member of the Allied Army known as "Monsieur le Clams." They never understood him. There was no corresponding appointment in their own fierce and gallant Army, nor in the clever mechanical fighting machine to which they were opposed. Monsieur le Clams, he was a one, he was. They will shake their heads over the things he did and the things he said. They may even spend three ha'pence on beer to drink to his memory.

The casual visitor to one of those village inns in which such a conversation is being carried on will have some difficulty in finding out what is meant. Even if he was in the War, he may never have met "Monsieur le Clams," for there were very few members of that peculiar brotherhood, and the title is not easy to recognise in its French version.

But if he is able to penetrate the disguise, and if he ever met such a person as the one to whom the inhabitants of those villages allude, he will know that they are speaking of the Claims Officer—possibly of an individual who was attached to do that and sundry other odd part-time jobs with a division, or possibly of one of the dozen or so whole-time specialists upon whom fell the responsibility for settling all manner of disputes, such as naturally arise when some millions of amateur soldiers are put to live in one of the most heavily cultivated and densely populated regions of Europe.

It all came about like this. The original British Expeditionary Force conducted its brilliant retreat, and participated in the Marne battle and the Aisne; Paris was saved, and people had time to get their breath and look about.

A Chapter of Calamities

Paris was saved, yes; but, even far behind the lines, the property of individuals was severely damaged. Gates had been left open or used for barricades or firewood. Mattresses had been used for all sorts of purposes. Forty men had slept in the dining-room and hurriedly marched away; the gunners had turned out all the agricultural machinery, and left it in the open in order to stable their horses in the sheds; the engineers had diverted the stream which supplied many a farm with water, to make a defence line; the mules of the A.S.C. had washed away the gravel paths round the church—and although manure is good for pear trees, that which the animals of the A.S.C. left behind did not seem to suit some orchards near the Lys.

Something had to be done about it. There is a very old tradition in the British Army against plunder and damage to civilians. Wellington, among others, called on his Creator to witness that he commanded soldiers, and not a crew of thieves.

A captain of the A.S.C. and a sergeant initiated a system, which was gradually adopted and enlarged until it became a general routine order that all damage done in billets was to be settled for, according to French billeting law, by such small appropriate payments as might be necessary. A commission was set up to adjudicate, and half a dozen junior officers were appointed to preside over what had been a peaceful Flemish or French province, and was now the home, *pro tem.*, of vast numbers of English-speaking men.

These officers were of all sorts: some from Indian cavalry, some straight from England, some "combed out" of muddy trenches because they could speak the language and knew something about the people with whom they would be confronted.

Thus it might happen that a forlorn individual would be trying uneasily to see which side, his left or his right, was the less uncomfortable to lie upon in a hole contrived in the mud of a Flemish beet-field, when his wooing of slumber would be interrupted by a hand which brusquely raised the sand-bag flap over the entrance aperture, revealing a runner with a pink message form in his hand. "Lieutenant Brown AAA report at H.Q. 546 Brigade AAA."

An Arduous Passage

The brigade headquarters turn out to be that of an artillery formation. Brown has crawled and dodged back to the point at which, just out of bullet range, the mule-drawn limbers fling down the rations and ammunition which the carrying-parties from the trenches fetch away. Here he has borrowed a horse from the transport sergeant, and with some difficulty found his way along the dark, shell-holed lanes, and by much asking and wandering arrived at Brigade H.Q.

The orderly officer looks at him

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wearily, and surveys the pink message form he has brought to justify his appearance. At last the officer remembers, turns over the files on his desk, and finds a piece of cheap note-paper written all over and over :

"Here. What do you make of this ? "

Brown spells it out. It is in "near" French.

"Someone has drunk something, sir ! "

"So I gather. You can deal with this—er—claim ? "

"Yes, I think so ! "

"Good man. We'll give you some breakfast. Ride a hoss ? Very well, we'll find you one ! "

In due time Brown finds his way by devious lanes to the Botte de Foin estaminet, from which the complaint comes. He finds there an old gnarled man, like one of the willows that lean across the surrounding ponds, and an even older woman, with a face like a baked apple. They both talk at once, but he makes out this :

"It was about seven o'clock, Wednesday of last week, the soldiers came. I know which regiment it was, they had the letters O.A.T.S. on their sacks. My wife and I had a barrel of '*Stoot*' and they all came in to drink. Soon we had used all our glasses, so they brought their own mugs. Then they had no change—all five-franc notes. So while I went to get some they all helped themselves to the stoot because my wife could not pour quick enough. So when I got back from my neighbour's the stoot was all drunk, but they had only paid four francs. Now, sir, that is not just. We reckoned to make twenty francs a barrel . . ."

"Suppose I get you an officers' mess to billet with you next week, when the troops change ? "

"Well, sir, that will be very nice. But we shall still be twenty francs short."

"No, you have had four of them. Now, if they give you five francs from their canteen, and you sell butter, eggs, chickens, and vegetables to the officers' mess, you will be all right."

"Not quite, sir, but still we are Allies . . . ! "

When Monotony Might Be Welcome

Something of that sort, it may have been, which would earn Brown the fame of being able to deal with such matters. He would be asked again, and, if he went on doing well, might find himself spending all his days doing claims and

Photo : A. J. Insall.

FLANDERS POPPIES

Various theories have been advanced, during the past few years, to explain the gradual disappearance of the poppy from the former battle-areas. None of them, however, has proved at all conclusive, for the excellent reason that the poppy is not disappearing. After an admitted decline, it has recently staged a (literally) brilliant "come-back," and our "Then and Now" photographer, who in 1936 saw scarcely a bloom, in 1937 found the fields, and sometimes even the roadsides, dyed blood-red with the flower. The above illustration, which comes from between Merckem and Nordschoote, also shows one of the concrete pillars erected to mark the limit of advance of *I'Envahisseur*.

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salvage, and looking after roads, and not going up night after night with digging parties—a monotonous practice.

His new job—if he were so lucky—might have, on the contrary, all too much variety. Brown, we will suppose, on one occasion found himself facing a huge woman entirely swathed in black, whom he mentally called "Hamlet's Aunt." But she seemed to be also the aunt of the deputy for the province. Brown addressed her in his very best French, and asked what he could do for her.

"Pay for my potatoes!" was the reply—not without a certain autocratic majesty.

Gradually he unravelled the matter. It seemed that the Umpteenth [1] Corps had been ordered to do a "stunt." For this it required, of course, practice; and there was in the neighbourhood a large area fenced off and scheduled for training and manœuvres. But the new staff mind was at work, and instead of manœuvring where they should have manœuvred, the units of this corps had manœuvred all over the potatoes of Hamlet's Aunt.

There was a fearful to-do. The submarine campaign was at its height, food was short, and shipping in great demand. Hamlet's Aunt had missed none of this. She summoned her nephew, the deputy from Paris, she summoned the general of the corps. They met on her flattened fields. Someone would have to be sacrificed. Brown, by far the junior officer of the group, had a strong suspicion that it was going to be he.

But men did not give up without a struggle in those days. And when the general uttered, as Brown knew he must, the accusing words, "And what do you know about this business?" he meekly replied:

"Nothing, sir. I was not aware that the potatoes had been damaged!"

The general stared.

"But haven't they?"

Brown staked his future in the British Army on his luck. He spoke respectfully, heels together:

"May I send for a spade, sir?"

"You'd better, I think!"

"A Very Intelligent Young Fellah!"

A spade was brought, Brown struck it into the earth, and turned up . . . a magnificent root of potatoes, quite unharmed. A whole brigade, advancing by "short rushes," had not affected them in the least. The stiff soil above was stamped flat, but had protected them. Brown knew quite well that Hamlet's Aunt would say that the cost of digging land so treated would be more than the potatoes were worth, and he hastily intervened, at the risk of his "pip": "I think a working-party is indicated, sir."

A working-party was ordered, and the general, on going away, was heard to remark:

"A very intelligent young fellah!"

[1] We regret that we are unable to render this in Roman figures.—Ed.

Photo: A. P., Paris.

ON THE SLOPES OF MT. VIDAIGNE

The series of low hills known as the Monts des Flandres, and comprising Mt. Vidaigne, Mt. Noir, Mt. Rouge, the Scherpenberg, and various other "peaks," runs roughly in a north-east—south-west direction behind Kemmel, and afforded us valuable assistance in organising our defences of Kemmel, Messines, and indeed the southern part of the Ypres Salient generally. This photograph was taken 1½ km. due west of Locre, the date being July 3rd, 1918. The road leads from Mt. Noir and St. Jans Capel to Westoutre and Reninghelst.

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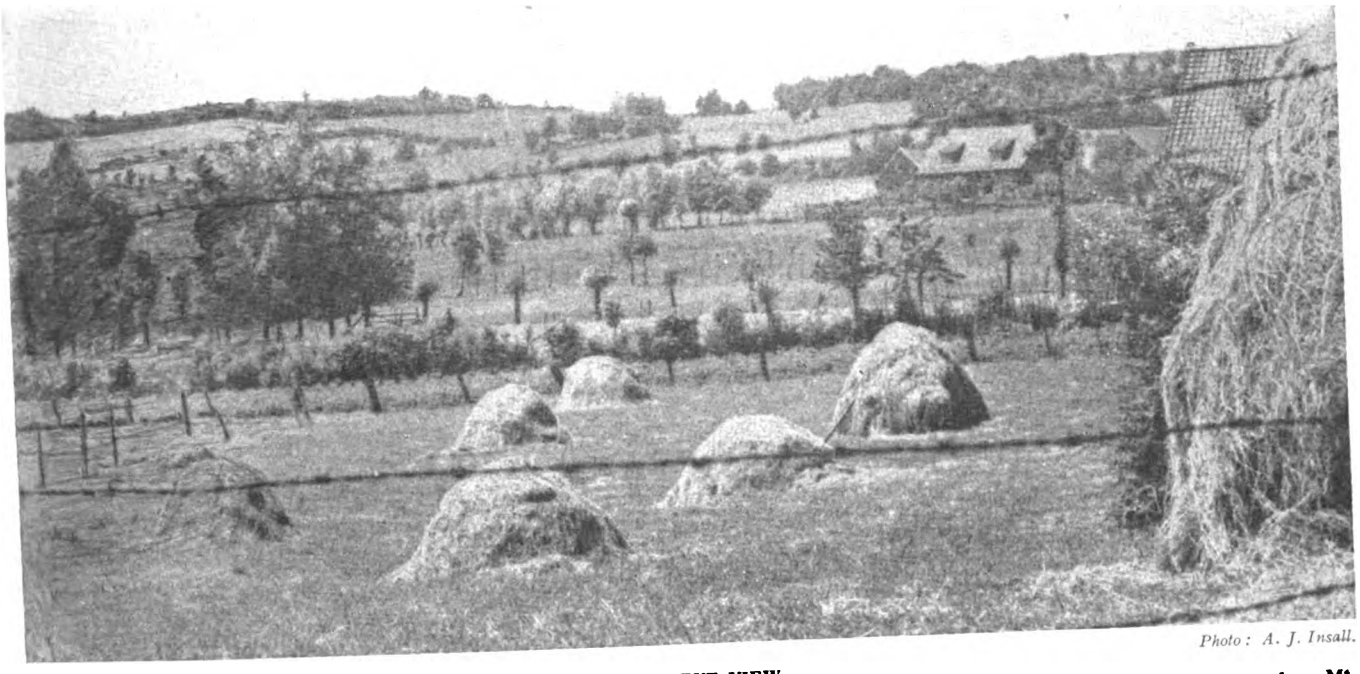

Photo: A. J. Insall.

A SHEEP'S-EYE VIEW

This is how the Monts des Flandres would appear nowadays to a ruminant chancing to glance through the spiny barrier in the foreground. Mt. Vidaigne appears here on the left of the picture, while just beyond the left-hand margin is Mt. Noir. Between these two hills the Franco-Belgian frontier runs, across which a considerable amount of mild smuggling takes place, particularly of tobacco. Inquisitive photographers are therefore not altogether welcome.

Brown justified the general's good opinion. He had sufficient intelligence to realise his extreme insignificance to that mighty head within the red-banded cap, so fully occupied with great offensives, man-power, and tank tactics. He learned from that authority's example the first great rule of the soldier's life: "See that you are properly fed!" He therefore bent himself assiduously to the task of under-housemaid to the quartermaster's side of the divisional staff, and was rewarded by finding a billet just behind the line in a rather dangerous sector, where no village window dared show a light after dark.

By no means all the landladies in Flanders were of the type of Hamlet's Aunt. The madame with whom he now billeted was spruce, polite, and competent. She had learned the secret of porridge, and was familiar with bacon and eggs. It was a most satisfactory billet; and, as so often happened, it remained so for exactly two days.

On the third—a Monday—madame produced his breakfast, smiling, competent as usual. At half-past eight she disappeared. At nine she reappeared in his office—a tiny room just inside the front door, in which he scribbled such papers as simply could not be dealt with literally "in the field," and in which, as mess president of Q mess, he kept the whisky locked—in her Sunday clothes. She held in her hands one of the regulation forms, "Damage done by the British Army in billets, under the law of 1877." Brown greeted her with all the awkwardness one naturally feels towards a person whom one has already greeted once the same morning, took the paper, and perused it.

The Tale of a Window-breaker

"The soldier Milson, breaking six panes of glass! What on earth is this, madame?"

"It is the regulation!"

"What regulation?"

"You have the papers of your colleague of the 92nd division. You will find it all there!"

"Hush, madame, you mustn't call divisions by their numbers. The Germans might hear you!"

Madame shrugged, implying that the Germans knew well enough. Meanwhile, Brown hunted among the papers of his colleague—that is, of his predecessor, who had been burdened with his thankless job during the sojourn in the area of the preceding division. He soon found what he was looking for. The soldier Milson seemed to have been careless with the panes of glass once a week with perfect regularity.

"But this is absurd, madame. We can't have damage of this sort going on as a matter of habit!"

"What would you? It is the one they call Frolicsome Bill. He is a good soldier, but on Saturdays he is a little *pompette*—b—— tight, as you would say!"

"Indeed, madame, I should not dream of using such an expression before a lady!"

Madame shrugged again.

"That is what they told me. They say he is a limit!"

"I have no doubt. But why is he always here?"

"He is the area commandant's batman!"

"I see. I'll tell the area commandant!"

"Yes, monsieur, but that will be no good. Your colleague told him. The area commandant, he say, 'Bill's the best batman I ever had. Let him break the window. You pay. That's what you're here for!'"

Her English was crisp and good, better than Brown's French.

"What did my colleague say to that?"

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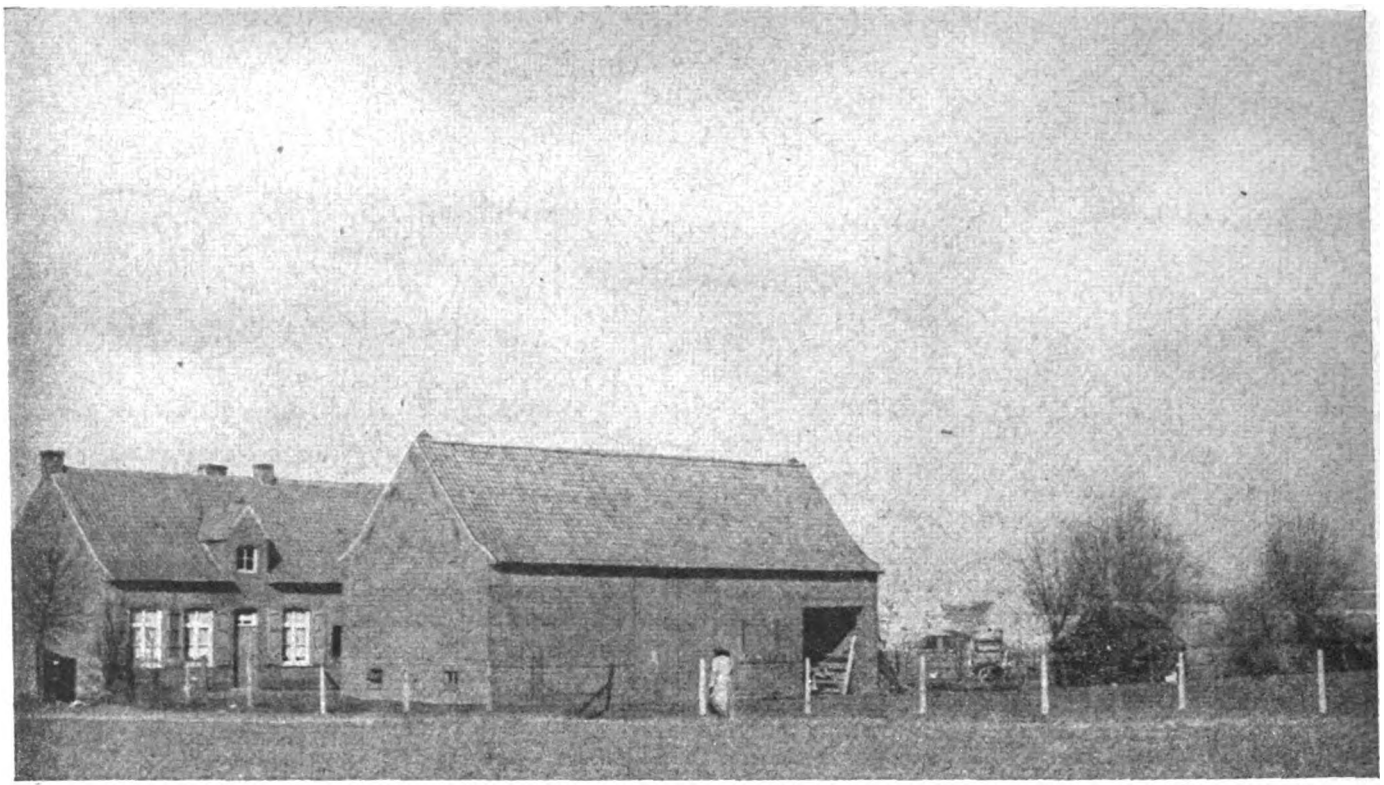

Photo : G. T. Watson.

LEINSTER FARM

This farm, of which, as in the case of the three others here illustrated, the present-day version is shown, stands just south of Birr Cross-roads, on the lane leading from the Menin Road to Zillebeke. In 1916 it lay within 500 yards of our front line, and in late April, 1918, it was lost altogether.

Photo : A. J. Insall.

GARTER POINT FARM

Garter Point, in the Zonnebeke area (i.e. east-north-east of Ypres) saw its severest fighting during "Third Ypres," our line running almost through it on September 20th, 1917. Subsequently it changed hands twice; and the present buildings are, somewhat needless to add, entirely post-War.

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Photo: A. J. Insall.

LANKHOF FARM

Some notice of this farm was taken on page 1359 of Volume Two, where we reproduced an illustration of old concrete shelters. The situation is 2½ km. south of Ypres, close to where the Messines road crosses the Ypres—Comines Canal at Lock No. 8. Lankhof Farm figured in "Third Ypres."

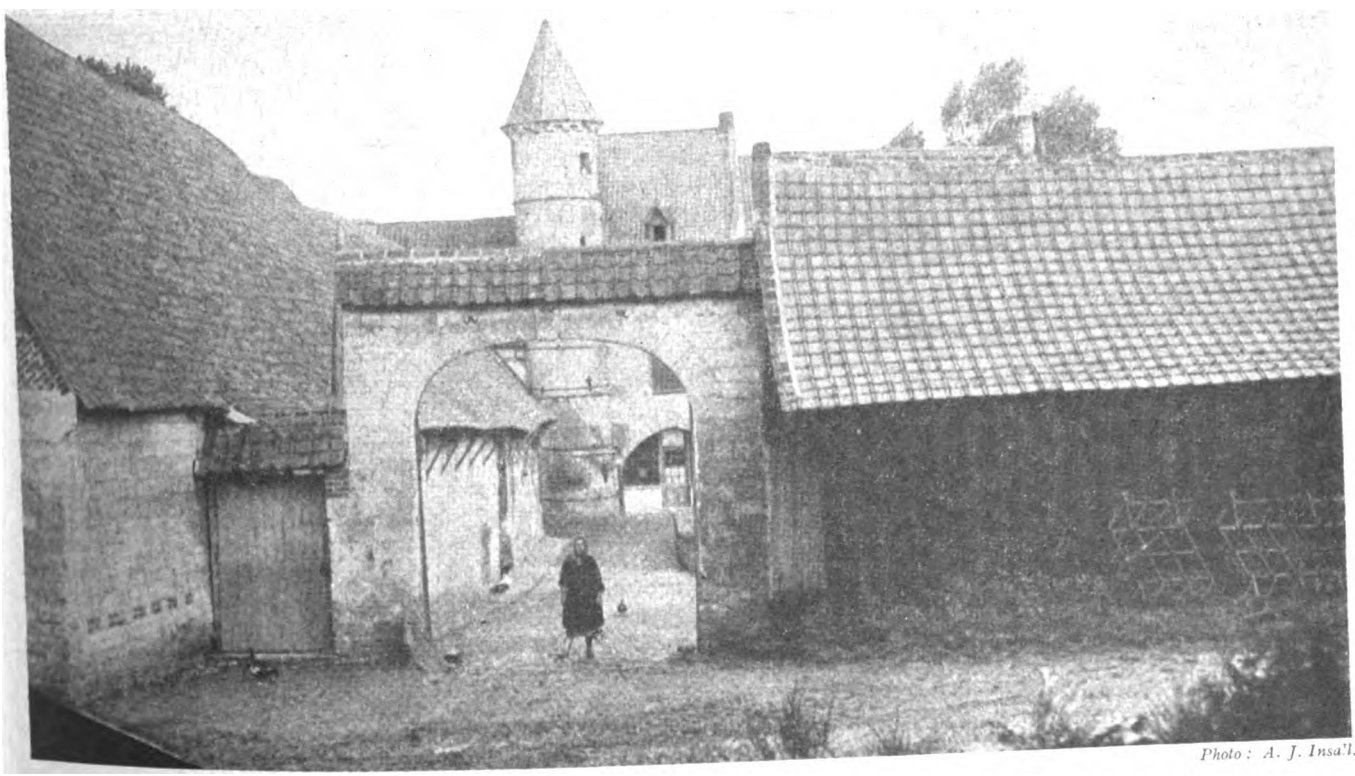

Photo: A. J. Insall.

FERMONT FARM

This is at Capelle-Fermont, 13 km. north-west of Arras and 2 km. east of Aubigny. Parts of the fine old farm-buildings, which became a staff billet during the War, date from 1410. The woman in the gateway is a Yugo-Slav servant, one of many who find employment in the district.

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" He say : ' It is quite irregular ! ' and the area commandant, he say : ' Get to 'ell out of 'ere ! ' "

" But you've had enough money for these panes of glass to build a young Crystal Palace ! "

" What is that ? "

" Never mind. I'll see the A.P.M. of the Corps ! "

" Oh, sir, do not do that. Bill has six children. He has shown me their photograph. When he is *pompette*, he weeps for them ! "

" And then smashes the windows ! "

" Oh, no, sir, that is when I tell him ' Time, Gentlemen, Time,' and he say he is not a gentleman and he is not yet half cut ! "

A Real *Tour-de-force*

Brown was thinking, " She wants Bill to buy the booze from her, and doesn't mind her windows going so long as she's paid. If I make enemies of her, the area commandant, and Bill, I shan't have a happy time at all. I must think ! "

He thought hard. He thought all the way to Boulogne, to which town he was ordered to attend a conference on collapsible barns. He thought his way into a toyshop. The proprietress could not make him out. Here was an officer just out of the trenches, who wanted to buy a clockwork mouse. He said it was to amuse the troops. The English were very droll.

Brown returned to his division, and, as Saturday approached, his servant could be seen in consultation with various odd-job men who usually had time to pass in the estaminet on Saturday night. When that hour came, Frolicsome Bill turned up, and did himself as proudly as ever. He seemed to have many friends, and they seemed to foresee a riotous end to his evening as usual. About the time, however, that madame came usually to begin the uneasy task of clearing her bar a sound was heard that disturbed Bill.

" Wha'sh that ? " he demanded unsteadily.

" Only madame winding up the clock ! " someone prompted, amid stifled laughter.

" Wind up—I'll give you wind up. It's not nearly time yet ! " he was beginning, but the words were frozen on his lips and his eyes stared terror-stricken at the corner by the door, at a small black object that darted under the chair, and when " shoo'd " by hilarious friends, darted away again.

" Don't let it touch me ! " he cried. " Don't let me see it ! "

They reassured him and took him home. Thereafter he lived a godly, righteous, and sober life as the Good Book says. Madame's window panes remained intact. The British Army was saved the cost of innumerable replacements. Bill's family no doubt were grateful, but it is uncertain if they ever knew why the winding up of the clock had such an excellent effect on him. Brown knew.

Problem : to Find 10,000 Football Grounds

Then there was football. How many weary hours did not Brown spend arguing with promoters of brigade and other contests. Football must not be played on beetroot or flax, or the plants will suffer as well as the game. Football must be played on good grass. But the grass was wanted for the cows. Where, then, could it be played ? Local authorities shook their heads. They had never played it. The Maire and the Secretary of the Commune, the *Garde Champêtre* and the Parish Priest, not one of them knew the difference between West Bromwich Albion and Aston Villa. As for giving up good land for " le Foolball," not they—not while anything to be sold could be grown on it.

Trenches, yes, if it must be. Foolball ? No ! It was not a game, this War. How Brown wished it was ! There were some fifty infantry divisions alone, each contained 12 battalions, each battalion containing 16 platoons. Each platoon wanted a football ground—some 10,000 grounds in all. Brown had some brilliant ideas. He thought how nice it would be if only the whole epic struggle could be conducted on the football field, what a " gate " there would be, what a saving of good pasture.

In the long run, of course, he had to practice what he called tact, and other people called deceit. Many platoons had to play in fields that were less than the standard dimensions. Many farmers had to take less rent for the fields so used than they had demanded. By the time the season was over, Brown could have written a better essay on compromise than Lord Morley's, and sometimes felt, after he had listened to lengthy arguments between disappointed brigade captains and awkward old Flemish farmers, as if he had a swelling the size of a football behind his ear.

By many such expedients Brown did his job right down through the last troubled year. He often wondered what he was for ; and, as the destruction around became less and less effective, he took comfort from the fact that he was doing something to mitigate it, and something to smooth the lot of the least considered of the troops, who were rather better received in billets because of his vigilance. Then, at last, the seemingly endless contest wore itself out. The battles began to slacken. He found himself ordered to prepare a demobilisation camp.

When *les Anglais* Should be Gone

For all these years, there had been sung in many an estaminet, in many a front room turned into a temporary bar, a song of which the second line ran : " *Après la guerre finie*," and the fourth " *Tous les Anglais partis !* "

Now villages that had been crowded would soon be empty, until they were refilled by their own returning soldiers. There was a general settling-up. Now claims were not so much for damage done in billets, as for the masses of material that had been laboriously transported to places which had been of crucial importance a few weeks before, and were now once again obscure Flemish villages. Old men, middle-aged women, boys and girls even, became more friendly than before.

Some few things, such as complete wooden huts, could be sold. But for the rest—the piles of wire, the masses of pit-props, the drums of paint, above all the banks of manure—who was going to shift all that ? No one, of course. Those masses of stores were already melting. A coil of wire would go, a pile of pit-props became less. As for the manure, it went all the time. There was the finest land in Europe, shamefully misused for four years. Here was the finest opportunity for making a profit out of crops that had ever occurred. The Flemish peasant would have been less than human, much less than Flemish, if he had neglected so grand a chance.

And thus it came about that the end of Brown's career in the Army was perhaps more useful, but certainly less heroic, than the beginning of it. For he had enlisted as a hero, determined to save Belgium, democracy, and several other things. He ended as a harassed claims officer, defending with determination a mountain of manure. His colleagues, as they were demobilised and went home, christened him offensively " Lieutenant-General Muck "—but he proudly retorted that he made wheat to grow where, a year before, nothing but barbed wire had thriven.

Such was the fate of " Monsieur le Clams."

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From RANSART to MOYENNEVILLE

Then and Now

Photo: Imperial War Museum

RANSART CHÂTEAU

Prior to the retirement to the Hindenburg Line, Ransart lay between the German first and second lines. Afterwards it became one of our billeting-centres, although, as it had by that time been reduced to a series of rubble-heaps, the billets themselves could hardly be requisitioned from among the houses. The above wintry view of the local château gives a fair idea of the state of demolition in which our troops found the village.

Photo: G. T. Watson

A CHÂTEAU NO LONGER

This indifferent-looking country house now marks the site of the former Château de Ransart. The position of the village is just west of the Arras—Monchy-au-Bois road, 12 km. or so out of Arras. Once it had come into our lines, it did not again pass out of them, and its history is entirely devoid of incident. The War first laid hands upon it when French Tenth Army troops occupied the Arras area between September 30th and October 5th, 1914.

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Photo: Imperial War Museum

ADINFER IN THE THROES

Adinfer and its wood stand upon fairly high ground 3 km. south-east of Ransart. Before the enemy's withdrawal of 1917 the village was just behind his new second line, which met his old second line slightly east of it. This photograph shows the remains of the place during our occupation in the summer of 1917. Prior to the extension of our line to include the Arras sector, the front opposite Adinfer had been held by the I Colonial Corps of the French Tenth Army.

Photo: G. T. Watson

THREE HORSES AND A CART

Rebuilt Adinfer is a sleepy little place of just over 12 score inhabitants, without so much as a post office, despite its imposing array of telegraph wires. The German advance of spring, 1918, came no nearer to it than Ayette, 3 km. to the south-east; and indeed, notwithstanding its change of ownership in 1917, the village may be said never to have witnessed a battle.

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Photo: Imperial War Museum

MESSY MOYENNEVILLE

A "Then and Now" pair of Moyenneville photographs appeared among the opening illustrations in this volume of TWENTY YEARS AFTER. Here and on the next page, just to make certain, we reproduce four more pictures of the place. Its position in relation to Adinfer is 7 km. almost due east; but it was not quite so far from No Man's Land during the early part of the War as this might imply, for the front ran north-eastward in this sector, and Moyenneville was almost in the German third line.

Photo: G. T. Watson

NOT MUCH TIDIER

A general view of the main street of Moyenneville, which twice came in for heavy fighting during 1918. Nowadays, however, a tiny gathering of British dead, and a certain prolificacy of military barbed wire, corrugated iron, etc., are the only reminders of former grimness. The fallen in Two Tree Cemetery, as it is called, on the Chemin des Bois, number 49—all from the United Kingdom.

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Photo: Imperial War Museum

THE SHATTERED RAILWAY NEAR MOYENNEVILLE

The high spot of Moyenneville's War history occurred on March 26th and 27th, 1918. Early on the former day a gap of 1,500 yards was discovered between the 31st and Guards Divisions, occasioned by the retirement of two battalions of the 93rd Brigade as the result of a wrong order. The remaining battalion of the brigade, the 15th/17th West Yorks, thereupon prolonged its left to help fill the gap, while the first two were rushed back to the line, only to be held up by heavy fire before reaching it. (*continued below*).

Photo: G. T. Watson

ARMY WIRE AND SUPPORTS BY THE LEVEL-CROSSING

The Germans, meanwhile, had pushed into Moyenneville and were enfilading the West Yorks. The latter, however, instead of retiring, used every man to stage a brilliant counter-attack, and actually recaptured the village. There, although driven back about noon to the western outskirts, they clung on for a total of 36 hours, until the general retirement of the 27th. During all this time their sole reinforcements was a single company of Irish Guards. Their casualties totalled 700, and they came out of action 44 strong.

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CHAPTER VI

WITH THE R.A.M.C. IN THE FORWARD AREAS

When one thinks about war it is in terms of battles and the men who fight in them. Rarely do we consider the position of those whose lot is often to stand by and wait, but whose services, when needed, are needed badly. The officers, n.c.o.'s and men of the Royal Army Medical Corps, particularly those not attached to fighting units, come within this category, but the services rendered by this fine Corps to the fighting forces were nothing short of magnificent, and it is fitting that in a work such as this the facts should be placed on record.

THE R.A.M.C. played a humane and vital part in the War. The extent of its activities was unprecedented, as these approximate figures[1] show:

Sick and wounded dealt with, 9,000,000; total wounded evacuated from Western Front, 2,000,000; carried in ambulance trains in France from front to base, 6,000,000; evacuated from France to England in hospital ships, 2,258,000; wounded from Western Front returned to firing-line, 1,600,000.

Nearly 1,500 per cent. Increase

Warrant-officers, n.c.o.'s, and men of the R.A.M.C. mobilised in August, 1914, totalled only 9,000; by the end of the War the total had reached 133,000—a figure almost equivalent to that of the original B.E.F. which crossed to France on the outbreak of hostilities.

Fatal casualties in the Corps totalled 743 officers and 6,130 other ranks; of these, 470 officers and 3,569 other ranks were either killed or died of wounds.

The valour and devotion to duty displayed are indicated by the number of decorations: V.C., 7 (2 with bar); D.S.O., 499 (25 with bar); M.C., 1,484 (161 with bar, 22 with two bars, 1 with three bars); Albert Medal, 3; D.C.M., 395 (19 with bar); M.M., 3,002 (195 with bar, 4 with two bars); M.S.M., 1,111 (1 with bar).

These remarkable figures cover auxiliaries as well as Regulars. At one period on the Western Front Regular the remainder being Territorial Force officers represented less than 10 per cent., and temporarily commissioned. The T.F. strength on July 1st, 1914, was 12,520; at the end of the War, 31,580. T.F. units sent overseas 76 field ambulances; 16 cavalry and mounted brigade field ambulances; 19 casualty clearing stations; 8 general hospitals; and 127 sanitary sections.

[1] *Short History of the R.A.M.C.*, by Col. Fred. Smith, C.B., C.M.G., D.S.O., R.A.M.C.

At the outbreak of war the Director of Medical Services—Surgeon-General T. P. Woodhouse—and two assistant-directors, were attached to G.H.Q.; a deputy director and two deputy assistant directors were attached to H.Q., lines of communication. To conform with special conditions, the D.M.S. established himself at the advanced base with the Inspector-General of Communications.

The Medical Services of each division and cavalry division were administered by an A.D.M.S. with the rank of colonel, who belonged to the headquarters staff of the division; those of lines of communication by the D.D.M.S. and two assistant directors attached to the headquarters of the I.G. Under his control were the four bases—Havre, Rouen, Boulogne, and Advanced Base, each commanded by an A.D.M.S. and sanitary officer.

The Nursing Services were administrated by a principal matron—Miss M. McCarthy—attached to the office of the D.D.M.S., then stationed at Rouen.

Mobile Laboratories

After the end of 1914, when the B.E.F. was reorganised into two armies, each of three army corps, there were certain changes which need not be detailed here. Mobile laboratories for hygiene, bacteriology, radiography, and dentistry, were established in army areas. In the later stages of the War it was found possible to send even to regimental aid-posts in the front line the means of combating wound-shock by transfusion. R.A.M.C. work was most helpfully supplemented by voluntary aid from the British Red Cross Society and Order of St. John, and the Y.M.C.A. provided recreation huts for hospitals and convalescent depots.

R.A.M.C. functions began at the regimental aid-post in the front line, where the regimental medical officer attended sick men and wounded brought in by the regimental stretcher-bearers. The post might consist of a dug-out, a cellar, or the ruins of a cottage capable of accommodating 20 to 30 wounded; or, during a rapid advance or retreat, merely of a sunken road or embankment, with stretchers lying in the open.

It was equipped with eight to ten stretchers, blankets, a dozen or so Thomas splints, shell-dressings, means of heating food and water, besides the usual medical supplies. For coping with an offensive 50 stretchers might be provided, with extra blankets; and the M.O. would have the help of extra doctors from the field ambulance.

The regimental bearers normally numbered 16—bandsmen, pioneers, etc.—but the number would be doubled for a "push." These were battalion, not R.A.M.C., men: brave, friendly, resourceful fellows who went into No Man's Land to succour and bring in their wounded pals—literally "picking them off the wire" and out of advance saps and shell-holes, and getting them back with extreme difficulty and at extreme risk. Only in emergencies and big attacks would field-ambulance bearers be detailed to help them.

They dealt with the human debris of war in the raw—clapped on the soldier's field-dressing, applied a rough tourniquet to stanch bleeding, fixed a rough splint on serious fractures, did anything they could to patch up the man and get him to the aid-post. R.A.M.C. men would be the first to take off their hats to these regimental bearers, whose rescues were often little short of superhuman.

Patching and More Patching

The M.O.'s job was to do further, more expert patching, and to pass the

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casualty on to the R.A.M.C. advanced dressing-station. This would usually be in the support line—in dug-out or cellar again, or perhaps within ruined cottage, château, brewery, or factory. From the aid post the wounded man would be carried—or helped, if a walking case—through the communication-trenches, over duck-boards, mud, and slush, by field-ambulance bearers. And a painful, difficult journey it usually was, coaxing the stretcher round awkward traverses, crouching under shell-fire, floundering in water and mire.

On the Somme, and in other big attacks, bearers slaved in this way for sixty hours on end, rested for two or thereabouts in some foul dug-out, then carried on for another sixty, weary to the bone. The best period for bringing in wounded was between the time of the battalion's reaching its objective, and that of the enemy's counter-attack; but the work went on, in some form, all the time.

A field ambulance was divided into three sections: "A," the headquarters section, with C.O., quartermaster, and four ambulances; "B" and "C" commanded by an R.A.M.C. major, with three waggons or motor ambulances apiece. Each infantry division had three field ambulances, and a cavalry division a cavalry field ambulance for each of its brigades. There were relay posts behind the line, with 16 to 24 bearers, and divisional collecting-posts where wounded were transferred from hand-borne to wheeled stretcher carriers.

From the dressing-station they were taken to a field hospital, five or six miles behind the line, where they would rest and be given a clean-up before going on to a casualty clearing station, 15 to 20 miles back, by motor ambulance or train. The C.C.S. was the pivot of the whole system of evacuation. Here the cases would be graded and sorted out, and the more serious be sent to the base *en route* to England with a "Blighty" ticket.

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

ENMITY FORGOTTEN

Or at any rate temporarily disregarded. German prisoners are here seen helping in a wounded Tommy near Beaucamp on November 20th, 1917, the opening day of the Battle of Cambrai. Beaucamp is a tiny place lying between Trescault and Villers-Plouich.

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

SITUATIONS REVERSED

In the upper picture two Germans are helping a Tommy. Here, four Tommies are bringing in a wounded Boche. The photograph was taken during the Marne fighting of 1918, at Marfaux, 15 km. south-west of Reims. The bearers belong to the 62nd (West Riding) Division.

Let us take a few typical experiences of a stretcher-bearer in the 1/6th London Field Ambulance, 48th Division.

Loos: two weeks in a dug-out in the trenches, half-a-mile from the German line. Most of your time is spent crawling through trenches; sometimes you can use a wheeled stretcher on roads and tracks. You bring in a man wounded in the head. The M.O. in the dressing-station begins operating at once, lifting the bone from the brain, humming a tune while doing it. He is not callous: just cool and workmanlike—faced with a job in the day's routine. As soon as he has patched the injury he sends the man down.

Through the Night Under Fire

In the night a cry: "Stretcher-bearers wanted! Volunteers!" You crawl through the trenches, find a group of men hit in a traverse, and apply field-dressings, and tourniquets—rough-and-ready work under fire. The first consideration is: *to get them out.* Going up with the empty stretcher, with shells "plonking" over and machine guns and shrapnel spraying the trenches, you feel shivery and shaky;

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Photo: Imperial War Museum.

GENTLY DOES IT

This illustration, like the lower one on page 75, deals with the aftermath of the 58th Division's capture of Chipilly in August, 1918. R.A.M.C. stretcher-bearers are shown lowering a stretcher case into an abandoned trench which has been converted into a regimental aid post.

but immediately you get your man on board you are steady as a rock.

The Somme, September, 1916, when the first tanks went over. Field-ambulance headquarters are about 12 miles behind the line. Thirty of you are ordered to go up with stretchers and collect wounded from an aid-post. The convoy is held up by shelling, which catches ammunition columns, A.S.C. waggons, and artillery. You pass men with their heads blown off; the road is splashed with blood. You are called out to help fill up shell-holes so that other convoys may pass over them.

Long before you get to the line you come into a hurricane of shell-fire and shrapnel, and crawl through trenches to High Wood over ground left by the Germans and littered with dead. The stench is such that you suddenly heave and bring up your last biscuit. The infantry have advanced; you are going up with the reserves. The enemy artillery plasters the reserves, and you get it too. Shells are falling on the trench with deadly precision; there is a searching cross-fire; you feel you can't go through it all and come out alive.

"Open out a bit," comes the order. The stretchers are then some yards apart. *Cr-r-r-ump! Crash!* One of your comrades is dead. But you plod on.

The "Cough Drop"—an isolated dug-out full of wounded which have been dumped there by the regimental bearers. Your first case is a six-foot-two Boche, head protruding well beyond one end of the stretcher, feet beyond the other. He has a broken thigh-bone, a wound in the chest, has been three or four days without food, and suffers great pain.

"Just our luck, clicking a big German—like this!" you grumble.

The procession moves off, four men to a stretcher, with four miles to go, knee-deep in mud most of the way. When the shells pitch over in salvoes you see bearers put the stretcher down and *cover the wounded man with their own bodies.*

A Harrowing Appeal

In the darkness there is a cry: "Stretcher-bearers! Can't you take my pal?" You look at the fellow's pal and nod your head. In an hour he'll be gone. "For God's sake! Do take my pal!"

On the way there's a relay dressing-station. The fellow who cussed first because he clicked a six-foot-two Boche dives across and brings the Boche a mug of tea.

"*Gott sei Dank,*" murmurs the Boche. "*Gott sei Dank!*"

If there is time before daylight you go up for a second load.

Another visit to the "Cough Drop." The tanks are going up and our men advancing in the morning, so you go up in daylight and sit on the steps of the deep German dug-out, flinching at the shelling, waiting to go out with wounded after dark. Below, you can see the M.O. at the operating-table. Some of your colleagues try to read books, one or two the New Testament.

And there, with the M.O., is an un-

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

NEAR GUÉMAPPE

A typical scene at a regimental aid-post near the above village on April 29th, 1917. Guémappe lies just south of the Arras—Cambrai road, 10 km. out of Arras, and was captured by the British in the great advance of April 23rd. The 29th itself was a "quiet" day.

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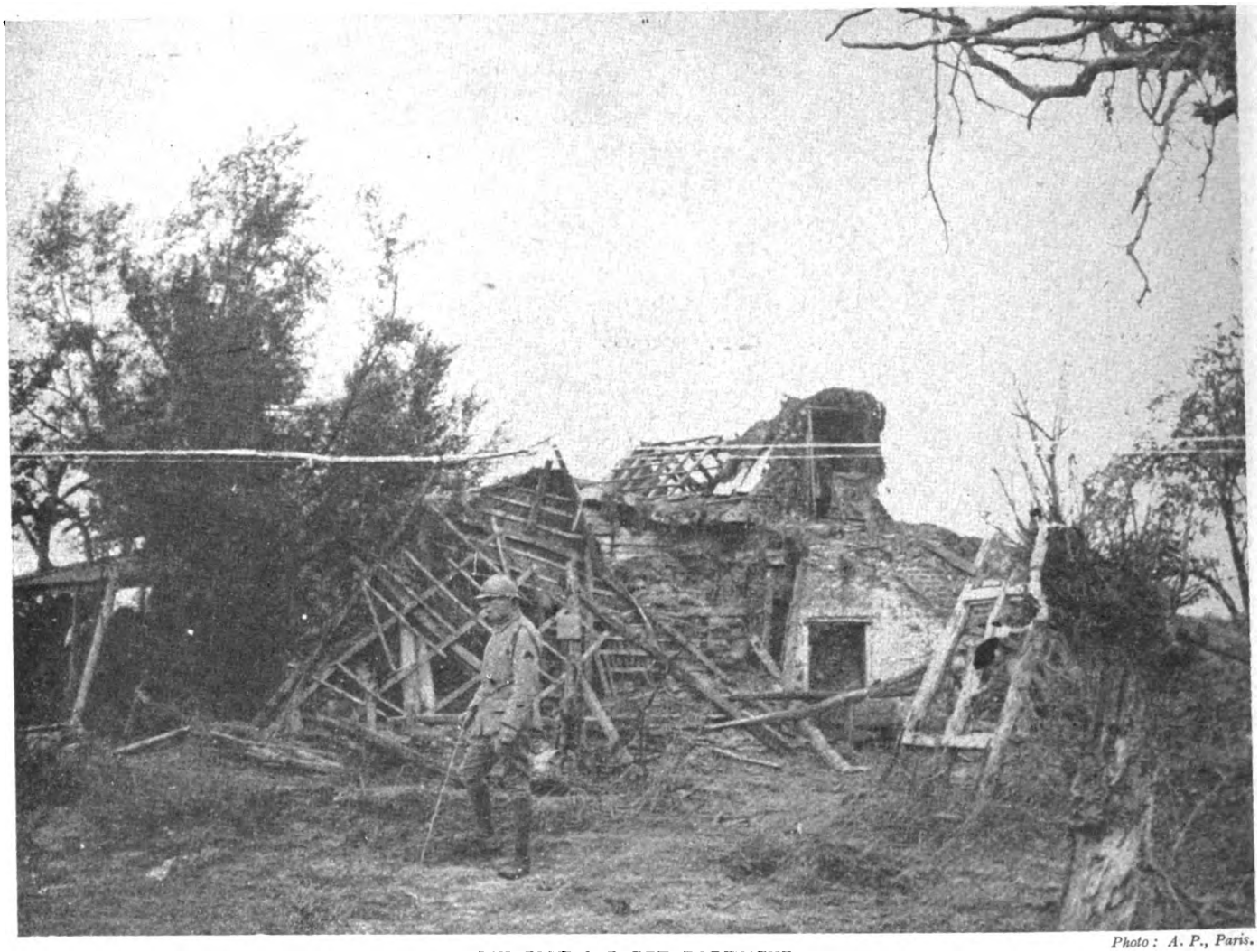

Photo: A. P., Paris.

THE BLUE CABARET, BOESINGHE

This very questionable-sounding haunt served the French soldiery stationed near it only in the innocent capacity of an observation post; and, in truth, its condition during August, 1917, as revealed in this photograph, qualifies it for little else. Unfortunatly no trace of the "Cabaret Bleu" can be discovered to-day, and seemingly it has vanished even from the local inhabitants' recollection.

sung hero of the 21st London—Sergeant Heather of the regimental bearers, one of the finest, bravest men who ever went to war. There is a terrific bombardment outside as the infantry go over the top. Suddenly a man rushes in, eyes staring out of his head, yelling like a hurt kid. He has been shot through the face, and is bleeding at the mouth.

"Steady, pal!" says Heather quietly. "It's all right. You're out of it now."

He goes to a cabinet, patches up the chap's face, talks to him consolingly as might a mother. Another casualty is carried in. Heather, rough-looking with a week or two's beard, talks to him, too, in his quiet, infinitely patient voice.

You'll see field-ambulance men come up through shelled country to assist the regimental bearers, and arrive at the dug-out dead-beat. Thinking of the work ahead of them, they are jumpy, nervy. Immediately they come into the quiet, commanding presence of Heather they are at peace with themselves and inspired by his supreme example to give of their best—go out and do anything demanded of them, no matter at what risk.

The last you see of Heather in the ebb of that attack, is sitting crumpled at the side of the trench, a gash on his face, mouth agape, speechless, dead-beat and done, worked out to the bone.

Helping the Helpless

Another unsung hero is Captain Ironsides, M.O. of the 4th London Field Ambulance. At night, after a heavy day spent in patching broken men, he steals out alone into shell-holes taking food and drink to wounded who cannot yet be moved. One day you hear some field-ambulance men discussing him:

"Fed up with us, he is. We don't always care to go on his jaunts. You see, he's one o' these blokes who believe in the Old Boy above. Some of us aren't so sure about it. That makes a difference."

Vimy Ridge, just before the Canadian attack: advance dressing-station at Souchez, in a valley which is the mortuary of some 70,000 French dead: swarms of rats, rotting limbs, filthy pools, and an overpowering stench. You go out at about 5 p.m. to a huge quarry behind the Ridge, only a hundred yards or so from the Germans, where 500 men could be stowed. In the quarry are infantry, regimental bearers, field-ambulance bearers, the regimental M.O.

The Saxons are in the line, and not a shot has been fired for a fortnight. Tommies go out and offer them cigarettes and bully, and get presents in return.

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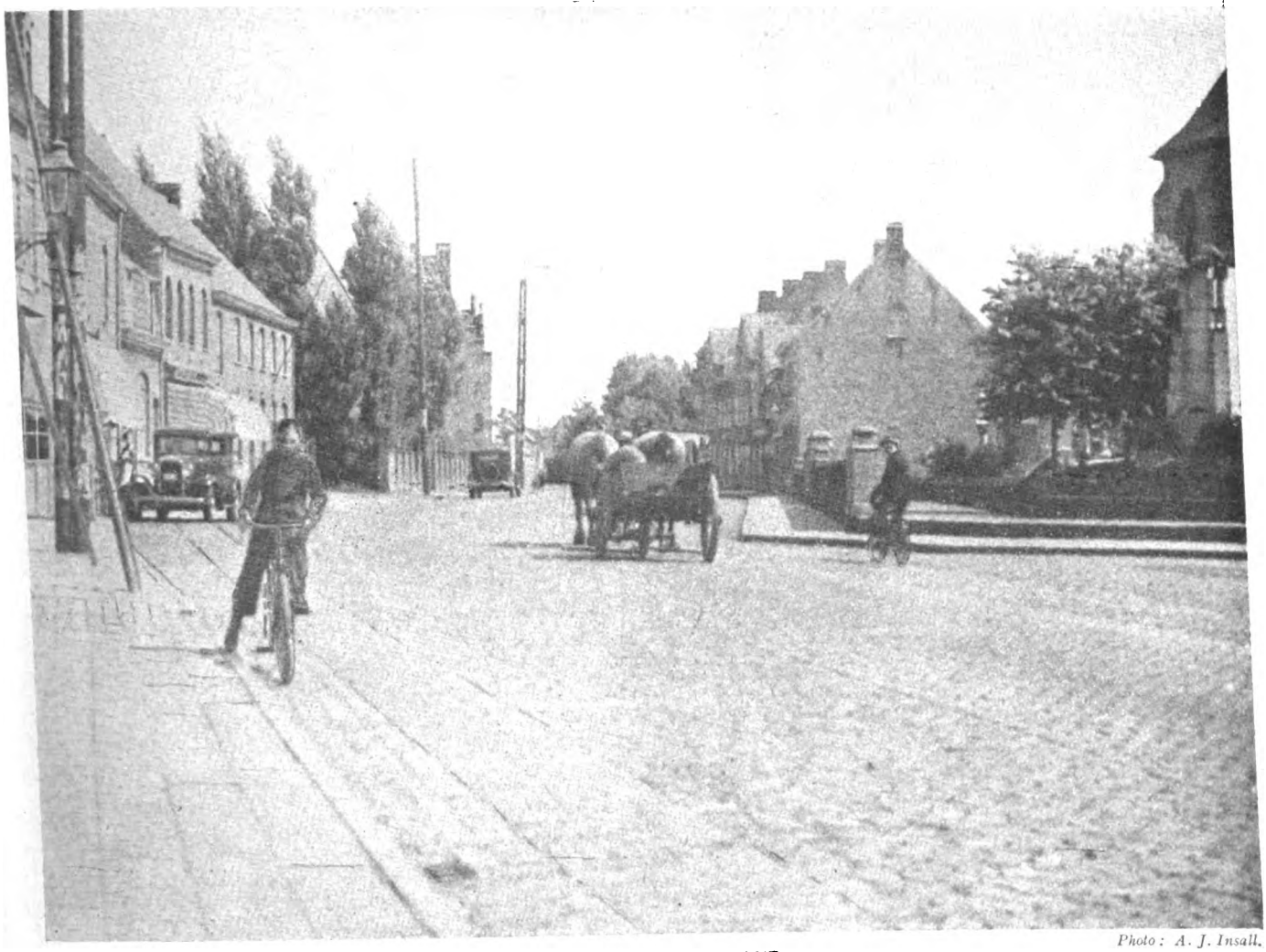

Photo: A. J. Insall.

A WIDE STREET, BOESINGHE

As mentioned on page 59 of this volume, Boesinghe was sacked by the enemy in 1914, after which it was not again reached by him. Its chief interest for the Tommy is that for a long while it constituted the junction-point between the British and Belgian or French forces. The Guards, 30th, and 36th Divisions were successively in touch with our Allies here between 1916 and May, 1918.

Says one: "Come on, let's go over and have a talk to old Jerry."

"No fear! I don't like the feel of it," says his pal.

Presently the whole racket starts up again; shells bump over. The Prussians are in, kicking the Saxons and making them fight. Men of ours who went over to shake hands return with white faces, some of them wounded. Soon there is the cry: "Stretcher-bearers wanted!"

"All right, boys," someone says. "Now we'll see Jerry all right!"

Two of you move out, crawl along broken trenches, find a man who was a sentry between the lines with a deep wound in the chest. You plug him as best you can with bullets snapping past, struggle back through squelching mud to the quarry, place him on a wheel stretcher, and take him to Souchez with the racket going on. On the way you notice his knees coming up, and fear lockjaw has set in. An orderly comes out of the dressing-station with pencil and note-book:

"Name? Number? Religion?"

"Never mind a damn about that," you reply. "The man's dying. Call the doctor."

Back again for another case. So it goes on.

In the Cellars Under the Ruins

Aix-Noulette, north of the Somme: a cellar under the girder-work of an old brewery, half-a-mile from the German line. About 90 French civilians are living like rats in these cellars. The stretcher-bearers "scrounge" beds from the houses and "kip" three or four to a bed, head to feet, feet to head—one of the funniest sights you can see in any war. In this brewery cellar a musician performs at night to cheer everyone up. A fellow with candles decorating his bed like a shrine bawls "Pack up your troubles in your old kit bag!"

In the intervals of going up the line for wounded there are water-carrying and other fatigues. At roll-call one morning outside the billet one fellow is still in bed. "Here, staff!" he shouts through the cellar grating when he hears his name. The staff thinks the voice comes from the ranks. The others snigger. And the lead-swinger turns over again for a nice long nap.

There's a lance-corporal, a Jew, with a glib tongue but a big heart, and a good stretcher-bearer; and also a corporal, a Scot. They hate each other like poison, but the Jew usually scores in any dispute. There is a rule against stealing fruit from the orchards. The Jew is fond of going over and helping himself; the Scot waits cannily to get

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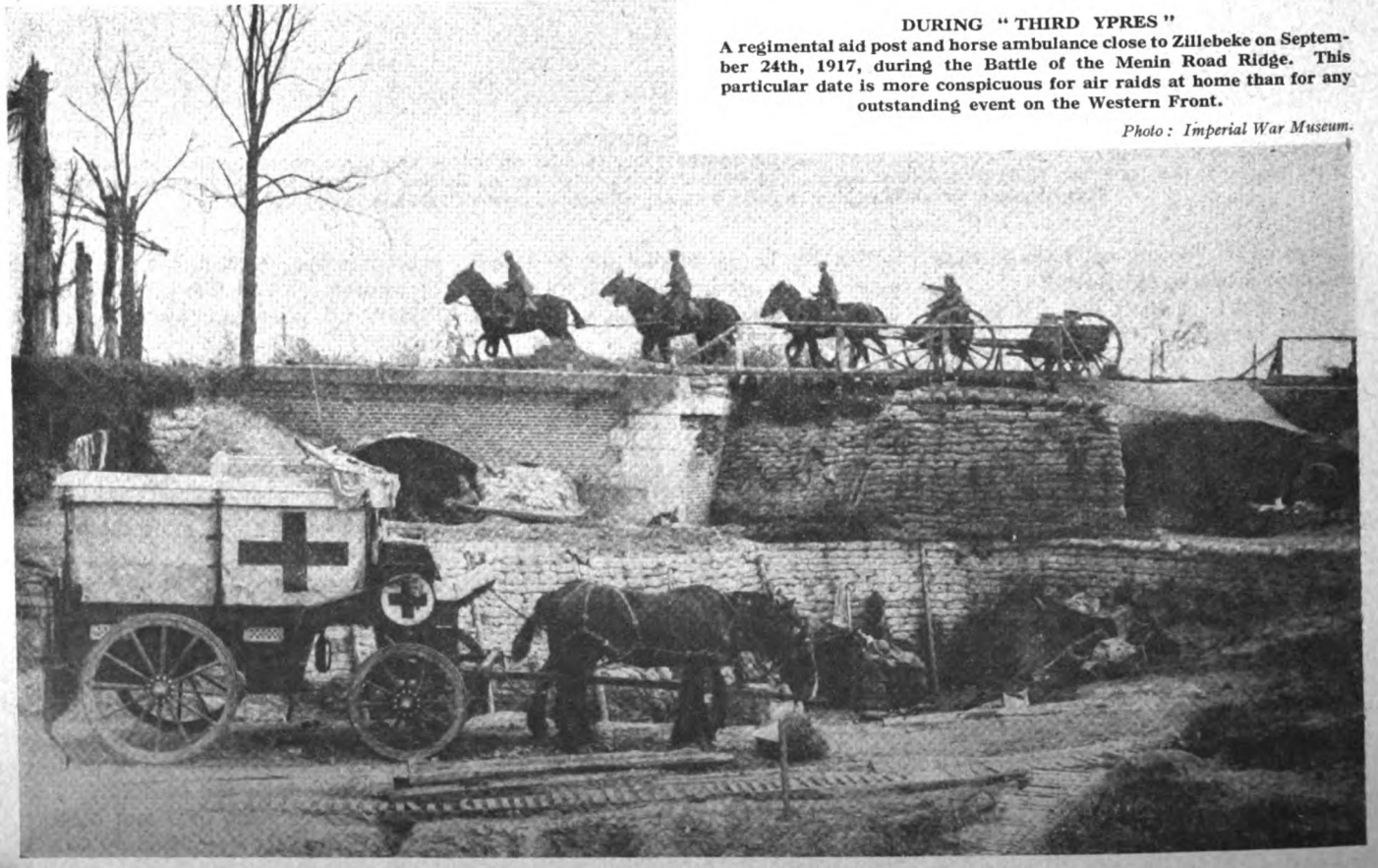
Photo: Imperial War Museum.

WOUNDED "DIGGERS"

A scene at an Anzac field dressing-station at Kandahar Farm, near Messines, on June 7th, 1917, during the Messines battle. There is now a British cemetery at this farm, whose precise location is just south of Wulverghem on the road to Neuve-Église.



DURING "THIRD YPRES"

A regimental aid post and horse ambulance close to Zillebeke on September 24th, 1917, during the Battle of the Menin Road Ridge. This particular date is more conspicuous for air raids at home than for any outstanding event on the Western Front.

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

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Photo : Imperial War Museum

WOUNDED SCOTS

Casualties of the 9th Division about to be sent back from the line by light railway on August 19th, 1918, during the Action of Outtersteene Ridge. Outtersteene, midway along the road from Vieux-Berquin to Bailleul, had been captured by us the day before.

NEAR BIRR CROSS-ROADS

At this point stretcher cases were assembled and picked up by motor ambulances during the Menin Road battle, September 20th-25th, 1917. The photograph shows wounded of the 1st and 2nd Australian Divisions returning from the line on the opening day.

Photo : Imperial War Museum.

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Photo: A. P., Paris.

BETWEEN WIELTJE AND BROODSEINDE

These two hamlets are about 6 km. apart, the former being 3 km. north-east of Ypres, the latter just over 8 km. east-north-east of it. The photograph shows a British dressing-station established in the ruined buildings of a farm near Wieltje. The village lay just inside our lines on the eve of the Third Battle of Ypres, but as our advance took the fighting-zone farther away it developed into one of many casualty clearing centres.

him, and one day finds him in the orchard.

But the Jew is sitting innocently under a tree pretending to read his Bible. It's a pity the corporal doesn't trouble to investigate further. He would find the book is the *New* Testament, specially borrowed for the occasion. . . .

Now let us change the scene to another front of a vastly different kind—the Struma, above Salonica. There is to be a raid on Bulgar villages. You build up your hospital on the border of the Plain and work in conjunction with the infantry, going over after them, and marking out a path with small white flags to guide the stretcher-bearers to the waiting *travoys*—stretchers on long frames, dragged by mules.

There is silent marching through the fragrant, sub-tropical Macedonian night, between tall reeds and grasses, across ravines, the leader carrying a light masked from the enemy; then a long wait for dawn, lying in the grass, with the noise of night-birds overhead.

Amid the Hills of Macedonia

Our barrage opens. The enemy replies. Then the infantry go forward to attack the trenches and posts round the villages, and there is a call to collect wounded. You tie up the mules and *travoys* at the nearest suitable point—perhaps in the cover of a ravine or clump of trees—rush out for the wounded, patch them up in a trench, bring them back, get them on to the *travoys*, and out they go to field hospital. Shells come pretty close, but fortunately some of them are duds.

When the infantry have finished their stunt and retired, the regimental M.O. is still working away at the last of the wounded, with nothing between him and his bearers and the enemy, should the latter decide to counter-attack. He seems quite unconcerned, as though he were in a Harley Street consulting-room.

"Better hurry up," you suggest. "The infantry have gone back."

"Don't get windy," he retorts, and carries on.

Three days later this M.O. goes over the top, brings back two or three men in turn on his back, and at the last moment is shot.

In the big Doiran attacks, of course, the organisation is similar to that on the Western Front, except that *travoys* are used over rough hillpaths, and ambulance waggons can approach nearer the front line in daylight, by some ravine tracks under cover of high ridges.

Farther afield, Mr. Francis Brett Young, who served as a major in the

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R.A.M.C., has given us, in *Marching on Tanga*, a graphic account of German askaris swooping on a field dressing-station in East Africa :

" In a second the whole place was swept by maxim fire, hellishly loud in the bush, and bullets were singing everywhere. Luckily most of the fire was high. T—— was busy trying to get the wounded officers deeper into the bush. Another murderous burst of fire. We all kept low. Indeed I was sheltering behind the body of the dead sepoy on the stretcher.

" The wounded men whom I had dressed and sent to lie down under a tree were getting restless. I counted seven of them, all, providentially, with wounds of the arms or body. And then, without any warning, I saw the Gurkhas, who had lain fighting in the roadway, scramble to their feet and come running towards me. One clutched me by the arm. ' Jaldi karo . . . make haste, Sah'b,' he cried.

A Breathless Hour in East Africa

" Our stretcher-bearers and ward-orderlies were scattering in every direction. I shouted to the wounded Baluchi jemadar to keep the wounded men together. . . . Keeping as low as we might, we crawled out of the bullet-swept area and ran into the bush. Five Africans who had been lying under the thorns joined us. We were fifteen men in all with one rifle between us.

" We halted breathless. For a moment the firing had stopped. Then they came with a rush, sweeping through the dressing-station, now inhabited only by the dead, and then, having found it empty, hot upon our track . . . A pause . . . and then a few scattered rifle shots : the whistle of bullets very near. They had found us. We could hear them crashing through the bush. The machine gun started again."

There followed a frantic flight through the bush with the wounded, the German askaris hot in prusuit. That kind of thing happened not infrequently in open warfare. At any time aid-posts and dressing-stations were liable to be overrun ; and enemy native troops were not taught to have much respect for the Red Cross as the non-combatant symbol of succour.

On Gallipoli the regimental bearers and field-ambulance units had an arduous, heart-breaking time. Describing the evacuation of wounded from Anzac and Suvla, the Official Historian [1] says :

[1] *Military Operations : Gallipoli*, ii, compiled by Brigadier-General C. F. Aspinall-Oglander.

Photo : A. J. Insall.

RUSTIC BEAUTY

Why our camera-man should have chosen to feature the dustbin side of this cottage is more than we can imagine, but perhaps he thought it would look as though they were still clearing casualties. In the German offensive of 1918 Wieltje just passed back into the fighting-area, and of course all the country between it and Broodseinde was well under enemy control. Prior to April 9th our front line had extended along the Passchendaele—Broodseinde—Becelaere ridge.

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" Throughout the four days' fighting the sufferings of the wounded at Anzac, and in a lesser degree at Suvla, had been almost indescribable. The collection of gravely wounded cases from the steep hillsides at Anzac into the tortuous valleys below, and their conveyance thence to the beach, were only carried out with extreme difficulty. Conveyance by hand-stretchers was the sole practical means: and the stretcher-bearers worked till they dropped. But it was quite impossible to deal expeditiously with very large numbers in this manner; and the sides of the gullies were lined with gravely wounded men, lying out in the blazing sun, choked by the dust of passing troops and mules, tortured by flies, and driven mad by thirst."

Down on the beach conditions were almost as bad. There were not enough lighters for the prompt evacuation of all the wounded, nor of trawlers for the light cases. What the doctors, bearers, and orderlies suffered in such an exigency, under tropical heat and shell-fire, with scant cover, may be imagined.

Sir Philip Gibbs's Tribute

The work of the R.A.M.C.—routine, matter-of-fact, undistinguished in the public mind—was an essential part of the war machine from the moment when the first troops landed in France. Not until the Battle of Neuve Chapelle, in the early part of 1915, was it given prominence. Sir Philip Gibbs then paid it an epic tribute in his dispatch to *The Daily Chronicle*, for he had seen the stretcher-bearers working among the wounded with almost superhuman gallantry.

The good-natured jibe against the " old sweats "—Rob All My Comrades —was passed on to the New Armies. Every man with a cross on his tunic, a brassard on his arm, was a " poultice-walloper," every M.O. an " O.C. Number Nines "—a caustic reference to the popular pill which usually accompanied " Medicine and duty " at sick parade.

But the R.A.M.C. had shown its mettle under raking fire; and most men in the subsequent years had experience of kindnesses from bearers and orderlies which were not contracted for in the Corps Manual.

The New Army field ambulances attracted thousands of professional men who preferred mending to smashing—men of intellect, sensibility, and good professional standing; and all but a few did their job selflessly and conscientiously, where there was every temptation to scamp it.

One representative of many whom the writer can recall is now a famous music-critic; another is a well-known R.B.A., whose pictures appear on the line in the Royal Academy most years. Their field-ambulance comrades respected them as fine men and good soldiers, though—heaven knows—war wasn't much in their line, and what they saw of it in the raw made them suffer spiritually.

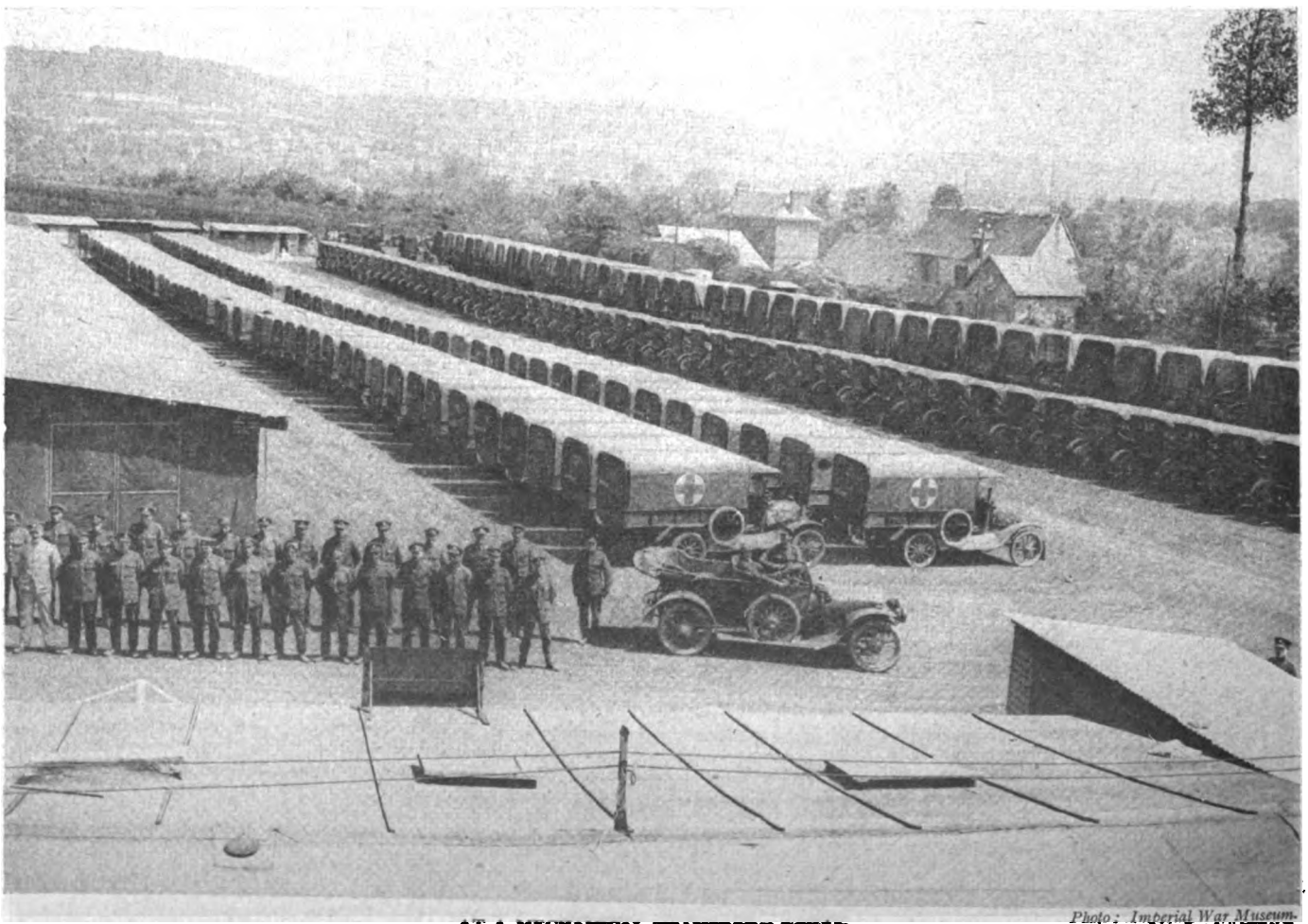

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

AT A MECHANICAL TRANSPORT DEPÔT

The photograph shows a detachment of lorries and motor ambulances ready for issue in a car-park at the Base Mechanical Transport Depôt, Rouen, on May 31st, 1918. British camps and hospitals occupied the southern outskirts of the city during almost the whole of the Four Years. The hospitals included eight general, five stationary, one British Red Cross, and one native labour, together with No. 2 Convalescent Depôt.

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CHAPTER VII

HOW THE BIG GUNS WORK

As the Great War of 1914–18 dragged on it came to pass that until the end of 1917 the guns played an ever-increasing part in both attack and defence. Gone were the days when a few shrapnel shells had been considered adequate by us for every purpose; H.E. had come into its own, and by 1918 the Western Front literally shivered, shook, and heaved under the incessant cannonade. To the infantryman the guns and, in particular, the big guns, were objects of curiosity. Every man in the front line knew what giant shells could do, but few understood much of the intricate machines that hurled the missiles through the air, or how they were directed upon fixed points within the enemy's lines. In the following chapter something of all this is explained, and explained as simply as a highly technical subject will permit.

Prior to the Great War, gunnery was regarded as one of the occult sciences. No young man dared aspire to a commission in the Royal Artillery unless endowed with a mathematical brain and a considerable knowledge of science. The gunner-sergeant was considered by his friends to be an astonishing combination of military virtues—a master of horse, a clever arithmetician, and a skilled fireworker. The private soldier was said to require at least three years of careful instruction before he could claim to be a qualified gunner.

The Six-months Gunner

The Great War exploded the legend. Quite ordinary people—officers and other ranks—were translated in six months into efficient gunners, and went over to France to perform valuable service as such. True, horsemanship had become less important, but, on the other hand, gunnery was now far more exacting in its demands. Of course, even the gunner manufactured in six months pretended to a knowledge and skill beyond the capacity of the foot-soldier, but he did not succeed in persuading a very large section of the public to accept his pretension.

There is, indeed, but little difference between the service of a big gun and the handling of a rifle. The two weapons are closely akin. Both consist essentially of the same parts and embody the same principles. Both have a steel barrel—a "hole with iron round it," as it has been called—through which the projectile is driven by the charge, so that it may leave the muzzle in a particular direction, and with a particular momentum, in the hope of hitting a target a particular distance away, and inflicting on it serious damage. Both barrels are "rifled," so that the spin necessary to enable an elongated projectile to travel point-foremost may be given. Both weapons are breech-loading, and in both the explosion of the charge is effected by a trigger which operates a hammer, which in its turn strikes a cap or a primer. In many guns, as in the rifle, the escape of gas through the breech is prevented by the use of a brass cartridge-case. Both weapons are designed to eject the empties conveniently.

The sights in both work on similar principles. The barrels have to be pointed at a certain angle above the line joining weapon and target (line of sight) in order to counteract the effect of gravity during the time of flight, and they have to be pointed right or left of the target to compensate for wind or movement as required. In both cases, the necessary elevation and deflection are put on the sight; but, in the one, the rifleman elevates and trains his weapon from the shoulder, whereas, in the other, the angles are put on by turning wheels which operate various mechanisms.

In the modern gun, there is always some means of absorbing recoil and of bringing the piece back to the firing position. The rifle is designed and weighted so that the rifleman can use his body for these purposes, provided that he keeps the butt well pressed into his shoulder.

Comparisons in Ranging

Bullet and shell have much in common. Both are shaped to receive a minimum of resistance from the air, but a bursting charge of explosive, allowed to the shell, is forbidden by international law to the bullet. The gunner makes an elaborate calculation to find out what correction to apply to his gun to compensate for all the conditions peculiar to the moment of firing—the wear of the gun, wind, and so on. The rifleman knows that, if his barrel is worn or if the wind is against him, he must raise his sight a little. For high-angle fire, the gunner uses the howitzer and the mortar, the rifleman the bomb and rifle-grenade.

No doubt other similarities will occur to readers; but enough has been written to show that there is no essential difference between shooting with a gun and shooting with a rifle, and no great disparity between the mental standards required respectively for the artilleryman and the infantryman.

What principally differentiates the gunner from the rifleman is that his weapon is so weighty that it requires a carriage; that, by divers devices, he is able to fire it from under cover; and that his projectile has a variety of contents—bullets, explosives, gas.

The connection between the gun and the machine gun—which, for the most part, belongs to the infantry—is even closer. For the latter has a stand, corresponding somewhat to the carriage, on which it can be elevated and traversed, and in which (or in the gun-mechanism) arrangements are made for absorbing recoil. The machine gun, like the gun, can also be used for indirect fire and for barrage-fire, of which more anon.

Surprisingly enough, too, there is no wide gap between the gunner of ancient days and the modern gunner, in spite of all the accumulated stores of science at the disposal of the latter. In the year of the Spanish Armada, Cyprian Lucar translated and dedicated to Henry VIII a famous Italian work called *Three Bookes of Colloquies Covering the Arte of Shooting in Great and Small Peeces of Artillerie*, and he added thereto an appendix which dealt with "*The Properties, Office, and Duteie of a Gunner*," from which we may cull quite a lot of useful advice:

"A Gunner ought to be a sober, wakefull, lustie, hardie, patient, prudent and quick spirited man. He ought also to have a good eyesight, a good judgement, and perfect knowledge to select a con-

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Photo: Imperial War Museum.

FIRING FROM THE RAILWAY

A 9·2-inch railway gun, belonging to the Royal Marine Artillery, firing at Woesten on August 23rd, 1917. Woesten is on the Ypres—Furnes—Nieuport line (and also main road) 8 km. north-west of Ypres, and roughly half that distance due west of Boesinghe. The date falls between those of the Langemarck and Menin Road Ridge battles; but on the Menin Road, and in the various woods adjacent to it, fierce fighting was nevertheless being carried on.

venient place in the day of service, to plant his Ordinance where he may doe most hurt unto the enemies, and be least annoyed by them, and where his Ordinance may not be surprised by the enemie.

Skilfull in Arithmeticke

" A Gunner ought to be skilfull in Arithmeticke and Geometrie, to the end he may be able by his knowledge in those artes to measure heights, depthes, breadthes and lengthes, and to draw the plat of any peece of ground, and to make mines, countermines, artificiall firewoorkes, rampiars, gabbions or baskets of earth, and such like things which are used in times of warre to be made for offensive and defensive service.

" A Gunner ought also to procure with all his power the friendship and love of every person, and to be careful for his own safetie, and for the preservation of all those that shal be about him.

" Also he ought to be no surfeter, nor a great or sluggish sleeper, but he must gouverne him self in al times as a wise, modest, sober, honest and skilfull man ought to doe, that through want of understanding he may never leese his credite, nor an universall victorie which oftentimes by the meanes of good Gunners well managing their peeces is gotten. . . ." [1] And so on.

The gun and its carriage passed through numerous stages before they reached their present state of perfection. The earliest cannon were laid along the ground for firing, being supported merely in a frame of timber, and were given elevation by the insertion of wedges under the muzzle. The next development was a huge cannon with a calibre of 36 inches, which was used at the siege of Constantinople in 1453, and, for its transport, required 30 waggons, linked together and drawn by a team of 60 oxen. " Mons Meg," now in Edinburgh Castle, is of this type, but its calibre is only 20 inches.

Up to the end of the 16th century, guns were used almost exclusively in fortress warfare, and were consequently of large calibre and borne on cumbrous carriages.

[1] Quoted by *The Gunner Magazine*, June, 1937.

Gustavus Adolphus, the great leader of the 17th century, was the first to render the gun mobile and to use it in the field. He adopted a weapon mounted on a carriage drawn by two men, and another on a carriage drawn by two horses. Then the limber was invented, giving four wheels to the carriage, and shortening the time of coming into action.

During Marlborough's wars, our light artillery was drawn by four horses, and was distinguished, according to a continental writer, " by its lightness, its elegance and the good quality of its materials." The drivers were civilian carters, and marched on foot. At the end of the 18th century, drivers were enlisted and rode, gunners were mounted on the carriages, and the pace could therefore be increased beyond that of the walk.

Carriages at Waterloo

Improvement was, however, a slow process. When a field-gun fired, it recoiled 24 feet or thereabouts—a defect which entailed great labour in

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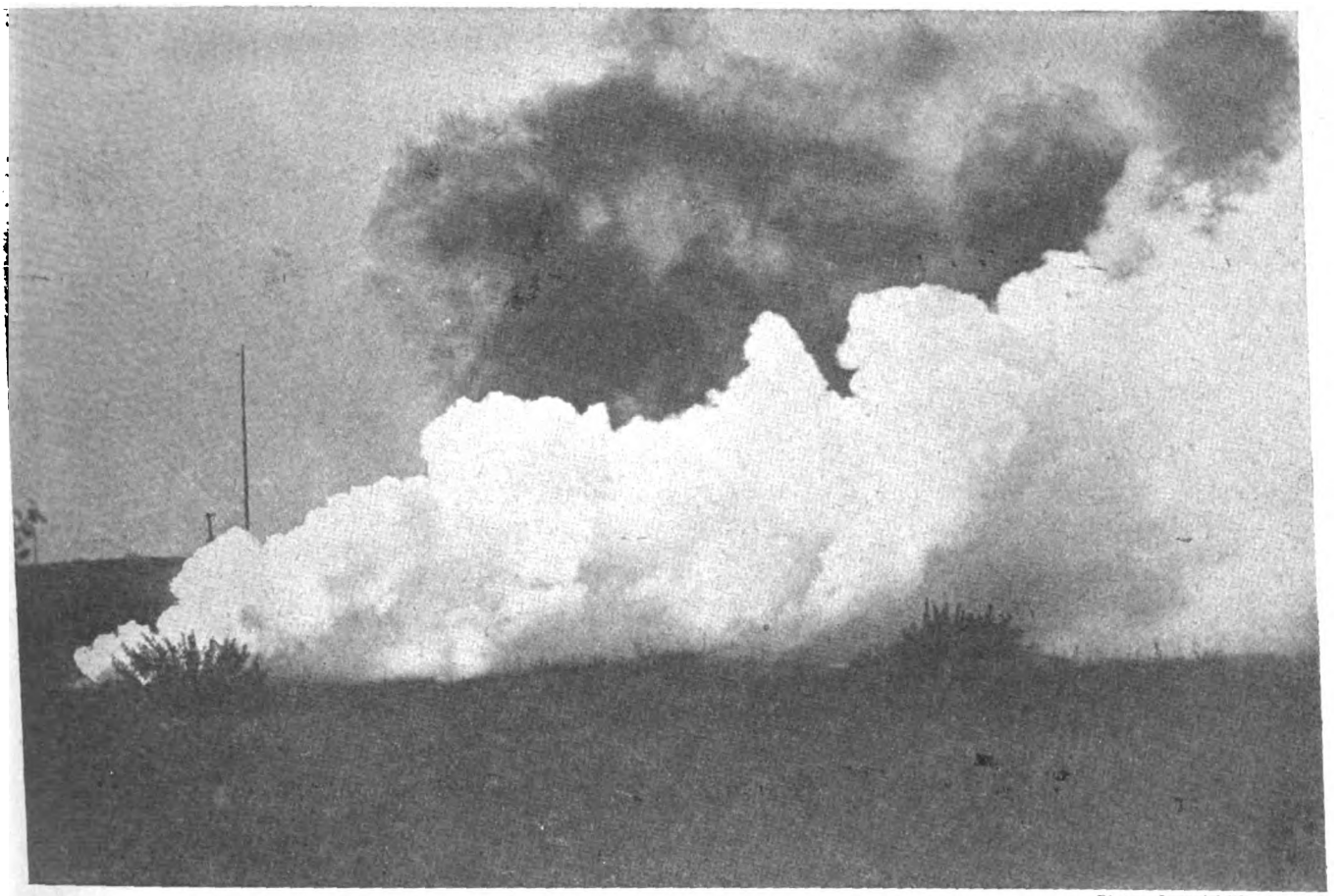

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

MAKING A SMOKE-SCREEN

The purpose of the screen is to conceal artillery batteries, and the photograph was taken during the fighting in the Passchendaele area in September, 1917. If "Third Ypres" stands out in the minds of infantrymen as one of the worst battles in the War, it is remembered by gunners as a nightmare without parallel. Never were British guns, be they heavy or light, so hopelessly incapacitated by the artilleryman's worst enemy, mud.

running up, and a great delay between rounds. At Waterloo, for instance, the gunners, after a time, became too exhausted to run up their guns. The carriages, therefore, kept receding from the line, and finally got so much bunched together that they could hardly be fired.

Then came a great advance in the invention of the recoil-buffer—a device which consists of a cylinder filled with oil, a piston, and a piston-rod. An opening in the piston (or in the wall of the cylinder), known as the "port," allows the oil to pass under pressure from one side of the piston to the other.

Thus, if the piece be attached to the piston-rod and the carriage to the cylinders (or vice versa), and the carriage be provided with a suitable slide upon which the piece can move backwards and forwards, recoil will be checked by the resistance which the oil in the cylinder opposes to the movement of the piston, a resistance which can be varied as required by the size given to the "port." Then, instead of recoil-movement of the carriage along the ground, we get movement only of the gun along the carriage. The carriage itself remains steady, the detachment can stand round it, and rapid fire becomes possible.

The carriage was further steadied through being anchored to the ground by the brakes, and by a spade fixed to the end of the trail.

To complete the system, which was introduced in 1890 and gradually developed into the present Q.F. equipment, an arrangement was designed for returning the gun to its original position. This is known as "recuperation," and, in its simplest shape, takes the form of springs, which, compressed by the gun in its recoil, reassert themselves and drive the gun forward into the firing position.

Heavy artillery was employed in the field in Spain by Wellington, and in the Indian Mutiny and Crimea. In general it was neglected or even abandoned in peacetime. Gunners, since the days when they first tasted speed, have always liked to move rapidly. Horse-gunners have been accused of saying—"If it wasn't for these b——— guns, how we could gallop!" And Norman Ramsay has been the beau ideal of gunners, not, as might be supposed, because he wrought destruction among our enemies by quick and accurate fire, but because he galloped through them, with his guns, inflicting negligible loss in the process. So the cry in peacetime has been for mobility. But in war there is at once a demand for greater fire-power, only to be obtained through heavy guns.

Artillery in the Boer War

In the South African War there was an early cry for them, for our field artillery, though numerous, was outgunned both in weight and in range by some of the Boer ordnance. Four-point-sevens—obsolescent naval guns—were towed to Ladysmith on cumbrous carriages improvised on board ship; and so good a "press" did they have that the Government ordered 200 new ones to be made, which were completed about the time the war ended.

Nobody then wanted them, and so they remained until 1914 rusting in the

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Arsenal, out of which, on the usual call for more "heavies," they were then dug, to be regarded, in the scarcity of other weapons, as great treasures. They were given second-rate carriages, on which, having a high velocity, they recoiled violently. It used to be said of them that, if their shells created as much alarm and despondency in the hostile ranks as the guns, on firing, did in the battery position, they were worth all the pains suffered by the detachments on their account.

Actually, at the beginning of the War, we possessed a first-class heavy gun—the 60-pounder—perhaps the best in Europe. But we had only one battery (4 guns) to each division—a total of 24.

In addition to these, there were 24 old 6-inch howitzers, which were kept in coast-defences and, though occasionally allowed to let off a round or two, were never taken seriously. We were fortunate, however, in having a well-run school of Siege Artillery at Lydd, which laid valuable foundations of knowledge in this branch of gunnery.

In 1913, or early 1914, Sir Archibald Murray asked the present writer to produce a paper on heavy artillery for the War Office. I pointed out that our possible enemies—the Germans—possessed nearly 800 heavy guns and howitzers, and that they would certainly follow the precedent set by the Japanese in 1904 and employ them in the field. Against these, we could set only those mentioned in the preceding paragraph.

A considerable increase was therefore desirable. If, however, that was beyond our finances, then at least the old 6-inch howitzers should be properly equipped, rendered mobile, and employed in the field so that commanders might obtain experience in their handling. As a result, one battery was sent on manœuvres, where it received a welcome much less warm than that extended to it on the Aisne a year later, when it made our first reply to the German 5·9-inch howitzer. Up till that moment, our lack of heavy weapons had greatly annoyed our infantry, who would have taken much more kindly to shelling by "Jack Johnsons" and "Black Marias" had we been able to answer back.

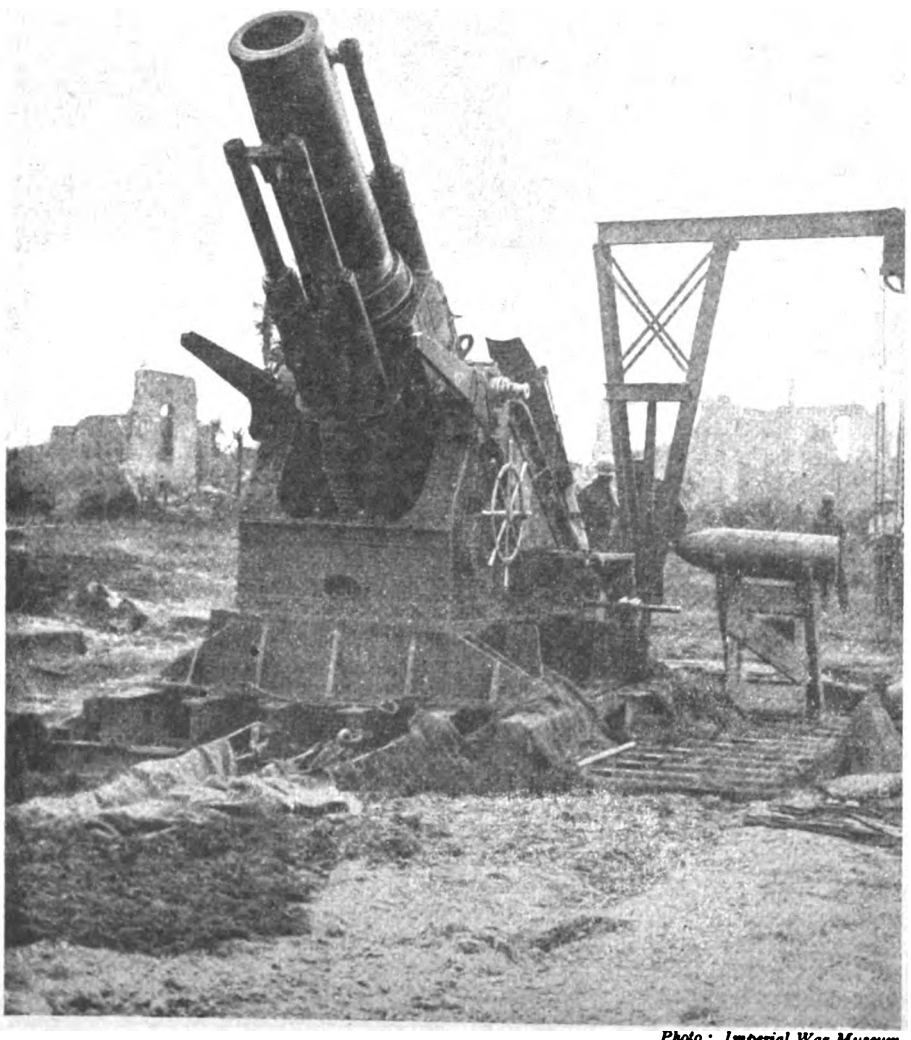

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

INTRODUCING "GRANNIE"

"Grannie," a 15-inch Mark II howitzer, was one of the larger guns employed against the enemy during September, 1917, in the Ypres Salient, where she is here seen in action. The 15-inch "how," built for transport by road, was designed a few days after the beginning of the War by Admiral Bacon, who had retired from the Navy and become general manager of the Coventry Ordnance Works.

"Mother" Makes her Curtsey

Our deficiencies in this respect were realised in the first battle, and orders were placed for many modern 6-inch and 9·2-inch howitzers. A design for the latter had been approved just before the War, so it was possible to go at once into production with it. The first specimen appeared on the front in November, 1914. It was known as "Mother," and was in great demand from one end of the line to the other.

Two years later, there were 233 of these weapons in France. They were true "weapons of position," with a holdfast kept in place on recoil by a box under the muzzle, which had to be filled with seven tons of earth, a bed, a live roller-ring, and other ponderous properties. A model of the gun in stone can be seen on the top of the Artillery Memorial at Hyde Park Corner. It was an impressive and effective weapon, with a range of 10,000 yards and a shell weighing 300 lb.

Its general ponderousness gives point to the following story. On one occasion, my brigade of heavy artillery—the 14th—was largely responsible for bringing to a halt an enemy attack which had broken through the infantry and field artillery in front of us. As the batteries had put up a fine performance and had suffered considerable loss, the authorities decided to award them one M.C. and one D.C.M. per battery, the recipients to be chosen by officers and men respectively.

At that period, an unfortunate custom prevailed of exaggerating heroic

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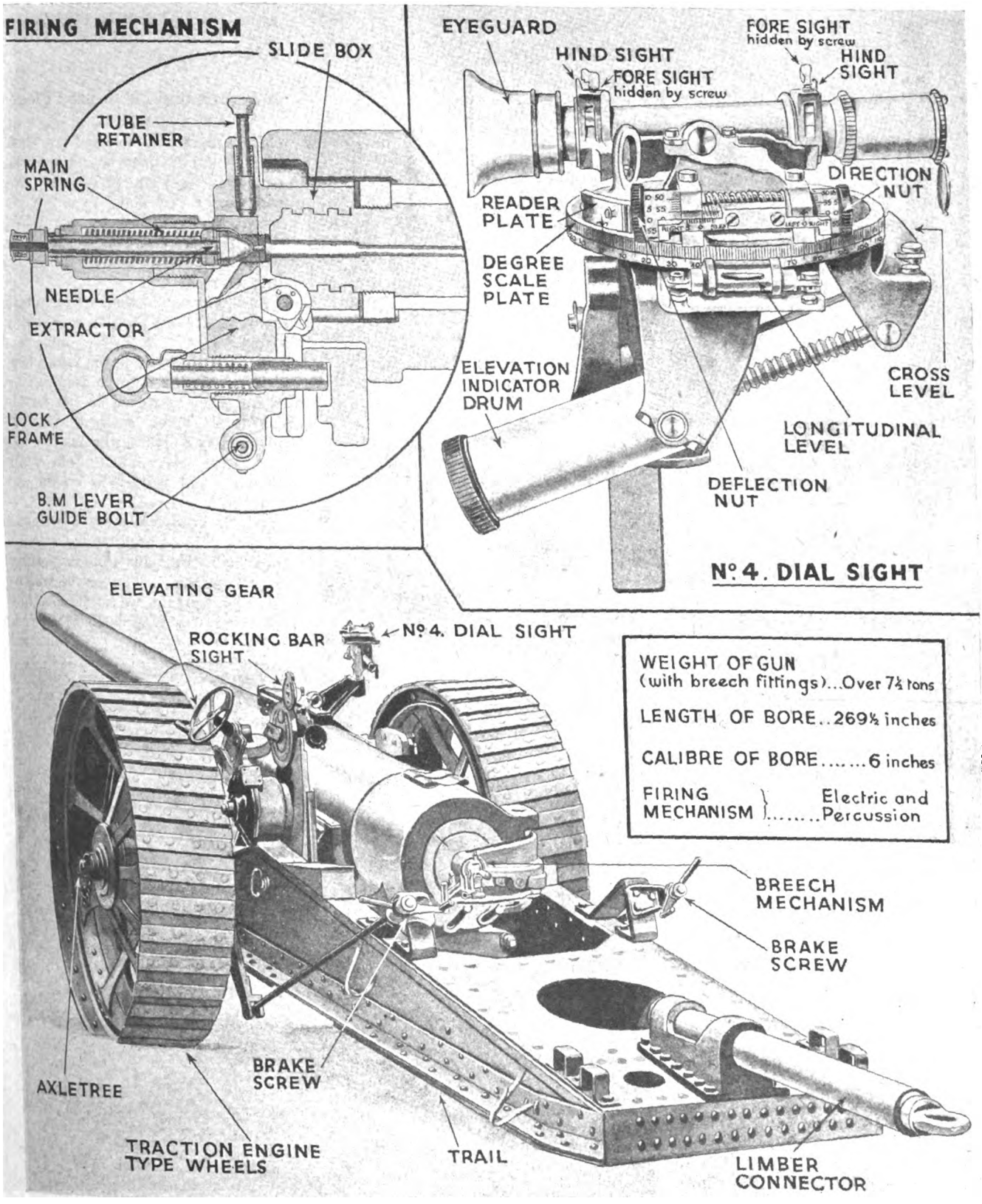

Specially drawn.

DIAGRAMS OF THE 6-INCH GUN

To be exact, the British 6-inch breech-loading Mark VII gun. This weapon comes into the category of heavy (as opposed to field) artillery, and ranks, in order of size, between the 60-pounder and the 9·2-inch. It was not such a widely-used piece as its cousin, the 6-inch howitzer. On the Fourth Army front in July, 1916, for example, there were only 20 6-inch guns, as opposed to 104 6-inch howitzers; while at Messines, less than a year later, the disparity had risen to 24 guns as against 348 howitzers.

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Photo: G. T. Watson

NEAR HERVILLY

The modern sugar-refinery at Montigny, a minute hamlet 2 km. due south of Hervilly, which in turn is 1½ km. south-east of Roisel and 13 km. east of Péronne. Allusion has frequently been made in the earlier volumes to the prevalence of the beet-sugar industry on the Somme.

deeds in order to ensure reward, where rewards were few and competitors many. In this instance, the rewards had already been settled, so no trimmings seemed necessary. Back, however, came the papers for more lurid description. A few journalistic touches satisfied the authorities with regard to all except a gunner designated for the D.C.M. in a 9·2-inch battery. Rather disgusted, I put in a deliberate leg-pull. I said that a shell had obliterated the whole detachment with the exception of Gunner Thomson, that Thomson had then, under heavy fire, continued the service of the gun alone—that is, he performed the tasks of 13 men. And, the irony having been missed, the deed stands for ever to his credit. If future generations read of it, they may well say, "There were giants indeed in those days."

A Mobile and Much-used Piece

The new 6-inch howitzer was a first-class weapon. It weighed less than 5 tons behind the team, it possessed a non-recoil carriage, and it did not, as its predecessor had done, require a platform. When drawn by the F.W.D. lorry, it was quite a mobile piece, and was often in the forefront of the battle in both advance and retreat.

As there was no serious danger from the sea, it was found possible to withdraw a number of 6-inch guns from coast defences for service in the field. Some of these continued to be used as guns, others were shortened at the muzzle, had their bores enlarged and re-appeared as 8-inch howitzers. 9·2-inch guns were also taken from coast-fortresses and were used on railway-mountings.

12-inch howitzers were constructed and used both on position- and railway-mountings, and an 18-inch howitzer weighing no less than 86 tons or, with its mounting, 356 tons, was under construction when the War came to an end.

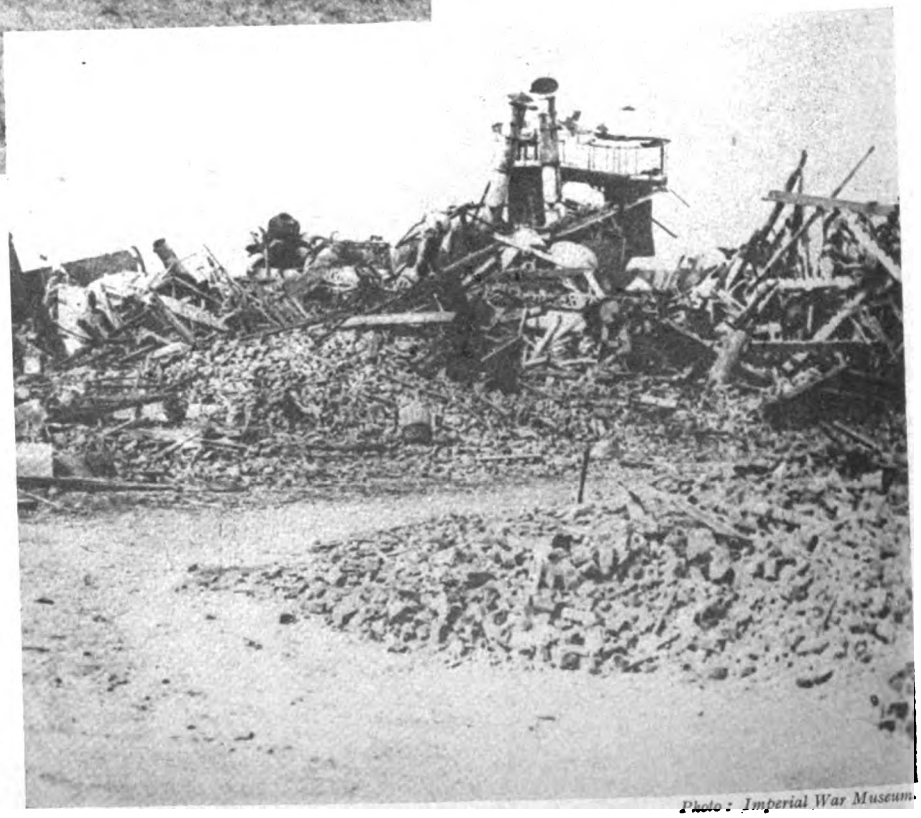

Photo: Imperial War Museum

SWEET OBLIVION

This illustration shows the condition of the former refinery at Montigny on July 29th, 1917. The 24th, 66th, and 50th Divisions of the XIX Corps were all in the Hervilly—Montigny sector on March 22nd, 23rd, 1918, retiring from it on the latter date to the west bank of the Somme. This Montigny should not be confounded with its namesake—also well known to British troops—north-east of Amiens.

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A 15-inch, known as "Granny," and designed, like "Mother," before the War, was in action, manned by naval detachments, towards the end of 1914, but proved unsatisfactory. Finally, 12-inch and 14-inch guns—very powerful and long-ranging weapons, mounted on railway carriages—came on the scene, the one late in 1916, the other in 1918.

The Germans, having won a start in the matter of ordnance, kept ahead in some respects. In 1915, they had a powerful gun firing at a range of 20 miles into Dunkirk, and, in 1918, a "Big Bertha" was shelling Paris from a distance of 75 miles. On the other hand, our material was of better quality than that of either friend or foe. In some cases it was perhaps too good, and gave the impression that mobility had been sacrificed to endurance. It is difficult to award a palm for ordnance, for each weapon is designed to fulfil a particular function; but our 6-inch howitzer and the French 155-mm. G.P.F. (*Grande Puissance Filloux*) were hard to beat.

In the early days, the demands on such "heavies" as were available was tremendous. My battery of four-sevens, on first arrival, came into action four times, in four widely separated localities,

Photo: G. T. Watson.

THE CHURCH, ABLAINCOURT
Two photographs of the village of Ablaincourt appeared in photogravure on page 53, and here we offer contrasting views of its church. The above picture was obtained amid weather-conditions worthy of Passchendaele.

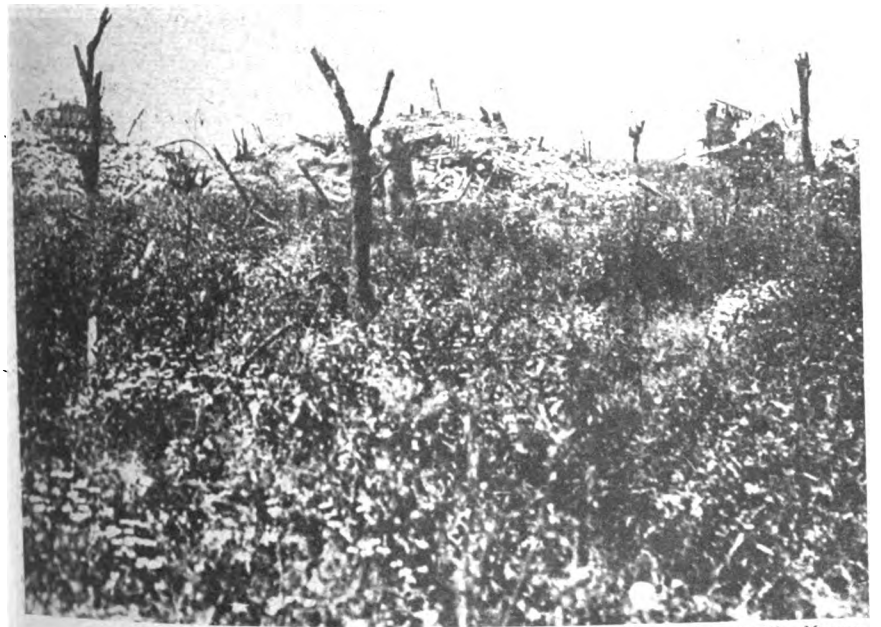

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

BENEATH A FOREST OF VEGETATION
Ablaincourt, it will be remembered, is one of the villages not far south of the Amiens—St. Quentin road, and is 4 km. north-east of Chaulnes. It shared the ebb and flow of fortune common to most Somme villages in 1917 and 1918, but had already received a severe battering during the great struggle of 1916, when it lay in the path of the French. The present photograph was taken on July 12th, 1917.

before it fired a round at the enemy. A long night-march, digging in, registration, then a telegram urgently requiring our services in another part of the line, another night-march, and so on, until the men were completely exhausted.

A Ruthless Forger

At such a time, it was naturally a matter of despair to a certain keen young subaltern—the proud possessor of two 9·2-inch "hows"—to have both his charges put out of action in one day. However, having got wind that two new 9·2-inch "hows"—a present from a grateful Dominion to her soldiers—were about to arrive at a certain station in the area, he took his transport to a station a little nearer the base, produced forged documents authorising him to take over the "hows" at once

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Photo: *Imperial War Museum.*

THE GRAND' PLACE, DOUAI

The town of Douai lies on the road between Arras and Valenciennes, and is 23 km. east-north-east of the former, just inside the western boundary of the Nord department. On October 1st, 1914—the day of the Kaiser's alleged message on "General French's contemptible little army"—General Maud'huy, commanding the French Tenth Army, advanced on Douai, but was unable to prevent the Germans from entering it a week later.

as a matter of urgency, and had them in action in the shortest possible time in the neighbourhood of his old position. He was careful, of course, to remove the brass presentation plates, and he managed to avoid discovery for a whole fortnight. After that, he fell heavily from grace.

Ammunition, to which we may turn after having dealt with the gun, falls naturally into two divisions—the cartridge and the shell—to which the tube must be added when the cartridge does not contain its own means of ignition.

For the field gun, the cartridge in its brass case is attached to the shell, and therefore loaded with it. For the field howitzer, the cartridge and the shell are separate, because the size of the charge which is inserted in the case has to be varied according to requirements. The smaller the charge, the more steeply curved the trajectory for a given range. The smallest charge for a particular howitzer might give a maximum range of 2,500 yards. It would be used at that range if there were a high obstacle in front, or if it were required to drop the shell steeply behind a hill. The largest charge naturally gives the flattest trajectory and the longest range.

The cartridge, when in a brass case, is, as with the rifle, fired by the action of a hammer on a cap or primer. When the cartridge is bare, as that of the 60-pounder, it is fired either by the pull of a lanyard on a friction-tube or by the blow of needle or striker on a percussion tube.

The British artillery prior to the War relied largely on shrapnel. This type of projectile had been invented by the distinguished British gunner who gave it his name, and devoted most of his large private fortune to its development. We therefore regarded it, perhaps, with too kindly a parental eye. We equipped the whole of our 18-pounders with it alone, and gave our 60-pounders 70 per cent. shrapnel as against 30 per cent. H.E.

Shrapnel versus H.E.

Certainly our shrapnel was excellent, but it was of no value against trenches, and its employment, especially the attainment of the correct height of burst, made high demands on training. Both the French and the Germans preferred high explosive for their field guns, the French employing 70 per cent. of it at the beginning of the War and 90 per cent. of it at the end. For howitzers and heavy guns H.E. was used almost exclusively by all the belligerents.

In H.E. shell, two kinds of fuses were employed at first: one which exploded the bursting-charge just after the shell

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had struck the ground, and another which waited to do so until the shell had reached one's dug-out. Later on, Fuse 106 was introduced—a wonderful fuse which exploded the shell instantaneously as it touched the ground, giving its fragments a lateral range of 1,000 yards, a high man-killing effect, and a considerable value for the destruction of wire-entanglements.

Smoke-shell came into use for neutralisation and to cover the advance of tanks. Gas was more often discharged from projectors in the front trenches than from guns. It took us 13 months—from July, 1917, to August, 1918—to produce effective copies of the German mustard-gas shell. These projectiles then became so popular that supply could never keep pace with demand. In October, 1918, 6-inch "hows" were asking for 36,000 of them a week, and receipts numbered only 6,000 a week.

That they were most effective may be judged from the following episode. A battery of mine was dowsed one night with gas from what was believed to be some of our own shell fired by the enemy from captured guns. It was not a good battery, as was clearly shown by the state of its gas-discipline. Of the 69 men on the guns at the time, 68 men became casualties and were evacuated. One man only remained unharmed. Let us hear what he had to say.

"About midnight, half-a-dozen big shells landed in the battery. They didn't give much of a burst, no one was hurt, and so no one was much worried. An hour or so later, a sergeant came round and told us to put on our gas-masks. Most of the men had smelt gas, and had got them on already. I didn't bother to put mine on because I never smell or taste anything. At daylight, the cooks began to take off their masks to make breakfast. Then, as they didn't seem any the worse, the other men did the same as soon as breakfast was ready. About 9 o'clock, they began to go sick, some of them very bad, and, an hour later, the whole lot were done in. That is, except me; but then, as I said, I never was one to smell anything."

The worst offender of all had escaped scot-free, and suffered no ill-effects afterwards. We kept his story very dark.

How the Gunner Finds his Target

Having discussed the gun and its ammunition, we may now turn to the various operations required for fulfilling the one essential of gunnery,

Photo: A. J. Insall.

A THRIVING CITY

Modern Douai is an important commercial town of some 40,000 inhabitants, and before the War was rich in historical buildings. Perhaps its most interesting feature for Britons is the fact that from 1568 until as late as 1903 an English college existed here, whose purpose was to train Roman Catholic priests for the conversion of our country. After their entry in October, 1914, the Germans remained in the town until the 8th Division of Lieut.-General Sir Aylmer Hunter-Weston's VIII Corps reoccupied it on October 17th, 1918.

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Photo: Imperial War Museum.

DURING THE MARCH RETREAT

18-pounder field guns in action in the open near Albert on March 28th, 1918. The gunners of the Retreat acquitted themselves in a manner which was a fitting counterpart to the performance of the infantry; and it must not be forgotten that at times the artilleryman's task was even more difficult than his colleague's in the line.

namely that the projectile shall hit the mark.

The first of these is the production, for each type of gun, of a range-table, to show the elevation in degrees above the line of sight (gun to target) which must be given for each hundred yards' range up to the extreme range of the piece. This is compiled from the results of shooting with a new gun of the particular type along a measured range.

Next, the range-table is applied to the gun. That is to say, to the carriage is affixed a range-dial which, as the gun is elevated, turns round past a pointer and is so adjusted that, as elevation is given to the gun, the range —which, according to the range-table, that elevation should give—is indicated by the pointer.

The gun may be laid either directly or indirectly. Direct laying is a process similar to that used with the rifle. With the latter, the elevation for range is placed on the sight. With the gun, it is placed on the range-dial. In both cases, the layer looks directly over his sight at the target.

In direct laying, the layer, by laying over his sight at the target, automatically includes the angle of sight. With indirect laying, the angle of sight must be measured by an instrument and added to the elevation for range, the combined amount being given to the gun. The direction has also to be calculated. This is done by a variety of methods, each of which meets some particular difficulty. They are fairly simple, but a description of them all would occupy a large amount of space.

Great use is made of the dial-sight, which, in its simplest form, consists of a fixed dial divided, on either side of a diameter drawn parallel to the axis of the gun, into 180 degrees, and carrying a movable sight pivoted on its centre. Then (using one particular method), if the positions of the battery, an aiming-point (say, a church spire to the right), and the target, are known on the map, as would often be the case in static warfare, and the angle between target, battery, and church spire be measured, say, as 40°, then the layer would be given the order "aiming-point church spire, four owe degrees left."

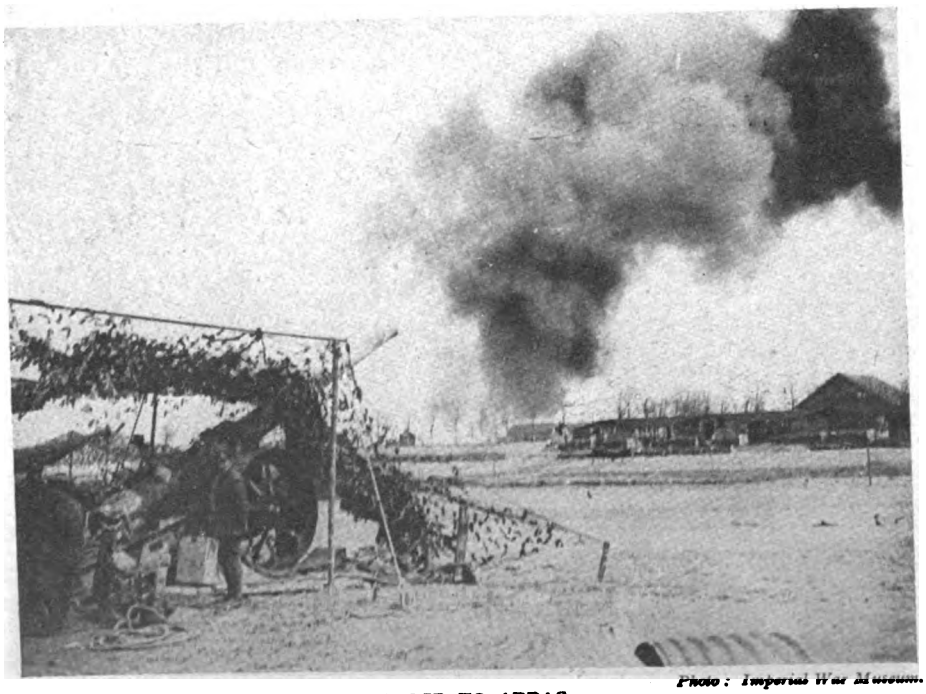

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

CLOSE TO ARRAS

Sheltered by a screen of camouflage netting, a 6-inch gun fires near Arras, April 3rd, 1918. The Battle of Arras—*i.e.* the strong German attack on our positions north and south of the Scarpe—had taken place on March 28th. From April 1st–3rd serious enemy assaults were everywhere suspended in preparation for the new drive toward Amiens on the 4th.

—And Bang Goes the Spire

He would proceed to set the back-sight at 40° left, and to traverse the gun until his sight was directed on the spire. The gun would then be pointing at the target, and aiming posts would be planted in front of the muzzle so that direction could be maintained even if the aiming point were to become obscured.

In field warfare, what commonly occurs is that an officer is at an observation post (OP) where he can see both the battery and the target. From the OP he takes, with his rangefinder, the ranges to target and to battery, and with his director—an instrument for measuring lateral angles—he measures the angle target—OP—battery. He places the ranges and angle obtained on a tri-

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angular instrument called a field-plotter, which tells him all about the triangle TOB (O = OP). He is then able to send to the battery the range BT and the angle TBO. The layers can then swing the guns on to the target by using the OP as an aiming point as described in the preceding paragraphs.

At the beginning of the War, guns were spaced in line at regular intervals—a procedure which simplified the solution of gunnery problems, especially that of obtaining parallel lines of fire. The needs of camouflage and of finding large numbers of covered positions caused guns to be grouped in a variety of ways, and, especially in the case of heavy artillery, often made the laying of each gun a separate problem.

After "laying" we pass to "ranging," which is the process of ensuring by observation that the bulk of the rounds from the guns fall on or near the target. It is idle to expect to place all rounds on the target, for the gun is not a weapon of precision. For each type of gun there is a standard of accuracy (known as the 50 per cent. zone) which is discovered and tabulated at the shooting-trials carried out for the compilation of the range-table.

The probable error in range is very much greater than the probable error in direction. Both increase with the range, and both are tabulated for each hundred yards in the range-table, so that we may know what standard of accuracy to expect at any particular range. This is of special importance when firing barrages to cover the advance of infantry, and will be further dealt with in the chapter on barrage work.

The Three Methods of Ranging

Ranging is carried out by observation, either from the battery or from an OP or from an aeroplane. The first method is used only in an emergency, either when the enemy has made an unexpected advance, or when conditions, rarely encountered, demand the close support of the other Arms. The second is the normal method. The battery commander has first to select an OP suitable for the particular target. It may be a tree, a chimney-stack, the roof of a house, a balloon, a trench, or a hill.

Personally, I have tried them all. On a quiet part of the front, early in 1915, the enemy allowed me for some days to make use of an excellent chimney about 600 yards from his line. Those whose lives do not ordinarily lead them into chimneys can have no idea of their conveniences: an excellent ladder

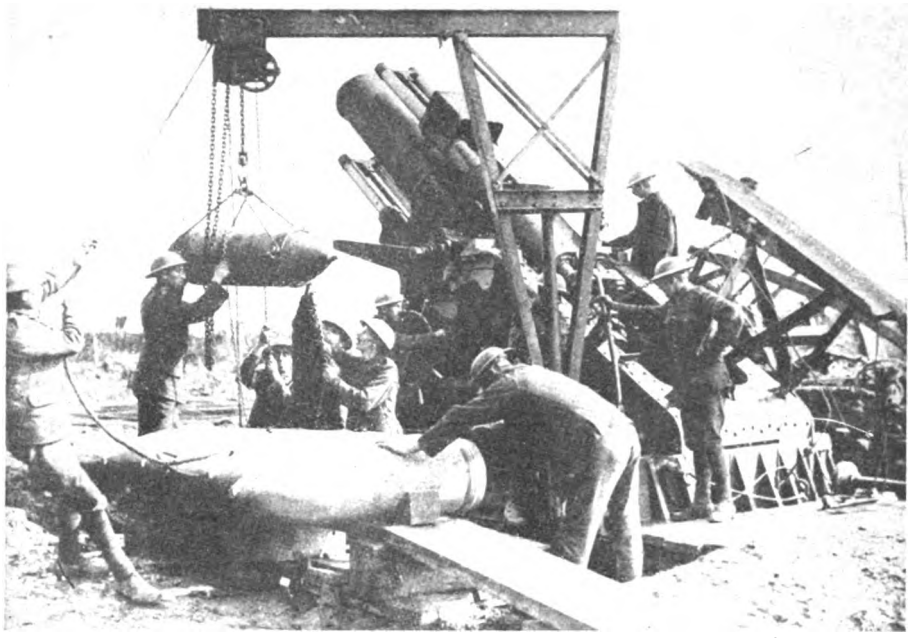

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

ON THE MENIN ROAD

Men of the Royal Marine Artillery are here seen preparing a giant 15-inch howitzer for action on the Menin Road, October 5th, 1917. This date falls between the Battles of Broodseinde and Poelcappelle, but the Broodseinde fighting had by no means ceased. German prisoners taken since dawn on October 4th amounted to nearly 4,500.

up the inside—near the top of which a seat can easily be fixed; a gentle swaying of the stack in the breeze; a natural voice-way for the issue of orders to the telephonists at the base; a fine view, obtained by the removal of a brick or two; camouflage obtained by a piece of sacking, hung behind the head. It all seems too good to be true. It is certainly too good to last.

For two days I was undisturbed. On the morning of the third day, the enemy

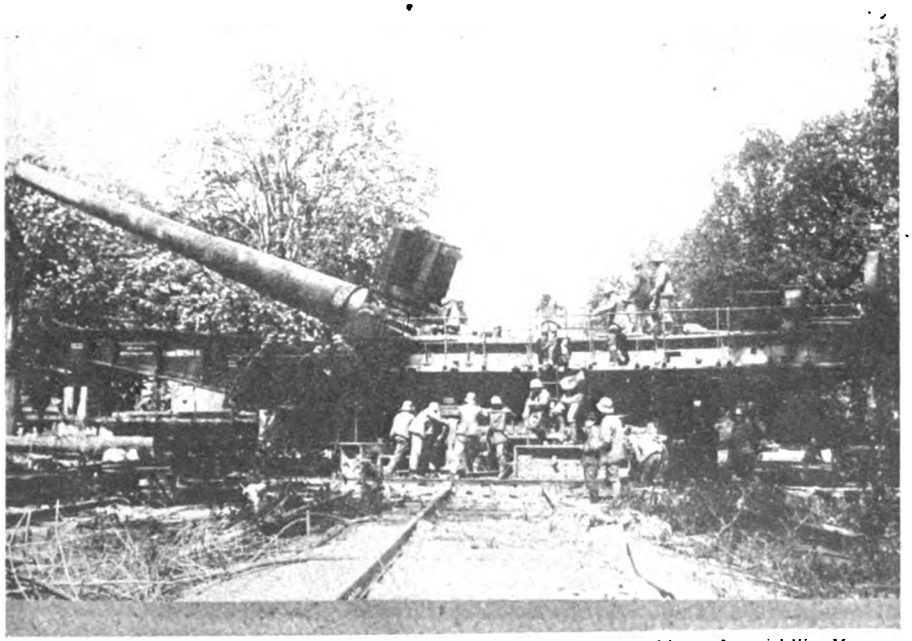

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

A "BIG BERTHA"

This nickname, originally applied to the 42-cm. howitzer employed by the Germans in 1914, later developed among us into a generic term for all their very long-range guns. The above photograph shows a 38-cm. monster, on railway mounting, in action at some unspecified point on the Western Front. Notice the sheltered site and scattered brushwood screens.

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persistently shelled a chapel about a mile back, past which my telephone line ran, and cut me off from communication with the battery until 1 p.m. My captain then asked me for a quarter-of-an-hour's grace, as the men had been standing to the guns all the morning, and he had just sent them off to their dinners. I agreed, and went with my party to eat sandwiches in a neighbouring dug-out. Almost at once a shell burst near the chimney. We dashed out and retrieved our precious telephones, which we had left behind. As we got back to the dug-out, a second shell hit the base of the chimney and brought it down with a crash.

Tree OPs, too, had short lives as a rule. In the Salient, however, just before and during the Second Battle of Ypres, I managed to keep one for quite a long time. It was in a lofty tree on the highest contour and had two positions, one half-way up, with a fair view and not easily visible to the enemy, the other near the top, with a good view, but visible from the German support trenches. The latter was for use on special occasions only, as snipers took distant pot-shots at it.

Silencing a Howitzer Battery

Spending long hours in the tree, I learnt to know as much of the enemy country as lay in sight exceedingly well. At daylight on the 21st April, I noticed a curious projection behind a ridge to my front. With my glasses I made it out to be part of the carriage of a heavy howitzer, and the presumption was that there was a whole battery in action there. I ranged on a point far enough away from the hostile guns not to disturb them, and then got ready to switch on to them the moment they opened fire.

Shortly afterwards, there came flashes from behind the ridge—one, two, three, four, at two-second intervals. At once we made our switch and opened fire. There was a long pause, and then another four rounds from our opponents, to which we replied, silencing them for some hours. Later in the day, they made feeble attempts, with a couple of guns, to re-open fire, but on each occasion we stopped them and, soon after dark, they ceased altogether.

It was the occasion of the first gas-attack, and heavy fighting had been raging all day on our left. The enemy battery had evidently intended to enfilade some of our trenches in that area; but it had spent a wasted day, whereas my guns had been in the happy position of being able to silence it at will, with hardly any interruption of the numerous other tasks which fell to their lot.

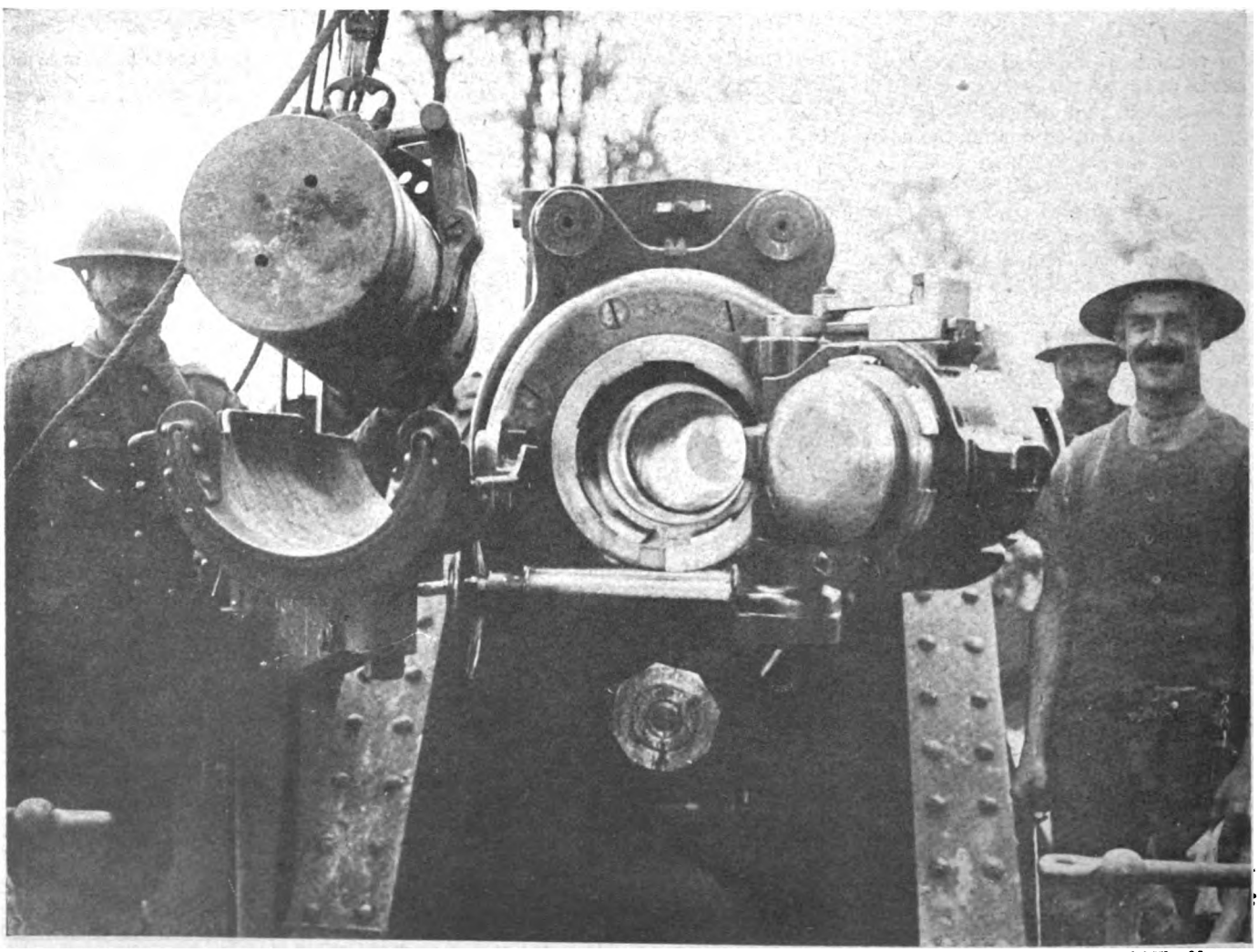

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

IN SHE GOES

In this photograph the camera is looking, from the breech end, through the barrel of a 12-inch howitzer, into which the shell seen dangling on the left is just about to be popped. The gun, which is on a railway mounting, is situated at Brielen, the date being August 1st, 1917. Brielen lies on the Ypres—Furnes road and railway, 3 km. north-east of the former. Note the rifling of the barrel, which bites the copper driving-band of the shell.

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Photo: Imperial War Museum.

NOT A TUG-OF-WAR

Ramming home the shell into the breech of a 12-inch howitzer of the 89th Siege Battery, R.G.A., at Dickebusch, June 14th, 1916. It was on June 13th that the Canadians managed to recapture most of the ground lost by them between the 2nd and the 6th in Sanctuary and Armagh Woods. Except for this fighting, the scene of which lay some 8,000 yards east of Dickebusch, the period was one of almost complete inaction in Flanders.

This work in the OP was the most interesting duty the gunner had to perform. There he had to keep his eyes continually open in the hope of a sudden opportunity, and he had to study the ground and yet conceal his presence. Generally speaking, the better the OP, the more dangerous it is, for the enemy realises quite clearly the points from which he can be observed, and is ready at all times to blot them out if he suspects them of being occupied.

Ask any gunner officer or signaller about his experiences, and he will tell five OP stories to one of happenings in the battery. Guns were often shelled to bits. That was unpleasant, but not particularly interesting. Point-blank firing against the Germans who had broken through was both exciting and interesting, but was, fortunately, of rare occurrence.

Evidently "Blotto"

Some OPs had to be far behind the line in order to obtain the necessary width of vision, and they could then be fully equipped with accurate instruments. Prior to the 8th August, 1918, we suspected the enemy of using Bayonvillers church as an OP, but, not being certain, refrained from shelling it. On reaching the village on the 8th, I climbed up to the tower, and there found a room complete not only with instruments, but also with every luxury. In a large arm-chair was seated one of my gunners, puffing at a fat cigar and evidently "blotto."

He offered me brandy, and told his story. He belonged to an observation party, the rest of which had gone on with the infantry while he had stayed to loot. "Suddenly from behind a wall up jumped two Boche officers. Before I had time to put up my arms, they both put up theirs. I said 'Now then, you keep at Kamerad till I've been through your blinking pockets! And out of them I pinched two flasks of brandy and two cases of cigars.'"

As a brigade-commander, when I visited an OP, I usually made the officer in charge fire a round or two to test speed of coming into action and accuracy of fire. On one occasion, I found a young American officer on duty who, impatient at the slowness of his country in joining the Allies, had managed to obtain a commission in the British Army. His heart was evidently in the right place; but he was taking no chances. He was clad in a complete suit of mail-armour, and about it was slung almost every artillery gadget that had ever been invented.

To try him out, I suggested that he should shoot at a little red house in the far distance. He said that the house was not marked on his map, that this was his first appearance in an OP, and that he hoped I would excuse him. I made a guess at the position of the target and telephoned the necessary orders. A gun fired, and the round

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Photo: A. P., Paris.

1914

On an earlier page we showed a sculpture of the Kaiser fashioned by a French soldier stationed in the line at Bellacourt. In these three photographs we give a remarkable indication of the static nature of the War in this region.

appeared to fall some 500 yards over and 4° to the right.

I tried to persuade my American to make a correction, but again he asked to be excused, leaving me to make another guess. The gun fired a second time, and, after a bit, up went the house in a cloud of red dust—a fifty-to-one fluke. "Well, you see now how it's done," I said severely, and then departed, hoping that he would tell the tale in the States for years to come.

Shells that Vanished in Mid-air

In the flat country round Ypres, where the burst of a shell a little above the line of sight could generally be seen, the enemy used occasionally to range with air-bursts by means of time-fuses and H.E. shells. Although his shells were timed to burst, and sometimes did burst, just over our heads, they seemed quite innocuous, for I never saw anyone damaged by them. What happened to the fragments was always a mystery. It used to come as an unpleasant surprise when, on a change to percussion fuse, the shell became thoroughly effective. We tried this method of ranging, but never took to it seriously, except in the case of long-range guns.

Owing to hostile shelling, it was exceedingly difficult to maintain telephonic communication between the OP and the battery. A line might be cut in 40 places in a day, and repairs were a slow and dangerous process. Many a good signaller "went west" doing his duty in this way. The establishment of signallers in my battery was 24, and I always had another 24 men under training to replace casualties.

I was fortunate in having a first-class electrician to train them. He had resigned a good job in Constantinople and dashed home to join up. He won the D.C.M., and was killed shortly afterwards. Out all the day on the lines, and up half the night with his classes, he deserved well of his country.

Ranging with air-observation was on the whole the most effective method of bringing rounds on to the target. But it was a dull affair for the officers in the battery.

Photo: A. P., Paris.

1915

Incredible though it may sound, the same camera-enthusiast was able to photograph this windmill from a more-or-less identical standpoint during three successive years in the trenches. The results of his efforts reveal a striking example of gradual demolition.

The airman looks down on an imaginary clock-face, the centre of which is the target, and a diameter of which, passing through 6 o'clock, the target, and noon, points due north. The target is at the centre of a number of concentric circles, the circumferences of which are 50, 100, 200, etc., yards from it. The arc enclosed by each circle has a distinguishing letter—the inner circle A, the next B, and so on. The airman signals the fall of the rounds with reference to their positions on this clock face, e.g. a round 100 yards due west of the target as B9. The battery commander, with a replica of the clock-face on his map, can quickly calculate the corrections to be given for direction and range.

Observations from the Air

Air-observation was comparatively easy, but the work was dangerous, exhausting, and less interesting than other air-tasks. Solitary machines operating over the hostile line naturally attracted attack; and accordingly, during periods when our machines were technically inferior to those of the enemy, we suffered heavy losses. The gunners felt this very much, for ranging seemed properly their work, and they hated seeing gallant young airmen being killed on their behalf.

General Herr—a French authority on the subject—says of observation of fire by French airmen that at first it was bad owing to lack of experience, that then it became good as airmen became expert, and that finally it dropped to a low level because all the glamour and rewards of work in the air lay in other spheres of activity.

With us, in the early days, before wireless had been perfected and good ground-signals elaborated, there was much misunderstanding and consequent confusion between airman and battery. In my own first effort, I was given nine

Photo: A. P., Paris.

1916

Bellacourt is a tiny place 9 km. south-west of Arras, and midway between Beaumetz and Blairville. It therefore entered the British area after the extension of our line, but the only recorded attack on it occurred on January 28th, 1915. The mill is the Moulin de Blamont.

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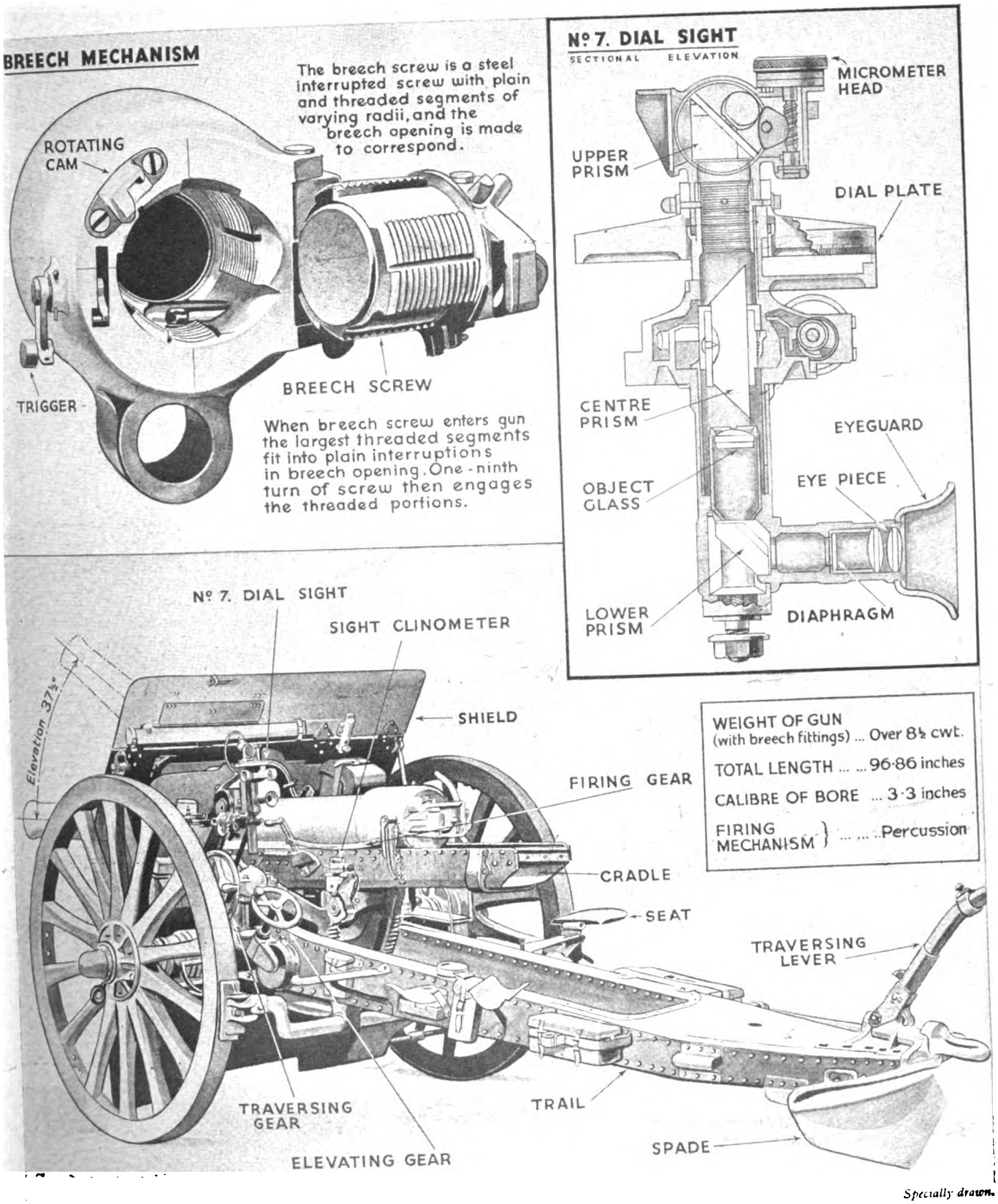

Specially drawn.

MYSTERIES OF THE 18-POUNDER UNVEILED

The three drawings on this page are intended to explain, in so far as brief explanation to the layman is possible, the various mechanisms comprised in the 18-pounder quick-firing Mark IV gun. This field piece, by far the most familiar artillery weapon used by us in the War, was available during most of the Four Years in quantities which at least doubled those of any other gun. On the Somme in 1916 the Fourth Army possessed 808 18-pounders, as against 202 4·5-inch howitzers, the class next in number; and at Messines in 1917 the totals had risen respectively to 1,314 and 438.

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targets to engage—far too many. I arranged with my airman that, as soon as he had ranged us on one target, he should signal to us to change on to the next.

Unfortunately, just as we were about to fire the first round, an urgent message arrived cancelling the first target. It was an enemy headquarters, and a wicked headquarters of ours was nervous about reprisals. That killed the shoot. The airman was over target number 1, and we, wishing to engage target number 2, had no means of telling him so. Long wasted hours. Everybody very angry.

Shoots with air-observation were either pre-arranged or impromptu. The latter were the more usual in mobile warfare. An airman on artillery patrol indicated the positions of any targets he saw, and, by the use of certain letters, gave an idea of their relative importance. He called for concentrations of fire upon them, but did not necessarily give observations.

Tragedy Averted—Just

No system is fool-proof. During one of the big battles, I was rung up by the brigade-major and told to concentrate the fire of my whole brigade on a certain group of buildings. I queried the order, as I had shortly before been on the ground indicated as the target, and had seen a battalion H.Q. settled in the buildings and the line in front of it apparently secure. The order was confirmed by the brigadier personally, who said that an airman had signalled that the enemy was attacking in the locality named.

I ordered my batteries to make all preparations for opening fire on the target, but to go no further for the moment. At the same time I despatched my orderly officer on a motor-bicycle to clear up my doubts. He returned to say that peace reigned in the buildings, and that the battalion H.Q. was sitting down to dinner. I had risked my commission by disobeying orders; but it was just as well, particularly as the unit concerned was a Dominion battalion.

Prior to the War, the range was measured approximately either by a rangefinder or by eye, and then found exactly by "bracketing." This process consisted of trying to include the target between two rounds fired at elevations differing by 300 (normal) or 600 yards, and, having done that successfully, of repeating the attempt with narrower brackets until the range was established.

I pointed out in 1913 that such procedure did not meet the demands of modern war. My views were that the Russo-Japanese War had shown that

Photo: A. P., Paris.

ON THE YSER CANAL

The photograph shows the lock at Het-Sas, between Boesinghe and Steenstraat. Strictly speaking, the canal is not that of the Yser—although frequently so marked on maps—but of the Yperlee; for the Yser, after rising in France west of Cassel, flows roughly parallel with the coast-line until it joins the Yperlee at Knocke, west of Houthulst Forest. The waterway shown links Knocke with Ypres, and is in reality a prolongation northward of the Ypres—Comines Canal. The lock is called Boesinghe Lock.

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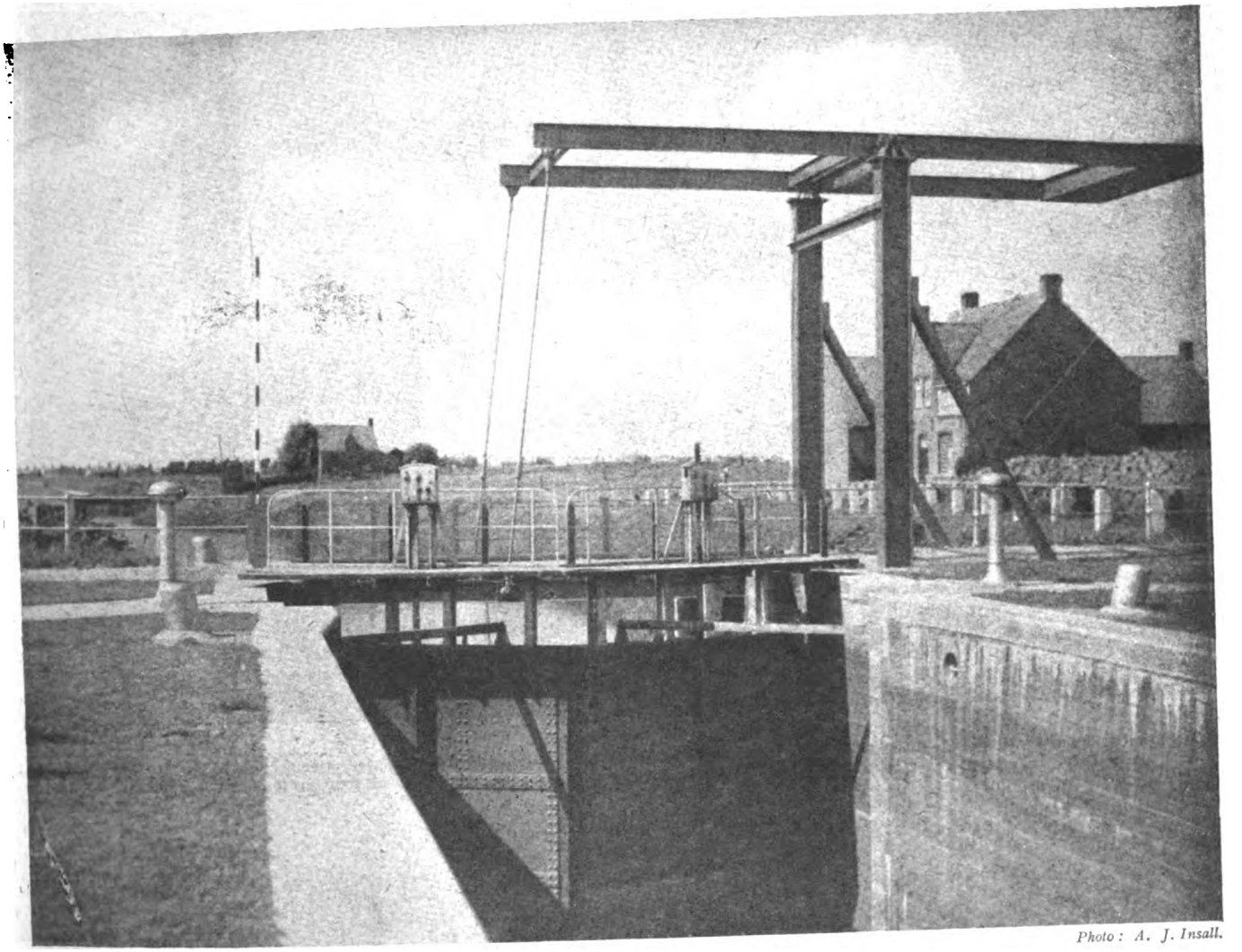

Photo: A. J. Insall.

BUSINESS AS USUAL

Unlike the Ypres—Comines Canal, the Yperlee Canal has not fallen into disuse, and above is shown the spick-and-span modern version of the lock at Het-Sas. The area saw some desperate fighting in 1914, after the Belgians had opened the Yser sluice-gates and flooded the countryside north of Dixmude, and again in the early summer of 1915, when the French had taken over this region. Het-Sas itself was recovered from the enemy on May 15th of the latter year.

machine guns and wire now dominated the battlefield; that it would be impossible for the infantry to attack across the open until the machine guns had been smothered; that machine guns are difficult to locate, and, when located, difficult to destroy; that it would be impossible to range on them all by the bracketing system prior to an attack, and that the attempt to do so would destroy any hope of surprise; that the principal chance of success in attack appeared to lie in surprise, to be effected, perhaps, by troops brought up to short range under cover of ground or darkness—conditions which clearly precluded bracketing; and that many other occasions for the opening of fire without previous ranging could be envisaged.

Views Disregarded

I pointed out, further, that the means of effecting change of procedure were available, and were in use both in the Navy and in coast-defences. We could measure the muzzle velocity of a gun at any period of its life. We could calculate the effect of wind, of variations of the weight and shape of shell, of temperature and density of the air, and of the temperature of the charge. We could improve faulty range-tables such as that of the 18-pounder. Having taken all these actions, we could find the "error of the moment," apply it to the measured range, and thereby earn the prospect of obtaining reasonable accuracy for the first round.

These views, though repeatedly pressed, were not accepted at the time, the official answer being that "the gun is its own rangefinder." In April, 1915, they received their first recognition in the issue of thermometers to field batteries. About a year later the suggested system was in full swing.

Out of it, and out of the growth of gas warfare, developed what was known as "Meteor." Six times in every day, a meteorological section, which had been formed at G.H.Q., dispatched to all batteries a telegram giving the barometer reading at sea level and the direction and force of the wind at various strata of the atmosphere.

A table was also issued showing for each gun the loss of velocity resulting from the number of rounds fired, and the effect of that loss in yards along the range. Aids to all the other necessary calculations were also tabulated, so that, on the receipt of "Meteor," the battery commander or his assistant could calculate the "error of the moment" and apply it to the measured range.

The theory on which calculations were based was: that a gun lost velocity with wear, because the enlargement of the bore allowed the gases

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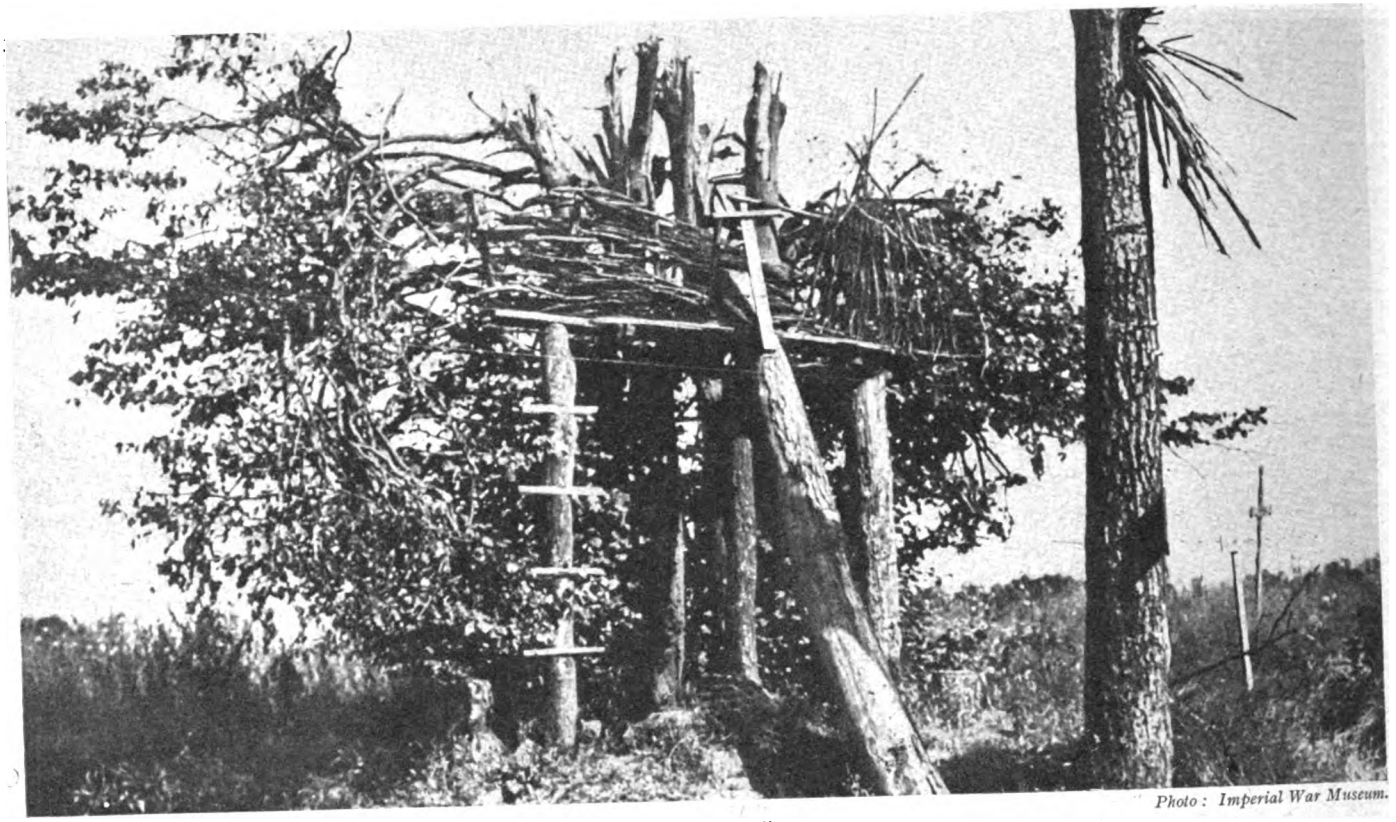

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

AN "O.P."

Looking more like a creation of the Swiss Family Robinson, this overgrown bird's-nest is an artillery observation post on the Western Front during July, 1916. The respective merits of trees, church-spires, factory chimneys, etc., were of much moment to observation officers.

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

BEFORE THE BATTLE OF ARRAS

A photograph of 12th Division artillery officers observing fire, and R.E. telephonists passing back the resulting information, at a point known as Cuthbert Crater, some 4 km. north-east of Arras and 1¼ km. north of St. Laurent-Blangy. The date is the first week of April, 1917—prior to our attack.

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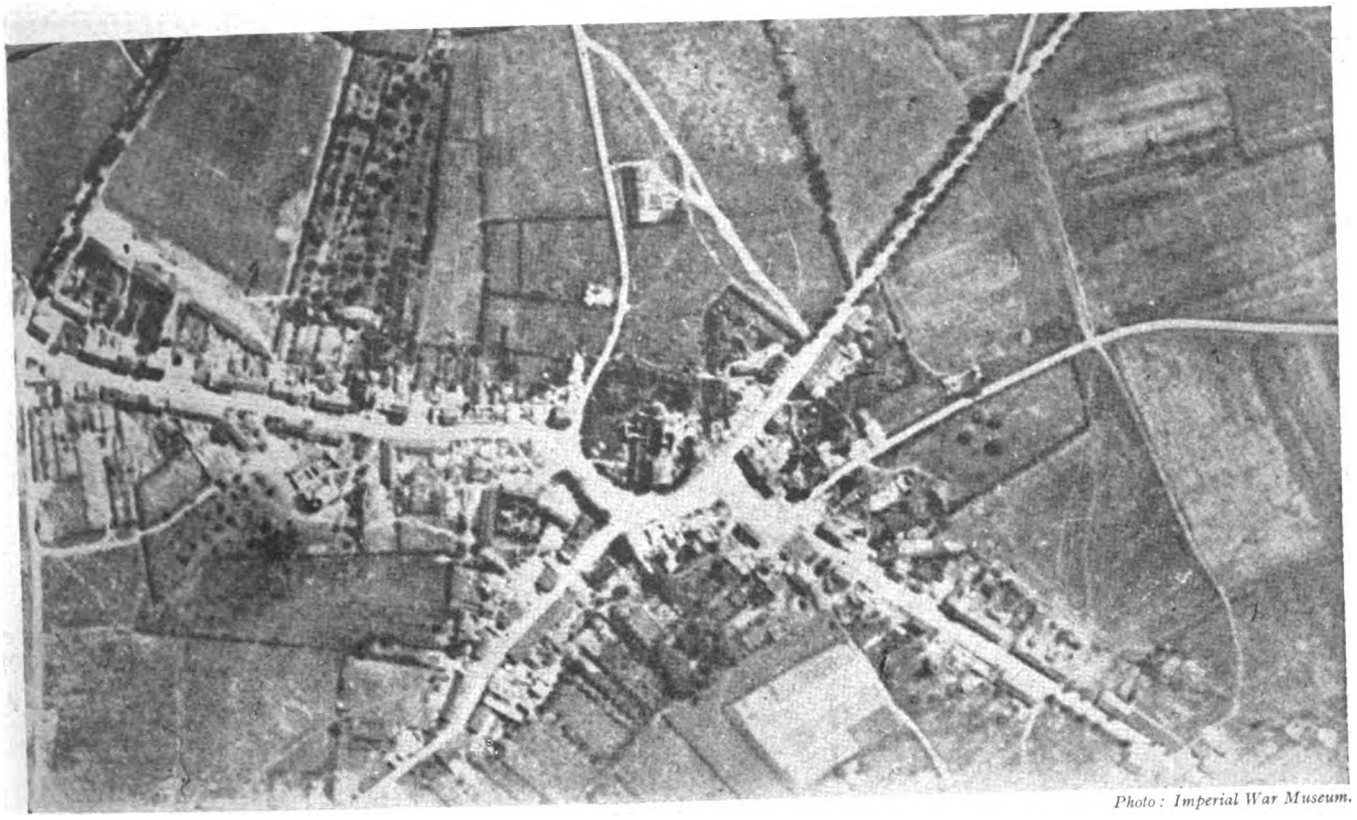

Photo : Imperial War Museum.

BEFORE TREATMENT

The ill-fated village of Passchendaele shown in two aerial photographs taken respectively on June 16th and December 5th, 1917. In the intervening months, of course, was staged the whole miserable drama of "Third Ypres." The north is to the left of both pictures.

Photo : Imperial War Museum.

AFTER TREATMENT

A fine advertisement for the annihilating power of artillery. Of the village itself no trace remains, and the very roads have in some cases disappeared. The track running toward the top right corner leads to Moorslede ; toward the bottom right, to Becelaere ; toward the upper left, to Westroosebeke.

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Photo: Imperial War Museum.

IN GLENCORSE WOOD

A German shell seen bursting in what remains of this famous wood on September 20th, 1917—the opening date of the six-day Battle of the Menin Road. Glencorse Wood lies to the north of the Menin Road, between Inverness Copse and Nonne Boschen. The British first entered it on August 10th, 1917, but it was not until September 20th that it was secured. The men in the photograph belong to the 1st Australian Division.

generated by discharge to pass to some extent round the shell instead of acting behind it; that the better stream-line given to a shell, the less affected it was by the resistance of the air, and consequently the further it travelled; that the lower the barometric pressure and the higher the temperature, the thinner the air, and consequently, the less resistance to the shell and, again, the further the travel; that the higher the temperature of the charge before firing, the greater its power of propulsion. "Meteor" was vital to the effectiveness of barrages, and to those great surprise attacks which were in vogue towards the end of the War.

The "Heavies" in Moving Warfare

We may now turn to the work of big guns in moving warfare, during both retreat and advance.

In 1918, a system prevailed which was anathema to every good gunner. It was that all mechanical transport was taken away from batteries and formed into a pool for general purposes, where it was used not only for ammunition supply, but also for the moving of staff furniture, the collection of Christmas fare from Paris, road work, etc. Battery-commanders but seldom saw their transport, had no control over it, and lived in expectation of being let down by it if and when an emergency arose. They protested, but in vain.

When the enemy broke through our line in March, 1918, their worst fears were realised. Batteries ran short of ammunition because lorries were being used for other purposes, and guns were lost because tractors were not available to withdraw them when emergencies arose. Once batteries got back their transport (mainly by commandeering any lorry they found on the road), they refused to part with it, and few guns were lost.

During this attack in March, 1918, the German bombardment destroyed nearly every OP and many wireless stations and signal centres. Consequently, during the retreat, there was a great scarcity of telephones and cables. Aeroplanes, moreover, were so busy fighting that they had no time to range guns. Battery-commanders had, therefore, for the most part either to observe in, or close to, the battery-position, or to fire on map-bearings in accordance with the reports of reconnoitring officers who buzzed backwards and forwards on motor-bicycles—neither a satisfactory arrangement. The artillery world was, in fact, organised for a war of position, and was thoroughly upset at being asked to

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move and move quickly, and yet to perform its fighting duties.

Yet the lighter of the big guns enjoyed some compensations. After long stagnation, it was great to be on the move. If they had no wires leading to the front, they had equally no wires connecting them to headquarters in the rear. After having been tied to telephones during their every task for years, they were now free, and fought the enemy largely on their own initiative.

At Roye in March, 1918

Covering the French falling back through Roye, for instance, my brigade —the 14th—which contained no less than 14 batteries or parts of batteries, many of which had drifted into it from other brigades, was warned on the night of the 24th March that it formed part of the rearguard of the last corps of the last Allied army worth anything, and must therefore fight on until it received a personal order from the French commander to retire. On the following day, it remained in action until the whole of the French infantry, cavalry, and cyclists had fallen back through it, without seeing a sign of the French commander.

Two of my batteries were then dangerously placed. 11 Siege Battery (6-inch "hows") was in action in an old trench-system, and had reached its position by means of a bridge which had since been destroyed by a shell. When I arrived, the battery-sergeant-major was busy repairing the bridge with rails and sleepers removed from a neighbouring line. He was very efficient at the job, and was delightfully calm. But he was having great difficulty, because French troops kept forcing their way across as he was building. When the rush ceased, he completed his work, and the battery got away—but none too soon.

I then went over to see my two remaining 60-pounders out. As I rode up, I could see the roads far to the rear blocked with retreating troops and transport. If the battery retired, it might with good luck escape capture, but it would certainly not be able to come into action again that day. Actually, the Germans made heavy captures in that direction in the afternoon.

The situation was critical. On the left, the French had fallen back through my guns. To the right, the enemy could be seen in force across the valley. I decided, instead of retiring, to advance into Roye, and, from there, to gain a fresh line of retreat by the Roye–Montdidier road. I knew that it would be a matter of touch and go; for, when I had left the town an hour or so earlier, armoured cars were covering the retreat of the hindmost infantry from the western exits.

The battery was slow in getting off, for Mounteney—the commander—always hated coming out of action. But, once started, it went at a rare pace, and it was a fine sight to see the hairy "heavies" lolloping at a fast canter with the great guns bounding behind them. The road was narrow and con-

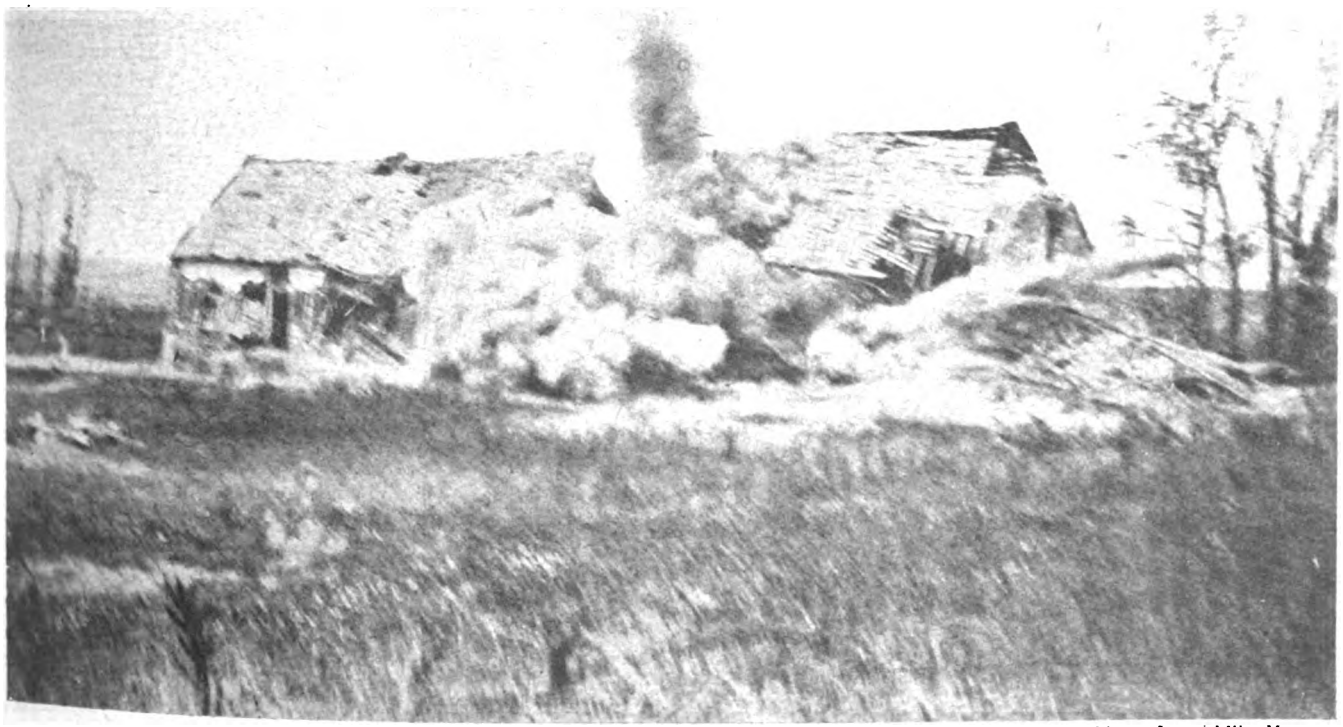

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

CRASH!

Another German shell-burst, this time representing a direct hit on a farm building in the neighbourhood of Méaulte, 3 km. south of Albert. The date is August 23rd, 1918, the village having been recaptured by the 12th (Eastern) Division, assisted by tanks, on the 22nd. Previously the enemy had held it since March 26th, when it was evacuated after a stiff rearguard fight by men of the 9th (Scottish) Division.

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fined, so horse-casualties would have been fatal to our chances of escape; but fortunately, the bullets were all going overhead, and, no enemy artillery being up, we got through. From Roye, we turned west in company with the last of the armoured cars; and, a few minutes later, the guns were in action, putting it across the enemy debouching from the town. Had I lost the guns, I should have been labelled " B.F." for ever.

Trying Not to Be Left Behind

The big guns thoroughly enjoyed an advance. In March 1917, when it became evident, from explosions behind the line, that the Germans were about to retreat, we were desperately anxious lest we should be left behind in the shell-pitted battlefields of the Somme. It was almost impossible to move with our ordinary tractors, so we set to work to devise other means of transport.

We built great sleighs, hoping they would slide through the slush; but they proved a failure. Then we scrounged all the rails we could find on abandoned dumps and derelict lines. With them, working nightly, we constructed a narrow-gauge line across the shell-torn area towards our trenches where they crossed the great Albert–Bapaume road. At the same time our artificers built special carriages to take the guns on the railway.

This method of movement proved successful, and when the Germans did retire, we had our guns as far forward as the situation would admit long before even the lightest of field guns got going. Unfortunately, there we were blocked. The one road available for the advance had been thoroughly cratered, and was being shared by two corps. We decided to concentrate all our efforts on pushing forward two 6-inch howitzers, and on keeping them supplied with ammunition. Until the road was repaired, that was all we could manage; but our contribution proved useful.

During the advance which began with the battle of the 8th August, 1918, and ended with the Armistice, the principal task of the big guns was to give a good start to each successive operation. Between times only the 6-inch " hows," which were very mobile, were equal to participation in the daily struggles. As the roads were in good order, and the going in the fields generally hard, these weapons always kept well forward. I had three batteries of them.

On one occasion, I was told to emplace them as far forward as possible, in order to give continuous support to an important advance that was to take place next day. I reconnoitred the lie of the land at once, but, on the following morning, not being sure whether or not the infantry had occupied the ground wanted by me, I rode forward, ahead of the brigade, to enquire. I found the enemy in possession of a hill which I had hoped would afford the necessary cover to my guns. Our infantry had received instructions to make no further advance, so I sent back for my Lewis guns.

Guns in Front of the Infantry

Before they arrived, however, the enemy retired, and the gunners, when they reached the crest, were just too late to catch one of his batteries, which had limbered up and was trotting away out of their range. We then held the hill with our Lewis guns while our batteries came into action below. It was a curious situation, for two out of the three batteries were in position in front of the infantry; and a battalion commander who had been on leave and was crawling over the crest of the hill in rear to rejoin his unit, had to rub his eyes well before he could be sure that the mixture of 6-inch " hows " and rifles was real.

The Germans, on the whole, made but little use of the harvest of guns and ammunition reaped by them in March, though they were desperately short of both in the later stages of their great advance. They fired at my batteries with 18-pounders once, and with 60-pounders twice; but that was all.

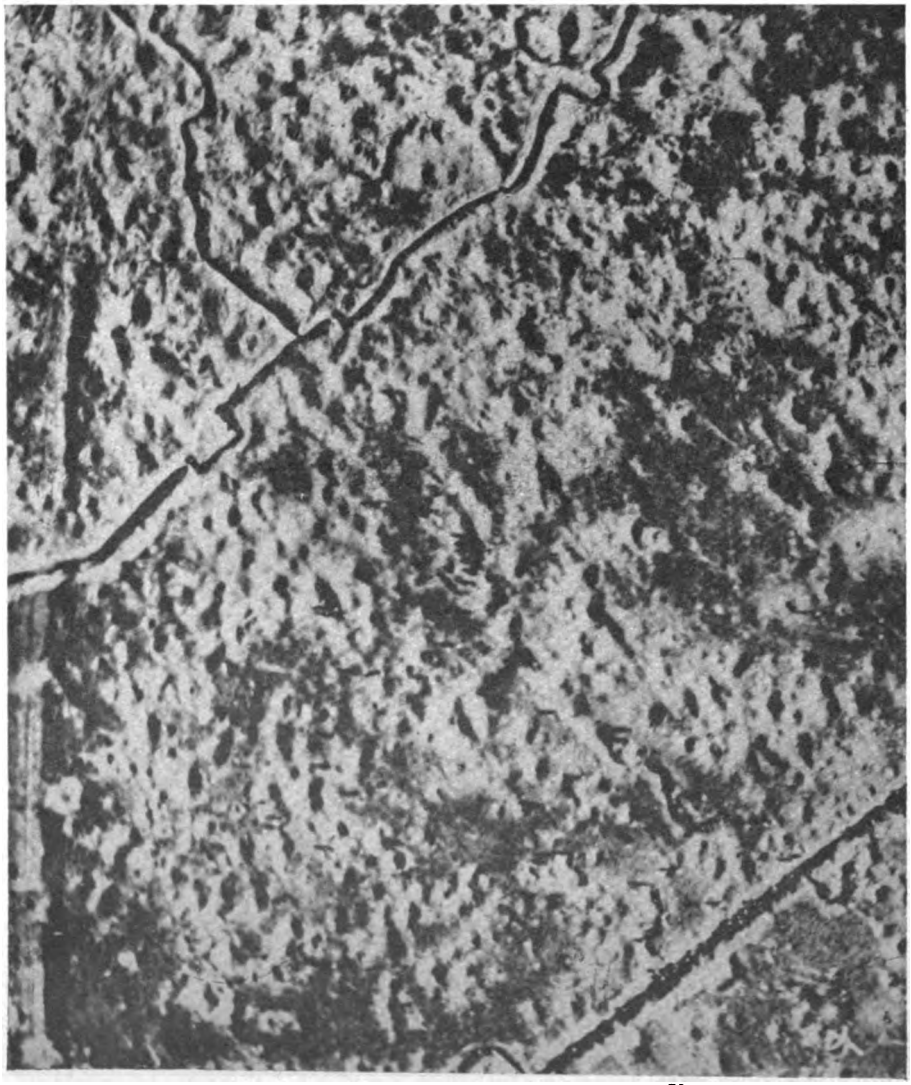

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

PUZZLE-PICTURE

You might not think so, but this aerial photograph shows a raid in progress. The troops, somewhat widely scattered, are near the bottom of the picture, and are revealed by their shadows, which appear as thin black horizontal lines about ¼ inch long. The white dots to be seen here and there—notably in the trench running across the bottom right-hand corner—are tin hats caught by the sunlight. This raid took place near Chérisy on September 15th, 1917.

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ST QUENTIN
Then and Now

Photo: Imperial War Museum

PREPARING FOR THE MARCH PUSH

To atone for the fact that no illustration of the important town of St. Quentin has hitherto appeared in the pages of TWENTY YEARS AFTER, we here devote a whole photogravure section to " Then and Now " aspects of it. To all intents and purposes St. Quentin marked the eastern limit of the Somme area as the Tommy knew it during 1917–18 : our front, after the enemy's withdrawal to the Hindenburg Line, being established just west of the town. Above are seen German troops concentrating for the advance of March 21st, 1918.

Photo: A. J. Insall

FREED FROM BONDAGE

The important waterway on which St. Quentin stands is known south of the town as the Crozat Canal, and north of it as the St. Quentin Canal, so familiar to British, Anzac, and American troops in 1918. The place itself is situated 36 km. almost due south of Cambrai, and 26 km. east-south-east of Péronne. Main roads radiate from it in every direction, and no fewer than six lines of railway diverge to different quarters. To-day accommodating just under 50,000 inhabitants, the town is a busy centre of the French cotton industry.

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Photo: *Imperial War Museum*

THE GRAND' PLACE IN FEBRUARY, 1919

The Old Contemptibles reached a line passing through St. Quentin on August 27th, 1914, while retreating toward the Aisne after Le Cateau; but apart from this no British formation saw the town from nearer at hand than its western suburbs during the whole of the War. For a long time the French were holding the ground west—a long way west—of St. Quentin, and it was they who pursued the Germans thither in March, 1917, forcing the Crozat Canal on the 21st.

Photo: *A. J. Insall*

THE REBUILT TOWN HALL (ORIGINALLY THIRTEENTH-CENTURY)

Once across the canal, the French encountered much heavier resistance, and on March 22nd there was very heavy fighting between St. Quentin and La Fère, 22 km. south of it on the Oise. On the 23rd, borrowing a leaf from the Belgian handbook, the Germans flooded La Fère and the Oise valley, but did not succeed in checking the French advance. Meanwhile, the British were also drawing near to St. Quentin from the north, and by April 2nd were close up to the Hindenburg Line all the way from this region to Arras.

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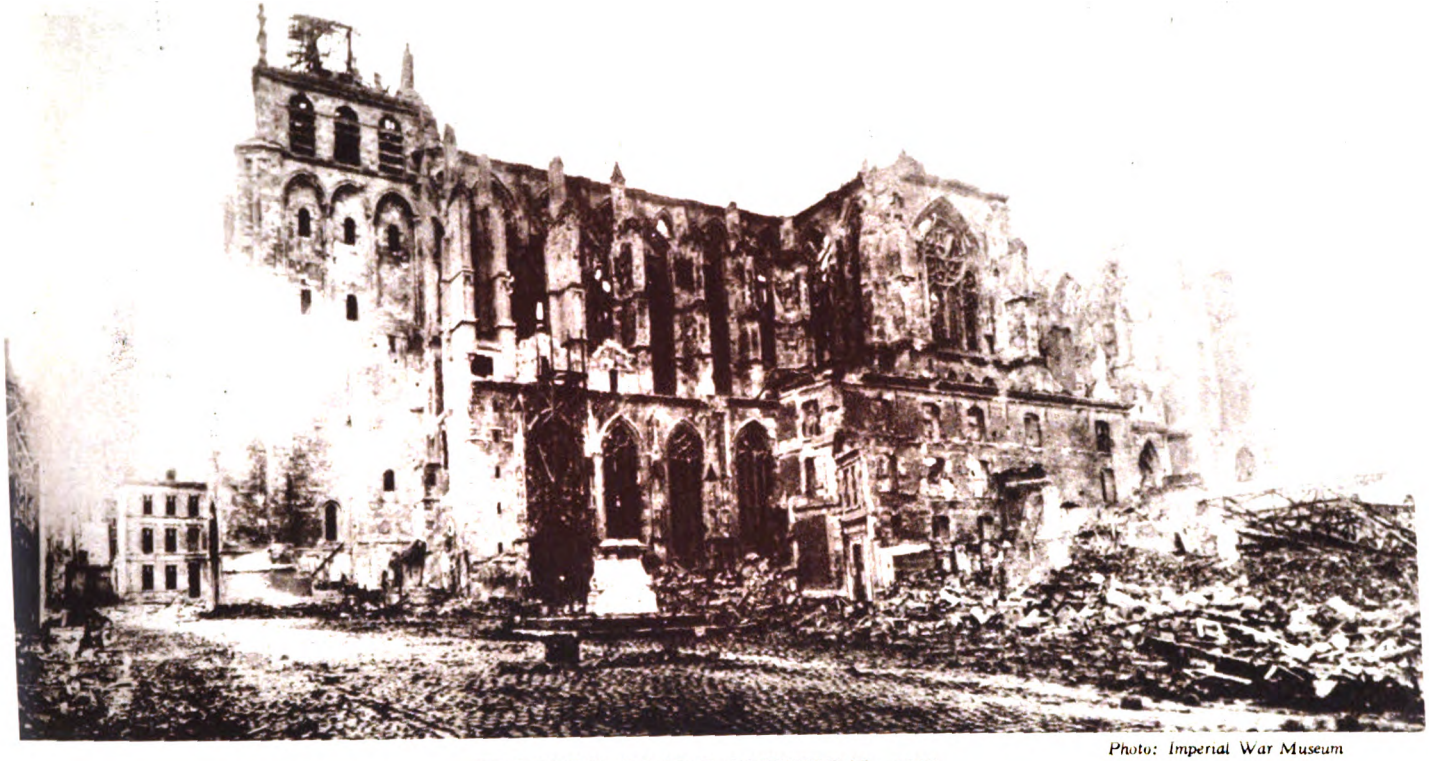

Photo: Imperial War Museum

THE RUINS OF THE CATHEDRAL, 1918

French and British troops continued to close in on the town, and went on taking villages in its vicinity until the beginning of the Second Battle of the Aisne, April 16th, 1917. But the hoped-for capture of St. Quentin itself did not then materialize; and, as has been said, the line eventually had to be established among the outer suburbs, where it enfolded the town in a miniature salient. On March 20th, 1918, St. Quentin was held by von Hutier's *Eighteenth Army*.

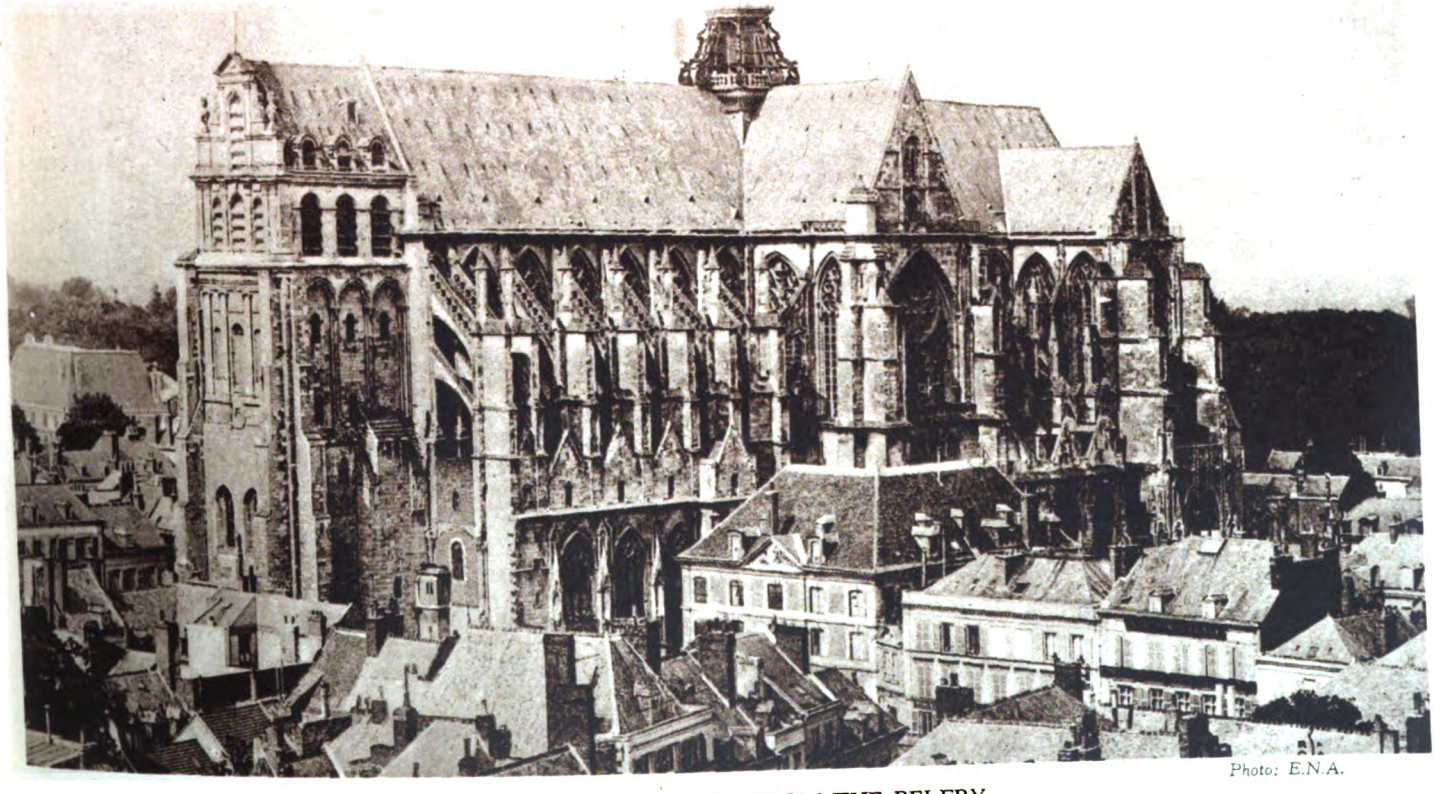

Photo: E.N.A.

THE CATHEDRAL VIEWED FROM THE BELFRY

About 4.40 a.m. on March 21st, 1918, a terrific bombardment opened on the whole front of our Fifth Army, and five hours later, in thick fog, the enemy came "over the top." The assault from St. Quentin struck Lieut.-General Maxse's XVIII Corps, consisting of the 36th, 30th, and 61st Divisions. Fourteen enemy divisions attacked the three British, and of the eight battalions composing our Forward Zone garrison a handful of 50 men got back to the Battle Zone! The enemy advanced three to four miles during the day.

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Photo: Imperial War Museum

THE CATHEDRAL: ANOTHER VIEW

The cathedral, basilica, or collegiate church of St. Quentin is a twelfth-century Gothic building, and one of the finest surviving from that early period. The extent of the damage which the Great War brought to it is revealed here not only in the two war-time photographs, but by the scaffolding to be seen in the modern picture below, which testifies to the continuance of repair-work even to-day. Notice, above, the corrugated iron over the stained-glass windows.

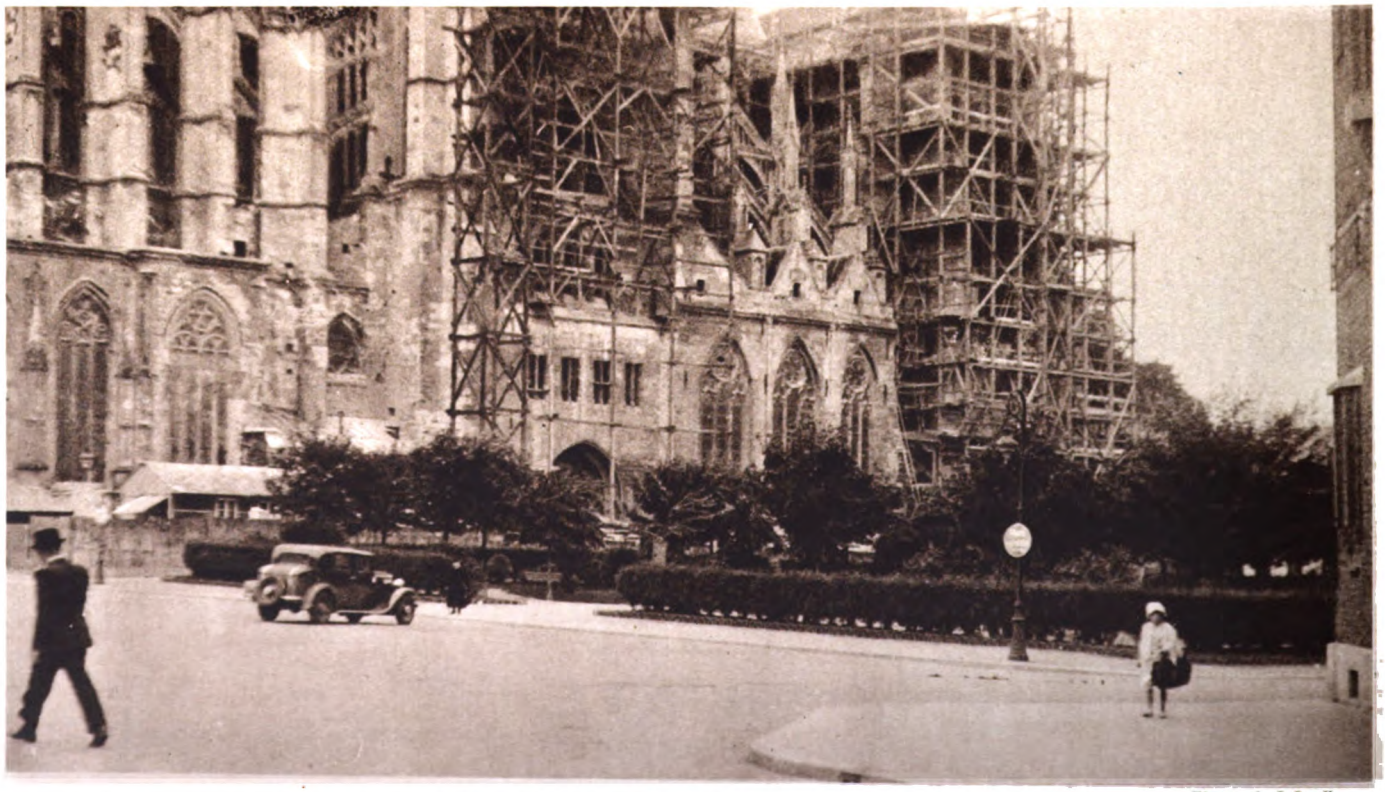

Photo: A. J. Insall

"CAUTION: MEN WORKING OVERHEAD"

The final recapture of St. Quentin was once more the task of the French, who began advancing toward it from Noyon on September 5th, 1918, in co-operation with the British advance further northward. An Anglo-French attack on a four-mile front east of Vermand proved successful on the 24th, and St. Quentin eventually fell to our Allies' First Army, under General Debeney, on October 1st. Prior to the Great War, the town had already been the scene of two great battles—fought respectively in 1557 and 1871.

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Photo: Imperial War Museum.

NEAR THE HOHENZOLLERN REDOUBT

A photograph of shells bursting during the attack on the Hohenzollern Redoubt on October 13th, 1915, in the closing phases of the Battle of Loos. The objectives for this day, in addition to the Redoubt, included the Quarries, Big Willie and Little Willie trenches, the Dump, and Fosse 8. Practically no progress, however, was made. The above picture was taken from Vermelles.

They might have done infinitely more.

We, on the other hand, drew great profit in our advance from German equipment. At least, my own people did. At first, I borrowed an Australian Trench Mortar Company thrown out of work by the change from static to dynamic warfare. The men were excellent. The rate of fire they would get out of a German 4·2-inch "how" when shells were plentiful and they had a competition on was something wonderful. I lent them a large and solid sergeant-major, late of the School of Gunnery at Shoeburyness. The combination was most effective. They were enterprising and resourceful; he supplied the technical knowledge.

Later, when the Australians left us, we used a detachment drafted from the batteries. We formed a class from the battery artificers, pulled a number of German guns to bits, and re-assembled them, thus becoming masters of the art of making complete weapons from a variety of parts. Then we ascertained what parts of the gun, such as sights, and portions of the breech mechanism, the enemy commonly destroyed or concealed in order to render the gun unserviceable. We collected a number of these, and carried them with the detachment. By this means we were always able to bring some of the guns in any captured battery into action.

Ammunition Supply

We had several methods of ammunition supply. Sometimes there were plenty of rounds in the battery position. Sometimes, when the shells were scattered, infantry would bring them to the gun, the reward being permission to fire one round out of three themselves. They relished this greatly, a poetic justice in hoisting Fritz with his own petard. Sometimes, again, we took the guns to a German dump, and then blazed away to our hearts' content. We never had to worry about "wear," either on account of the rate of fire, or of the number of rounds fired; for having shot a gun to the death, we could easily replace it.

As to transport, three lorries carried the artificers, detachments, and spare parts. When there was any doubt as to the possibility of fresh captures, each lorry towed a 4·2-inch "how," which was our favourite weapon. Ammunition could always be found.

When the system was in full swing, it worked easily and almost automatically, with the result that we must have fired at the enemy about 15,000 of his own shells between the 8th August and the Armistice. Such procedure had obvious advantages. It gave great content to the gunners; it saved a large tonnage in transport and manufacture; and it reduced the wear on our own ordnance.

Moreover, the enemy, knowing the positions of his own abandoned guns, and usually believing that he had rendered them unserviceable, never bothered to bombard them. This enabled us to work right up in the forward area, without even using camouflage. For instance, when the 46th Division broke the Hindenburg Line, we had in action, just behind our jumping-off trenches, a group of 5·9-inch "hows" which, from such a point of vantage, were able to support the infantry with ease up to the limit of the great advance that day, and, indeed, to engage targets well beyond that limit.

This action was merely the carrying out of the old idea, which modern conditions have by no means rendered impossible of realisation, of making war support war. If put into practice on a large scale, and applied to weapons, ammunition, supplies, and transport, it might raise mobility considerably. But it has to be carefully thought out and organised beforehand. It will not spring into existence at the mere issue of an order.

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Specially drawn.

OVERSEAS BADGES—FOURTH SERIES

From left to right, the top row first, these Canadian badges stand for: 1—170th Bn. Mississanga Horse. 2—172nd Bn. Rocky Mountain Rangers (Brit. Columbia). 3—173rd Bn. Canadian Highlanders. 4—175th Bn. Medicine Hat. 5—176th Bn. Niagara Rangers. 6—181st Bn. Brandon. 7—183rd Bn. Manitoba Beavers. 8—184th Canadian Bn. 9—187th Bn. Central Alberta. 10—191st Bn. Southern Alberta. 11—192nd Bn. Crow's Nest Pass (Alberta). 12—195th Bn. City of Regina. 13—196th Bn. Western Universities. 14—197th Bn. Vikings of Canada. 15—198th Bn. Canadian Buffs. 16—199th Bn. Duchess of Connaught's Own Irish Canadian Rangers. 17—200th Winnipeg Bn. 18—202nd Sportsmen's Bn. (Edmonton). 19—205th Bn. Hamilton. 20—206th Bn. French Canadians.

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CHAPTER VIII

THE VICTORIA CROSS IN THE GREAT WAR

It has long been the practice, in this as in other countries, to reward with some signal honour those who have rendered outstanding services to the State. Of the awards available for such a purpose there is one that stands practically alone. The simple bronze cross "For Valour," instituted by Queen Victoria in 1856, is undoubtedly the most coveted distinction open to members of the Empire's fighting forces. The intrinsic value of the Victoria Cross is very small; as an honour it stands unrivalled. It may be won by a drummer boy or by an army commander, and both would esteem it their most treasured possession. In the present chapter are recounted a few of the more outstanding exploits of 1914-18 in recognition of which awards of the V.C. were made.

THE V.C., a small Maltese Cross of bronze bearing the motto "For Valour," is the highest reward for heroism in the Empire, and the most coveted. Between 1854, when the first Cross was won in the Crimea, and 1914, a total of 522 were awarded; from 1914 to 1921, no less than 637—a tribute to the heroism called forth by the Great War. Of these 637, 193 were conferred posthumously.

How the V.C.'s were Distributed

The principal winners were:

Infantry	319
Australian Forces	63
Canadian Forces	60
Royal Navy, R.N.V.R., R.N.R.	48
Foot Guards	24
Indian Army, Indian Forces	21
Royal Artillery	16
Royal Engineers	16
Royal Flying Corps, Royal Air Force	16
New Zealand Forces	12
Army Hospital Corps, R.A.M.C., Medical Services	10
Royal Tank Corps	3

Lieut.-Col. Rupert Stewart, M.V.O., who gives a detailed analysis in a valuable compilation, *The Victoria Cross*, records only two cases in which a Bar was awarded to a V.C. Lieut. Arthur Martin-Leake, R.A.M.C., won his V.C. when surgeon-captain in the South African Constabulary on February 8th, 1902, during an action at Vlakfontein. He attended a wounded man under heavy fire from about forty Boers at 100 yards' range, then went to the assistance of a wounded officer, and whilst trying to place him in a comfortable position, was shot thrice, but would not give in until he rolled over exhausted. Eight men lay wounded at this point, but Lieut. Martin-Leake refused water until they had been served.

He was awarded the Bar in February, 1915, for most conspicuous bravery and devotion to duty throughout the campaign, especially between October 29th and November 8th, 1914, near Zonnebeke, when he rescued, while exposed to constant fire, a large number of wounded lying close to the enemy's trenches.

Capt. N. G. Chavasse, M.C., R.A.M.C., won his V.C. on August 9th, 1916, also for most conspicuous bravery and devotion to duty. During an attack he tended the wounded in the open all day under heavy fire, frequently in view of the enemy; and during the night he searched for wounded in front of the enemy's lines for four hours. Next day he took a stretcher-bearer to the advanced trenches, and under heavy fire carried an urgent case 500 yards into safety, being wounded in the side by a shell splinter on the journey.

Captain Chavasse's Fine Record

The same night he took up twenty volunteers, rescued three wounded men from a shell-hole twenty-five yards from the enemy's trench, buried two officers, and collected many identity discs, although fired on by bombs and machine guns. "Altogether he saved the lives of some twenty badly wounded men, besides the ordinary cases which passed through his hands. His courage and self-sacrifice were beyond praise." [1]

On September 14th, 1917, he was posthumously awarded a Bar, again for "most conspicuous bravery and devotion to duty." Severely wounded while carrying a wounded man to the dressing station, he refused to leave his post, and for two days not only continued to perform his duty, but went out repeatedly under heavy fire to search for and attend to wounded. Although practically without food during these searches, worn with fatigue, and faint from his wound, he helped to carry in a number of badly wounded men over heavy and difficult ground.

"By his extraordinary energy and inspiring example, he was instrumental in rescuing many wounded who would have otherwise undoubtedly succumbed under the bad weather conditions. This devoted and gallant officer subsequently died of his wounds."

There are two cases of father and son both winning the V.C. Lieut. Frederick Sleigh Roberts, Bengal Artillery, was awarded his in 1858; his son, Lieut. the Hon. Frederick Hugh Sherston Roberts, K.R.R.C., in 1900.

Capt. Walter Norris Congreve won his in 1899 at Colenso; his son, Brevet-Major William la Touche Congreve, was given the award in October, 1916, for "most conspicuous bravery during a period of fourteen days preceding his death in action": he had "constantly performed acts of gallantry and showed the greatest devotion to duty, and by his personal example inspired all those around him with confidence at critical periods of the operations."

During preparations for the attack he reconnoitred the enemy lines, taking out officers and N.C.O.'s for over 1,000 yards in front of our line, under fire. Later, by night, he conducted a battalion to its position, afterwards returning to it to ascertain the situation after assault. He established himself in an exposed forward position to observe the enemy, and gave orders necessary to drive them from their position.

Like Father, Like Son

Two days later, when Brigade Headquarters were heavily shelled, and many casualties resulted, he assisted the medical officer to remove the wounded

[1] The *London Gazette*. All other quotations in this article are from the same source unless otherwise stated.

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to places of safety, although he was suffering severely from gas and other shell effects. Again, on a subsequent occasion, he showed supreme courage in tending wounded under heavy shell fire. Finally, he returned to the front line to ascertain the situation after an unsuccessful attack, and was killed while writing his report.

In this brotherhood of valour there are no degrees of bravery. All that one can do here is to quote certain cases which were typical of others in various branches of the Services.

Capt. (Temporary Lieut.-Col.) Bernard Cyril Freyberg, D.S.O. and R.N.D., of the Queen's Royal Regt. (West Surrey), was awarded the decoration in December, 1916, for "most conspicuous bravery and brilliant leading as a Battalion Commander." With splendid gallantry he carried an initial attack straight through the enemy's front system of trenches.

Photo: Dudley Glanfield.

MAJOR-GENERAL A. CARTON DE WIART

Major-General A. Carton de Wiart, V.C., C.B., C.M.G., D.S.O., of the Dragoon Guards, was awarded his Victoria Cross in September, 1916, while serving as temporary lieutenant-colonel. He had already gained the D.S.O. The account reads: "It was largely owing to Colonel Carton de Wiart's dauntless courage and inspiring example that a serious reverse was averted. In forcing our attack home he showed the utmost energy and courage. . . . In organising positions and supplies he unhesitatingly exposed himself, and passed unflinchingly through fire barrage of the most intense kind."

Owing to mist and heavy fire, his command was much disorganised after the capture of the first objective. He rallied and re-formed his men, including some from other units who had become intermixed in the confusion. Inspiring all with his own contempt of danger, he led them successfully to the assault of the second objective, capturing many prisoners, and being himself twice wounded.

Again he rallied and re-formed, and although unsupported in a very advanced position, held his ground for the remainder of the day and throughout the night, under heavy artillery and machine-gun fire. Reinforced the next morning, he organised an attack on a strongly fortified village, and showed great dash in leading it, capturing the village and 500 prisoners, and being again wounded. In the afternoon he was once more wounded severely, but refused to leave the line until he had issued final instructions.

"The personality, valour, and utter contempt of danger on the part of this single officer enabled the lodgment in the most advanced objective of the Corps to be permanently held, and on this *point d'appui* the line was eventually formed."

Sangfroid

The award in September, 1916, to Capt. (Temporary Lieut.-Col.) Adrian Carton de Wiart, D.S.O., 4th Royal Irish Dragoon Guards, was for "most conspicuous bravery, coolness, and determination during severe operations of a prolonged nature." Owing in great measure to his courage and inspiring example, a serious reverse was averted. He displayed the utmost energy in forcing an attack home. After three other battalion commanders had become casualties, he controlled their commands and ensured that the ground won was maintained. Frequently he exposed himself in organising positions and supplies, passing unflinchingly through an intense barrage. "His gallantry was inspiring to all."

"Most conspicuous bravery and fearless leading" earned the award bestowed in January, 1918, on Major (Acting Lieut.-Col.) John Sherwood-Kelly, D.S.O., Norfolk Regt. (commanding battalion, Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers). A party of men of another unit, detailed to cover the passage of a canal by his battalion, were held up on the near side by heavy rifle fire directed on the bridge. He at once ordered covering fire, led the leading company of his battalion across, then reconnoitred

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under heavy rifle and machine-gun fire the high ground held by the enemy.

The left flank of his battalion, advancing to assault this objective, was held up by a thick belt of wire. He crossed to this flank, and with a Lewis-gun team forced his way through obstacles under heavy fire, got the gun into position on the far side, and covered the advance of the battalion through the wire, enabling it to capture the position.

Later, he led a charge against some pits from which a heavy fire was being directed on his men, captured the objective—together with five machine guns and forty-six prisoners—and killed a large number of the enemy. "The great gallantry displayed by this officer throughout the day inspired the greatest confidence in his men, and it was mainly due to his example and devotion to duty that his battalion was enabled to capture and hold their objective."

Many V.C.'s keep in touch with old comrades through the British Legion. A member of the Wimbledon Branch is Corporal E. Foster, East Surrey Regt., whose award for "most conspicuous bravery and initiative" was Gazetted in June, 1917. When an advance was held up in a village by two enemy machine guns, entrenched and strongly covered by wire entanglements, Foster, who was in charge of two Lewis guns, entered the trench and engaged them.

Wandsworth Should be Proud

One of his guns was lost, but with reckless courage he rushed and bombed the enemy, recovering it. Then, getting both guns into action, he killed the enemy team and captured its weapons, enabling the advance to continue. Foster is now an inspector in the sanitary department of the Wandsworth Borough Council.

The Rev. Geoffrey Harold Woolley, M.C., M.A., now a master at Harrow School, won his V.C. for conspicuous bravery on Hill 60 during the night of April 20th–21st, 1915, as a 2nd Lieut. in the 9th (County of London) Battn. The only officer on the hill at the time, with very few men, he resisted all attacks on his trench, and continued throwing bombs and encouraging his men until relieved. All this time the trench was heavily shelled, bombed, and machine-gunned.

As a Temporary Lieut. in the 2nd Worcesters, Mr. Eugene Paul Bennett, a barrister-at-law recently appointed to the Metropolitan Bench, was awarded the V.C. for "most conspicuous bravery in action" when in command of the second wave of the attack on Le Transloy, November 5th, 1916. The first wave had suffered heavy casualties, lost its commander, and was wavering. Bennett advanced at the head of the second wave, and by personal example of valour and resolution reached the objective with sixty men.

Isolated with his small party, he at once set about consolidating the position under heavy rifle and machine-gun fire from both flanks, and, although wounded, remained in command, directing and controlling. "He set an example of cheerfulness and resolution beyond all praise, and there is little doubt that but for his personal example of courage, the attack would have been checked at the outset."

From the original painting in the Imperial War Museum.

MAJOR J. B. McCUDDEN

Major J. B. McCudden, V.C., D.S.O., M.C., M.M., bears the distinction of having won the most decorations of any member of the Royal Air Force or Royal Flying Corps. In addition to the honours shown after his name, he gained a Bar to both his D.S.O. and his M.C.; and as though this were not achievement enough, he was only 22 years old when the last of these awards, the V.C., was made to him! He was killed in July, 1918, having accounted for more than 50 enemy aircraft in the course of his career. This portrait of him is by Sir William Orpen, R.A.

A V.C. won at Cuinchy on February 1st, 1915, was that of Lce.-Corporal Michael O'Leary, 1st Battn. Irish Guards. One of a storming party advancing against the enemy's barricades, he rushed ahead and killed five Germans holding the first, then attacked a second barricade 60 yards farther on, killing three men, taking two prisoners, and capturing it. He thus practically captured the position alone, preventing the rest of the party from being fired on.

Sniping the Snipers

At St. Python, France, on October 13th, 1918, Corpl. (Lance-Sergeant) Harry Blanshard Wood, M.M., 2nd Battn. Scots Guards, took command

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Photo: Sport & General.

LIEUTENANT HAROLD AUTEN

Lieutenant Harold Auten, V.C., D.S.C., of the Royal Naval Reserve, won his Cross while in command of a Q-ship, H.M.S. *Stock Force*, in 1918. The vessel was torpedoed by a U-boat on July 30th, and the forepart of her was entirely wrecked. But although she at once began to fill, her commander and crew went faithfully through the long programme of sending away a "panic party" in one of the boats, luring the submarine within range by means of this boat, and then pounding at the enemy with the guns. The *Stock Force*—a craft of only 360 tons—eventually sank with colours flying, but not before the U-boat had preceded her to the bottom. The Q-ship's crew were rescued.

of the leading platoon when his sergeant was killed and the advance was opposed by desperate machine-gun fire. The company had to clear the western side of the village, secure the crossing of the River Selle, and gain the ruined bridge in face of snipers.

Wood carried a large brick into the the open, sniped the snipers from behind it, covering his men while they worked across, and continued to do so until all had reached the objective. Later, he drove off repeated counter-attacks against his position. "His gallant conduct and initiative shown contributed largely to the success of the day's operations."

The air V.C.'s showed almost superhuman bravery and resource. When the award to 2nd Lieut. (Temporary Captain) James Byford McCudden, D.S.O., M.C., M.M., Royal Flying Corps, was made in April, 1918, for "most conspicuous bravery, exceptional perseverance, keenness, and a very high devotion to duty," he had accounted for fifty-four enemy machines, of which forty-two had been destroyed, nineteen of them on our side of the lines, only twelve of the fifty-four having been merely put out of control.

Twice he had destroyed four two-seaters on the same day; on the last occasion all four were destroyed within the space of one and a half hours. In his last squadron he had taken part in seventy-eight offensive patrols, in nearly every case as leader. On thirty other occasions, with the same squadron, he had crossed the lines alone, either in pursuit or in search of enemy machines.

On December 23rd, 1917, when he was leading his patrol, eight enemy machines were attacked between 2.30 and 3.50 p.m., two being shot down by Capt. McCudden in our lines. In the morning he encountered four enemy machines of which he shot down two. On January 30th, 1918, he attacked five enemy scouts, single-handed, destroying two, and returning home only when the enemy machines had been driven far east, his Lewis-gun ammunition was finished, and the belt of his Vickers had broken.

"Deserving of the Very Highest Honour"

"As a patrol leader he has at all times shown the utmost gallantry and skill, not only in the manner in which he has attacked and destroyed the enemy, but in the way he has during several aerial fights protected the newer members of his flight, thus keeping down their casualties to a minimum. This officer is considered, by the record which he has made, by his fearlessness, and by the great service which he has rendered to his country, deserving of the very highest honour."

"Most conspicuous bravery, skill,

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and determination on the 7th November, 1915, in France" won the award for 2nd Lieut. Gilbert Stuart Martin Insall, No. 11 Squadron, R.F.C. He was patrolling in a Vickers fighting machine, with First-class Air Mechanic T. H. Donald as gunner, when a German machine was sighted, pursued, and attacked near Achiet.

The German led the Vickers over a rocket battery, but with great skill Lieut. Insall dived and got to close range, when Donald fired a drum of cartridges into the enemy machine, stopping its engine. The German then dived through a cloud, followed by Insall. Fire was again opened, and the German brought down heavily in a ploughed field four miles south-east of Arras.

The Germans scrambled out and prepared to shoot. Insall dived to 500 feet, enabling Donald to open heavy fire on them. The Germans then fled, one assisting the other, who was evidently wounded. Other Germans commenced shooting, but, notwithstanding this, Insall turned again, and an incendiary bomb was dropped on the enemy machine, which was last seen wreathed in smoke.

Insall then headed west to get back over the German trenches. As he was at only 2,000 feet, he dived across them for greater speed, Donald firing into the trenches as he passed over. The German fire damaged the petrol tank, and with great coolness Insall landed under cover of a wood 500 yards inside our lines. The Germans fired some 150 shells at the machine, without causing serious damage. It had, however, been considerably damaged by rifle fire, so during the night was repaired behind screened lights. At dawn Insall flew it home with Donald as passenger.

Two More Gallant Airmen

In May, 1918, an award was Gazetted for 2nd Lieut. Alan Arnett McLeod. Whilst attacking hostile formations by bomb and machine-gun fire with Lieut. A. W. Hammond, M.C., as observer, he was challenged at 5,000 feet by eight enemy triplanes, which dived at him from all directions, firing from their front guns. By skilful manœuvring he enabled his observer to fire bursts at each in turn, shooting three down out of control.

By this time McLeod had received five wounds. While the fight was in progress, a bullet pierced his petrol tank and set the machine on fire. He climbed out on to the left bottom plane, controlling the machine from the side

Photo: Sport & General.

AT BUCKINGHAM PALACE

His late Majesty King George V is here shown during an open-air investiture of V.C.'s which he held outside Buckingham Palace during September, 1917. Sergeant Alexander Edwards, of the Seaforth Highlanders, is receiving the Cross which he won for capturing a hostile machine gun (slaying all its crew in the process), stalking and killing a sniper, and finally leading his men on to capture the furthest objective which had been set them. Edwards was badly wounded in the arm almost at the outset of these exploits, and suffered two more wounds the next day.

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Photo: A. P., Paris.

DAMSELS IN DISTRESS

The ruins over which the women in this picture are walking are those of the pit-head gear of the Fosse Audifret-Pasquier, at Escaudain. The latter is an industrial commune of 11,000 inhabitants 3 km. east of Denain, between Douai and Valenciennes.

FOSSE AUDIFRET-PASQUIER TO-DAY

Escaudain was first entered by the enemy early in October, 1914, and remained in his hands for just over four years. On October 20th, 1918, troops of the Fourth Army reoccupied this area, together with the town of Denain. Our War view was taken on November 1st, 1918.

Photo: A. J. Insall.

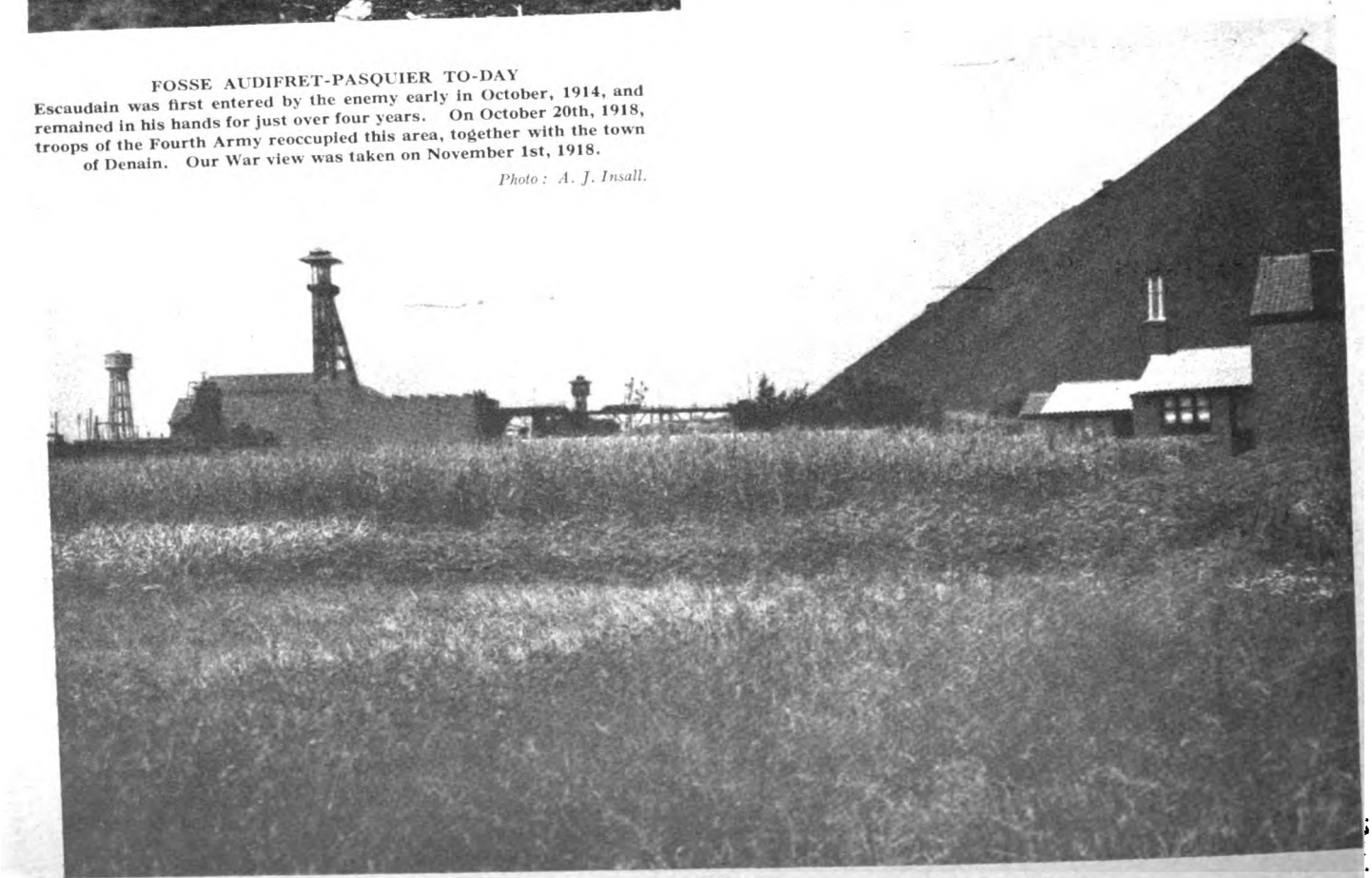

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Photo: Imperial War Museum.

AMID THE RUINS OF DRANOUTRE

A British convoy, on its way through the village, passing in front of the ruined church. Dranoutre, it may be recalled, lies just inside the Belgian frontier, on the road from Locre to Neuve-Église. It is 4½ km. north-east of Bailleul, with which a lane connects it.

OUTSIDE A BRITISH CEMETERY

On April 20th, 1918, Dranoutre—then in the front line—was taken over by French troops, the French 34th Division relieving our 49th. It was lost in the Kemmel fighting of the 25th, and was not regained until September. There are two British cemeteries, the one seen here being in the churchyard.

Photo: G. T. Watson.

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of the fuselage, and by side-slipping steeply kept the flames to one side, enabling the observer to continue firing until the ground was reached. Hammond had been wounded six times when the machine crashed in No Man's Land.

McLeod, notwithstanding his own wounds, dragged him out of the burning wreckage, at great personal risk, under heavy machine-gun fire from the enemy's lines. He was again wounded, this time by a bomb, while engaged in the rescue, but persevered until he had placed Hammond in comparative safety, before himself falling from exhaustion and loss of blood.

Gallantry to a fellow-officer won Squadron-Commander Richard Bell Davies, D.S.O., R.N. and R.F.C., the award on November 19th, 1915, when he and Flight Sub-Lieut. Gilbert Formby Smylie, R.N., carried out a raid on Ferrijik Junction. Smylie's machine was brought down by enemy fire. He planed down over the station, releasing all his bombs at it from a very low altitude, except one which failed to drop. Then he landed in a marsh and, before proceeding towards Turkish territory, set fire to the machine, knowing that the bomb would ensure its destruction.

As he started off, he saw Davies descending. Fearing that he would alight near the burning machine and risk destruction from the bomb, Smylie ran back, and from a short distance exploded the bomb by means of a pistol bullet. Davies descended at a safe distance, picked up Smylie—in spite of the near approach of a party of the enemy—and returned to the aerodrome: "a feat of airmanship that can seldom have been equalled for skill and gallantry." Smylie was awarded the Distinguished Service Cross.

A feat demanding great presence of mind won Sergeant Thomas Mottershead a posthumous V.C. in February, 1917. Attacked at 9,000 feet, his petrol tank was pierced and the machine set on fire. Enveloped in flames, and suffering extreme agony from burns, he yet was able to make a careful selection of a landing-place behind our lines, thus saving the life of his observer, Lieut. Gower. The machine collapsed on touching the ground, pinning Mottershead beneath the wreckage; and though he was subsequently rescued, he died from his injuries.

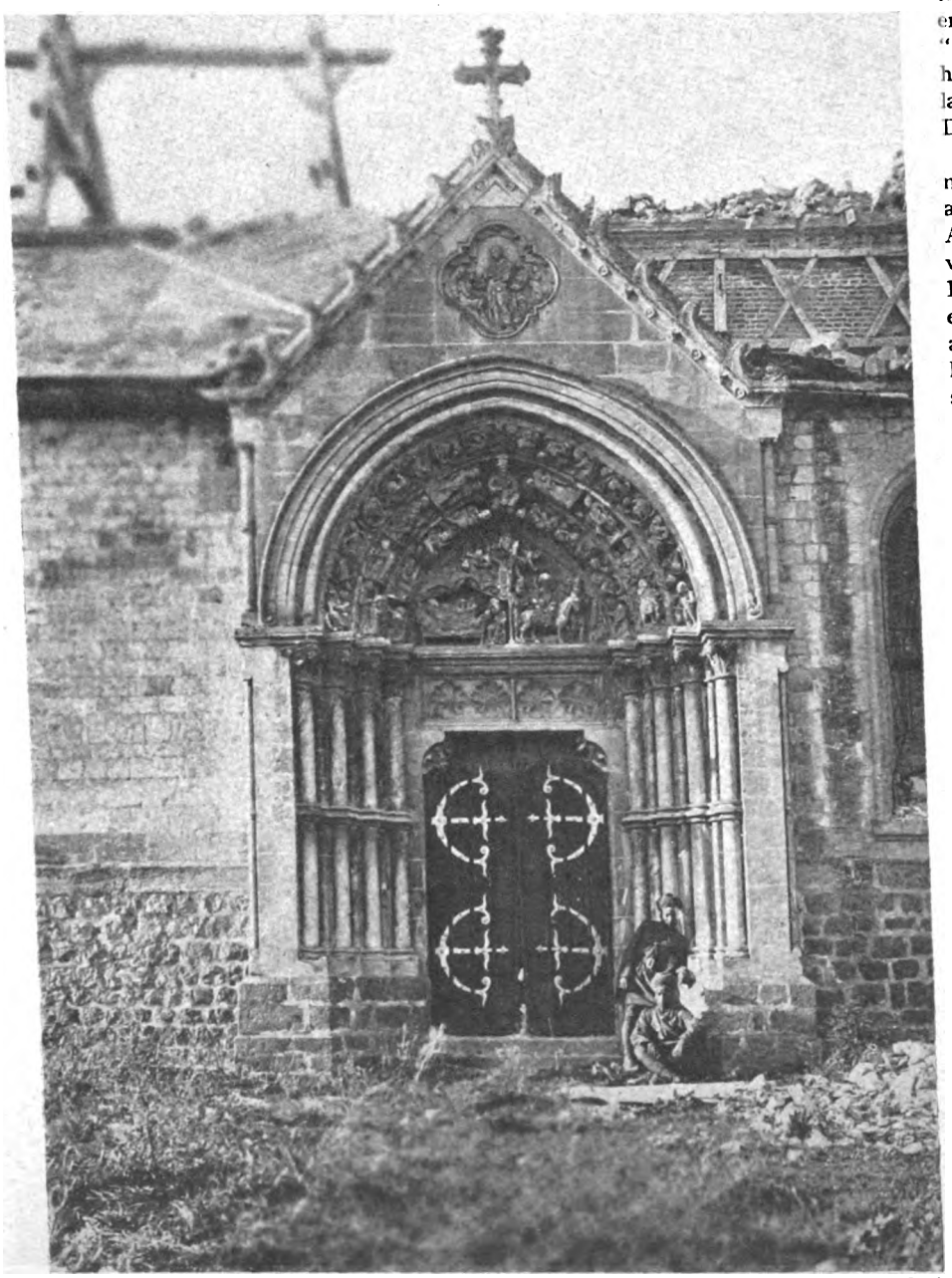

Photo: A. P., Paris.

ONLY JUST SAVED

The condition of the roof shows how extremely lucky was this fine old doorway to escape destruction at the hands of some zealous gunner—not necessarily German. The building is the village church of Athies, a place situated at the bifurcation of the Péronne—Nesle and Péronne—Ham roads, 9 km. south-south-east of the first-named town. Athies is also the eastern neighbour of St. Christ-Briost, well known for its bridge over the Somme.

On the Enemy's Recommendation

A unique V.C., inasmuch as it was the only one awarded on the recommendation of an enemy, was that of Acting Lieut. William Edwards Sanders, R.N.R., "in recognition of his conspicuous gallantry, consummate coolness, and skill in command of one of H.M. ships in action." Behind this brief official announcement lies a remarkable exploit. On April 30th, 1917, the German submarine *U93*, commanded by the famous Count von Spiegel, encountered a British three-masted schooner of just under 200 tons, and decided to sink her by gun-fire. The crew endured terrific shelling, entailing a number of casualties, then were seen hastily to abandon ship.

Von Spiegel came up astern to within less than 100 yards. Suddenly the White Ensign broke from the masthead, the deck-houses disappeared as by magic, hidden gun-crews lying on their stomachs "opened out," and Q-ship H.M.S. *Prize* inflicted serious damage on the submarine, which eventually vanished from sight in the darkness and smoke.

Lieut. Sanders, assuming that the

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U-boat had gone to the bottom, sent out a boat and picked up three Germans, including von Spiegel, who had been on the conning tower and also believed his vessel was lost. Actually, however, although unable to dive, she was navigated with difficulty round the Orkneys to the Norwegian coast, whence she was escorted to Emden.

All through the engagement, there had been on board the U-boat an English skipper, Capt. A. D. Burroughs, who had been captured when von Spiegel sank his ship, the *Ikbal*. He and the Count were enjoying a smoke on deck when the *Prize* appeared. In the ensuing shelling Burroughs had to take cover behind the conning tower; and the Count was knocked over the side.

Later, while the Germans in the *Prize* were helping to keep afloat the ship they had tried to send to the bottom, Burroughs in the crippled U-boat was helping to patch up the wounded Germans who held him prisoner! Lieut. Sanders did not live to receive his V.C., for a few months later he and his gallant crew were sent to the bottom.

In the Sea of Marmora

A Dardanelles V.C. was that awarded to Lieut.-Commander Martin Eric Dunbar-Nasmith, R.N., for "most conspicuous bravery, in command of one of His Majesty's submarines, while operating in the Sea of Marmora." But this gallant officer's exploits have already been narrated in the chapter entitled "The Navy's Stranglehold," as were the stories of Lieut. Norman Douglas Holbrook, R.N., who dived his *B11* under five rows of mines and torpedoed the Turkish battleship *Messudiyeh*, and Lieut.-Commander Edward Courtney Boyle, R.N., who showed comparable bravery and resource in his *E14*. Both these were also awarded V.C.'s.

Another Dardanelles V.C. was Commander Edward Unwin, R.N., in the *River Clyde* during the Gallipoli landing. Observing that lighters which were to form the bridge to the shore had broken adrift, he left the ship and under murderous fire endeavoured to get them into position, working on until obliged to return, suffering from cold and immersion.

After lying for a time in blankets, he returned to the gallant work, against the doctor's order, and completed it. Later he was again attended, this time for abrasions caused by bullets, but once more left the ship to save wounded men lying in shallow water near the beach. At this heroic task he persisted under continuous fire until forced to stop through exhaustion.

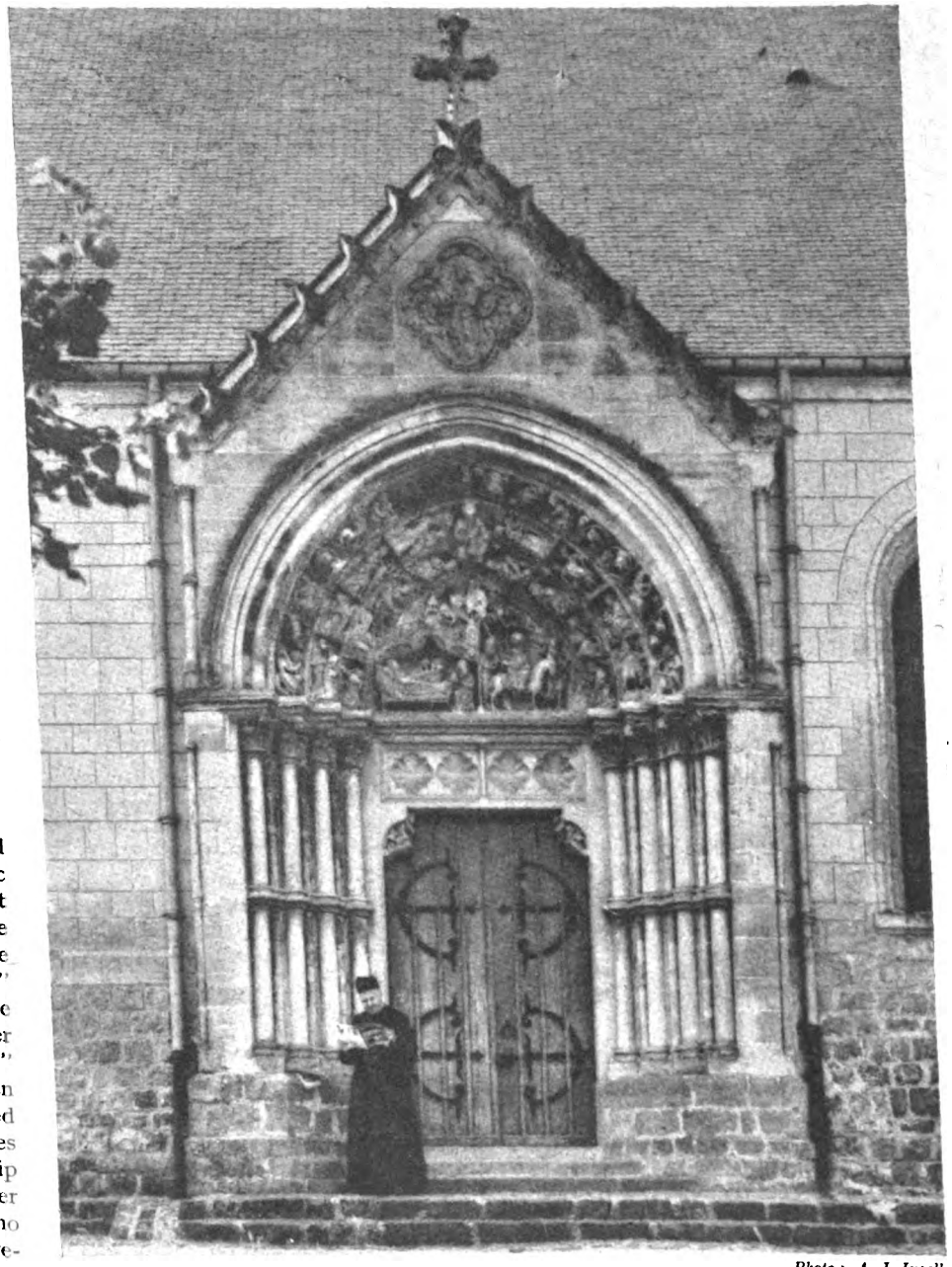

Photo: *A. J. Insall.*

A SPLENDID PORTAL

The date of the War photograph on the opposite page is September 19th, 1917; and the kind Fate which had hitherto protected the doorway became even kinder when she preserved it throughout the troublous days of 1918. The rest of the church was badly knocked about, and owes its restoration very largely to the efforts of the Abbé Duclercq, who is here seen perusing a copy of *Twenty Years After*. Athies was abandoned by the XIX Corps on March 23rd, 1918.

Others who assisted Commander Unwin were also awarded V.C.'s: Midshipman George L. Drewry, R.N.R., who was wounded in the head while securing the lighters under heavy fire, but persevered with his task and twice attempted to swim from lighter to lighter with a line; Midshipman Wilfred St. A. Malleson, R.N., who swam with the line, succeeded, and made two further attempts after it had broken; Able Seaman Wm. Chas. Williams, R.N., who held on to a line in the water for over an hour until killed; and Seaman Geo. McKenzie Samson, R.N.R., who worked on a lighter all day under fire, attending wounded and getting out lines, until he was himself dangerously wounded.

A representative Jutland V.C. was Commander Loftus William Jones, R.N., who led a division of destroyers against the enemy battle-cruiser squad-

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Photo: A. J. Insall.

NOT FAR FROM CASSEL

A verdant stretch of the once-familiar highway by which one approached Cassel from the eastern side —from Steenvoorde, Poperinghe, and Ypres. The rise at the further end of this vista marks the beginning of the hill which leads, by dint of many twists, up into the town.

ron in H.M.S. *Shark* on May 31st, 1916. A shell hit the bridge, disabling the steering gear, and another disabled the main engines, leaving his vessel helpless. Jones, wounded in the leg, went aft to help connect and man the after wheel. The forecastle gun and crew were blown away, then the after gun and crew.

Commander Jones, of Jutland

Jones went to the midship and only remaining gun, and helped to keep it in action. The crew was reduced to three, one of whom was soon badly wounded in the leg. A few minutes later a shell took off the commander's leg above the knee, but he continued to give orders while a chief stoker improvised a tourniquet. He commanded another ensign to be hoisted; and then, as a German destroyer was closing, he ordered the surviving crew to don lifebelts. Immediately after this the *Shark* was sunk by a torpedo, and her gallant commander disappeared with her.

Among the V.C.'s won in the blocking of Zeebrugge and Ostend was that awarded to Commander (Acting Captain) Alfred F. B. Carpenter, R.N., commanding the *Vindictive*. As readers have already learned in the chapter devoted to this exploit, he set a magnificent example in navigating mined waters, bringing his ship alongside the Mole in the darkness under heavy fire, supervising the landing, and encouraging the men in the most dangerous and exposed positions.

Lieut. Richard Douglas Sandford, R.N., commanding the submarine *C3*, skilfully manœuvred the vessel between the piles of the viaduct before lighting his fuse and abandoning her, though he and his crew knew that if the means of rescue failed and they were in the water they would be killed by the explosion. He disdained to use the gyro steering, and abandon the vessel at a safe distance, preferring to see the job through.

Able Seaman Albert Edward McKenzie, B Coy. of seaman storming-party, landed on the Mole with his machine gun, advanced down it with Lieut.-Commander Harrison—who was killed with most of his party—and accounted for several of the enemy, being severely wounded while working his gun in an exposed position.

Royal Artillery V.C.'s were mostly won in saving guns and men under fire. Lieut.-Col. Ernest Wright Alexander, 119th Battery, R.F.A., saved his guns against overwhelming odds at Élouges on August 24th, 1914, though the weapons had to be withdrawn by hand, by himself and three men, when the flank guard was attacked. This exploit enabled the 5th Division to retire without serious loss. Subsequently he rescued a wounded man under heavy fire "with the greatest gallantry and devotion to duty."

A Gunner near Béthune

Acting Sergeant John Crawshaw Raynes, "A" Battery, 71st Bde., R.F.A., won his V.C. at Fosse 7 de Béthune on October 11th, 1915, when

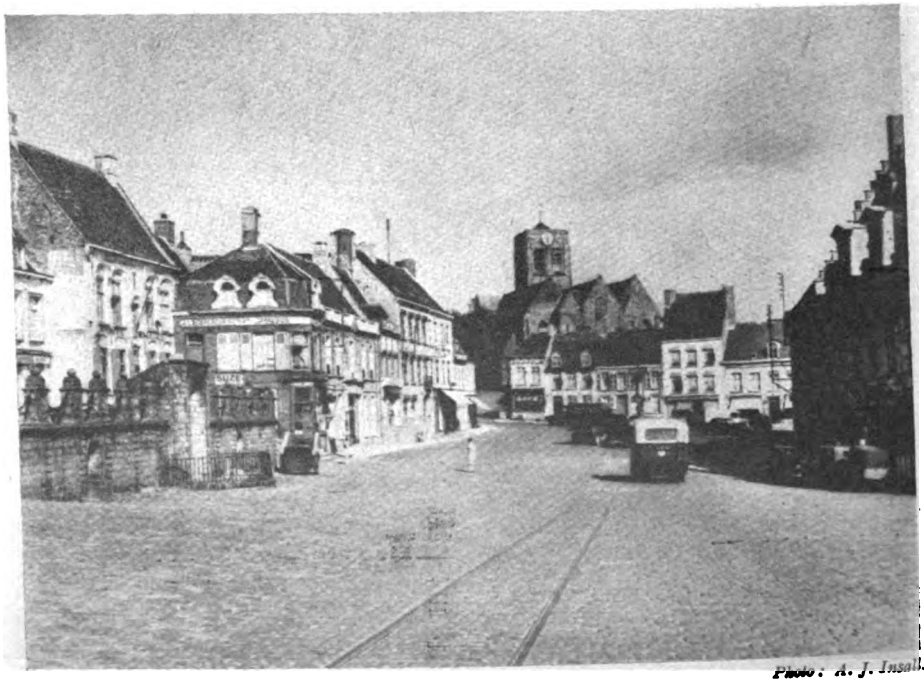

Photo: A. J. Insall.

IN CASSEL ITSELF

A good modern view of this comely little town, showing the citadel and the main street. The road to Ypres is the one leading out of the further left-hand corner of the square. To the right lie Bailleul, Armentières, and Lille; behind the camera, Dunkirk and St. Omer. Cassel's position, on a completely isolated hill, 500 ft. high, makes it a conspicuous landmark.

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his battery was heavily bombarded with armour-piercing and gas shells. On the "Cease Fire," he went out under intense shell fire, bandaged Sergeant Ayres, who was lying wounded forty yards away, then returned when his gun was again ordered into action.

On the next "Cease Fire," he called on two gunners—both killed shortly afterwards—and carried the sergeant into a dug-out. A gas shell burst at the mouth of it; he ran across the open, fetched his gas helmet, put it on the sergeant, and then, badly gassed himself, staggered back to serve his gun.

On October 12th, at Quality Street, four men were buried in a shelled house and four in the cellar. Sergeant Raynes, wounded in the head and leg, was the first to be rescued; he insisted on remaining and helping to rescue the remainder. Then, after having his wounds dressed, he immediately reported for duty with his battery, which was again being heavily shelled.

A representative Australian V.C. was Pte. Wm. Matthew Currey, 53rd Battn., A.I.F. When his battalion was suffering heavy casualties from a 77-mm. field gun at very close range in the attack on Péronne, September 1st, 1918, he rushed forward under intense machine-gun fire and captured the gun single-handed, after killing the entire crew. Later, when the advance of the left flank was checked at a strong-point, he crept around the flank and engaged the post with a Lewis gun, finally rushing it single-handed, causing many casualties, and enabling the advance to continue.

Subsequently he volunteered to carry orders for the withdrawal of an isolated company under shell and rifle fire, returning with valuable information.

The gallantry of the Canadian V.C.'s was typified by Lieut. Frederick Campbell, 1st Canadian Battn., who on June 15th, 1915, at Givenchy, took two machine guns over the parapet, arrived at the German first line with one, and maintained his position there under very heavy fire after almost the whole of his detachment had been killed or wounded. When our supply of bombs had been exhausted, he advanced his gun still farther to an exposed position, and by firing about 1,000 rounds held back a counter-attack. He was subsequently wounded, and died.

A Canadian and an Indian

Pte. (Acting Corporal) Leo Clarke, another Canadian V.C., was building a "block" in a newly captured trench, after most of his party had become casualties, when twenty of the enemy, with two officers, counter-attacked. He boldly advanced against them, emptying his revolver and two enemy rifles which he picked up. One of the officers wounded him in the leg with a bayonet, but Clarke shot him dead. The enemy then bolted, and Clarke, pursuing, accounted for five more. Later he was ordered to the dressing-station, but returned next day to duty.

An Indian V.C. in the Kipling tradition, decorated in June, 1916, was Sepoy Chatta Singh, 9th Bhopal Infantry, who left cover to assist his C.O. lying wounded and helpless in the open, bound up his wound, then dug cover for him with entrenching tool under heavy rifle fire, and for five hours, until nightfall, shielded him with his own body. Finally, under cover of darkness, he went back for assistance and brought the officer to safety.

Countless men whose names do not figure in the roll of valour shared the honour of V.C.'s which were awarded collectively, under an ancient rule, although one man was elected to receive the Cross. Countless others performed deeds as dauntless, which either escaped recognition in the frenzy of battle, or were performed without the necessary witnesses at hand to furnish the authorities with an official recommendation.

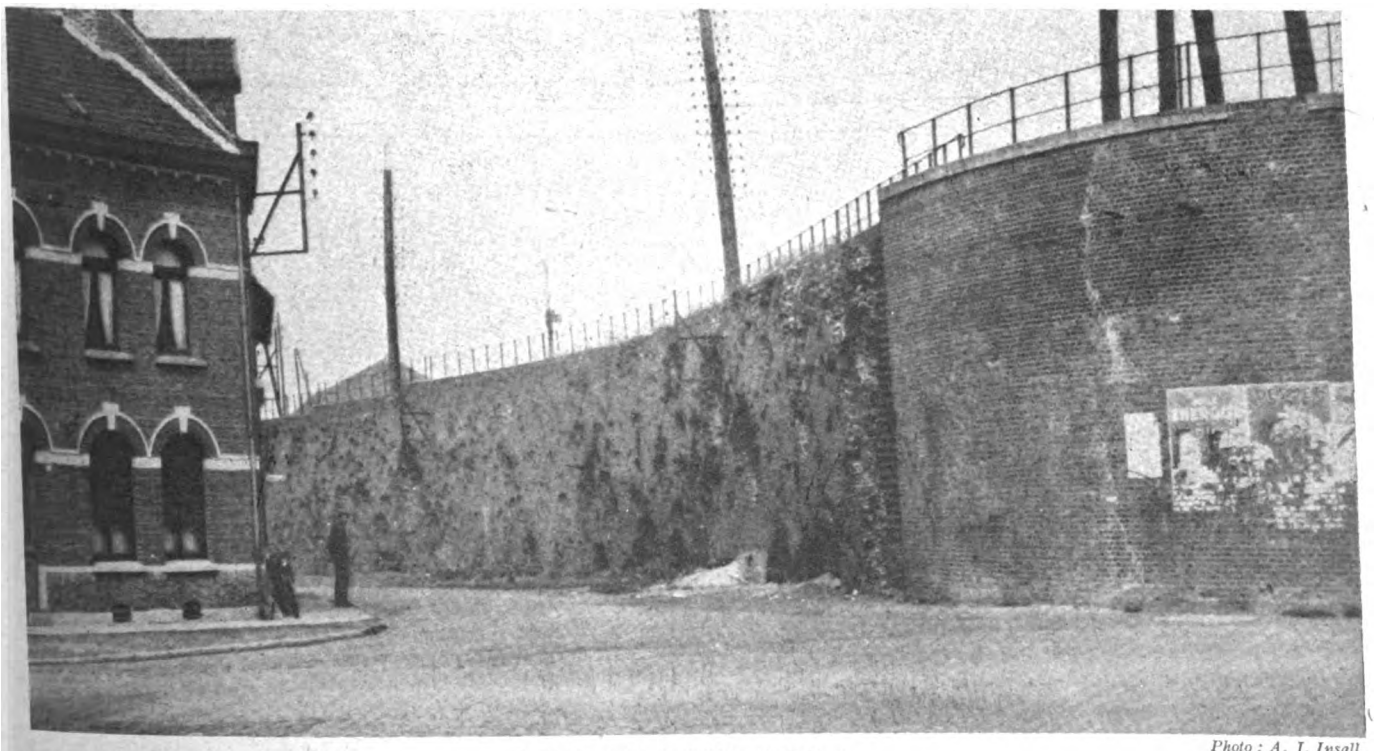

Photo: A. J. Insall.

HOARY AND BATTLE-SCARRED

What would otherwise be an extremely dull view is rendered highly interesting to the ex-soldier by reason of the evidences of war to be discerned in it. The shell- and bullet-scarred wall on the right of the road helps to carry the railway through the Lens suburb of Avion, entered by British troops on June 28th, 1917. In the more extensively rebuilt battle-areas there are relatively few such scars still to be found; and when one does come across them their contrast with the surrounding newness is very marked.

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CHAPTER IX

THE CONQUEST OF "GERMAN SOUTH-WEST"

The territory once known as German South-West Africa has a coastline of some 800 miles washed by the waves of the South Atlantic. Lying to the north-west of the Cape of Good Hope and Cape Province, the total area of this erstwhile German colony amounts to some 322,000 square miles, and the greater part of the country consists of barren and waterless desert. Desert or not, however, the geographical situation of "German South-West," with the port of Walfisch Bay hard by the all-important shipping route to the Cape of Good Hope, presented a problem to the Allies which called for immediate attention. In the circumstances there was only one solution, and that the speedy conquest of the territory. The present chapter deals with the campaign embarked upon for that purpose.

It is almost 38 years since the first shots were fired in the "South African War, 1899-1902." The Great Boer War, it was often called; but then, in those days, we had not learnt what a "great" war was. We know better now.

The Origin of "German South-West"

Thirty-eight years is quite a long time—more than a generation, in fact. And those of us old enough to have fought in the South African War are apt to forget that there must be very many readers of TWENTY YEARS AFTER who were so young at the time as to have little, if any, first-hand knowledge of that period; there are probably not a few who were then not even born. It is therefore worth while to devote a few paragraphs to South Africa in the twentieth century, if for no other purpose than to show how "German South-West" comes into the picture.

When the nineteenth century was drawing to a close, and while Queen Victoria was still upon the throne, "South Africa" was not the homogeneous portion of the British Empire that it is to-day. There were two widely separated colonies, Cape Colony and Natal—the latter almost entirely British, while the former contained a strong majority of Dutch or French Huguenot extraction—Boers, in other words. Adjoining these two British colonies lay a couple of independent Boer republics, the Orange Free State and the South African Republic (always known as the Transvaal), which—though claiming to be independent—were by treaty under a kind of suzerainty of England.

The arrangement, however, never proved satisfactory; and when the Transvaal (or at any rate the south-west corner of it) became crowded with adventurers attracted by the discovery of gold, it was soon evident that a progressive, industrious, and numerous mining community—comprising thousands of British stock—on the one hand, and an agricultural and rather primitive state like the Transvaal on the other, could not see quite eye-to-eye.

In a long-drawn-out dispute the President of the Transvaal thought fit to issue an ultimatum to Great Britain. War ensued. It lasted very much longer than people in this country had expected, but the result, of course, was inevitable. The Transvaal was conquered and annexed, as was also the Orange Free State, which had thrown in its lot with its northern neighbour. This was in 1902; and within a few years wise statesmen conferred on the two ex-republics responsible government under the British flag.

The "Scramble for Africa"

But all the time that the war of 1899-1902 was being carried on—and for some years before—there had been in existence in the south of the African Continent, and marching with British territory, a large German colony—German South-West Africa. This huge territory had been explored to some extent by the Dutch Government at the Cape in 1761, but no settlement had ensued. Early in the nineteenth century missionaries, both British and German, penetrated into the country, but neither national interest nor national jealousy was aroused.

From about the late sixties, and through the seventies, the Government of Cape Colony was constantly urging the mother country to annex the territory, but without effect, although in 1878 England did appropriate the best harbour on the coast, known as Walfisch (really "Whale Fish") Bay. The huge territory itself was, however, still in the hands of degraded savages.

Then, in the early eighties, began that "scramble for Africa," the last act of which we have just witnessed in Abyssinia. Of the Great Powers of Europe at that time, Germany alone had no colonial ambitions. Bismarck, indeed, was entirely "European" in his outlook. Circumstances, however, proved too strong for him, and on May 2nd, 1883, the German flag was formally hoisted over "Germany's first colony."

This was a very small affair, merely a tiny strip of coast at Angra Pequeña, and a hinterland 20 miles in depth. Appetite, however, comes with eating, and in August, 1884, Germany annexed the whole territory, thus becoming the possessor of more than 322,000 square miles of South African soil, with a coast-line of about 800 miles. Of this coast-line, England, as already stated, had six years earlier annexed Walfisch Bay with its fine harbour. Nothing whatever had been done to develop the port, and in 1914 it was in an absolutely defenceless condition.

German South-West Africa, as the colony was called (these words being the English translation of the German name), was not a "white man's country," and for years was a source of considerable expense to the Fatherland. The Germans, however, set out on their colonising task with typical thoroughness, though without that tolerance and breadth of outlook essential for developing a wild and savage land. In 1904 the natives, Hereros and Hottentots, broke out into active rebellion, and the rising took three years to subdue, at a cost of 22 millions sterling and by the employment of nearly 20,000 regular troops brought overseas from Germany. The campaign was waged by Germany with great, and at times heartless, severity.

One *Pro* and One *Con*

This rebellion is worth mentioning here for two reasons. In the first place,

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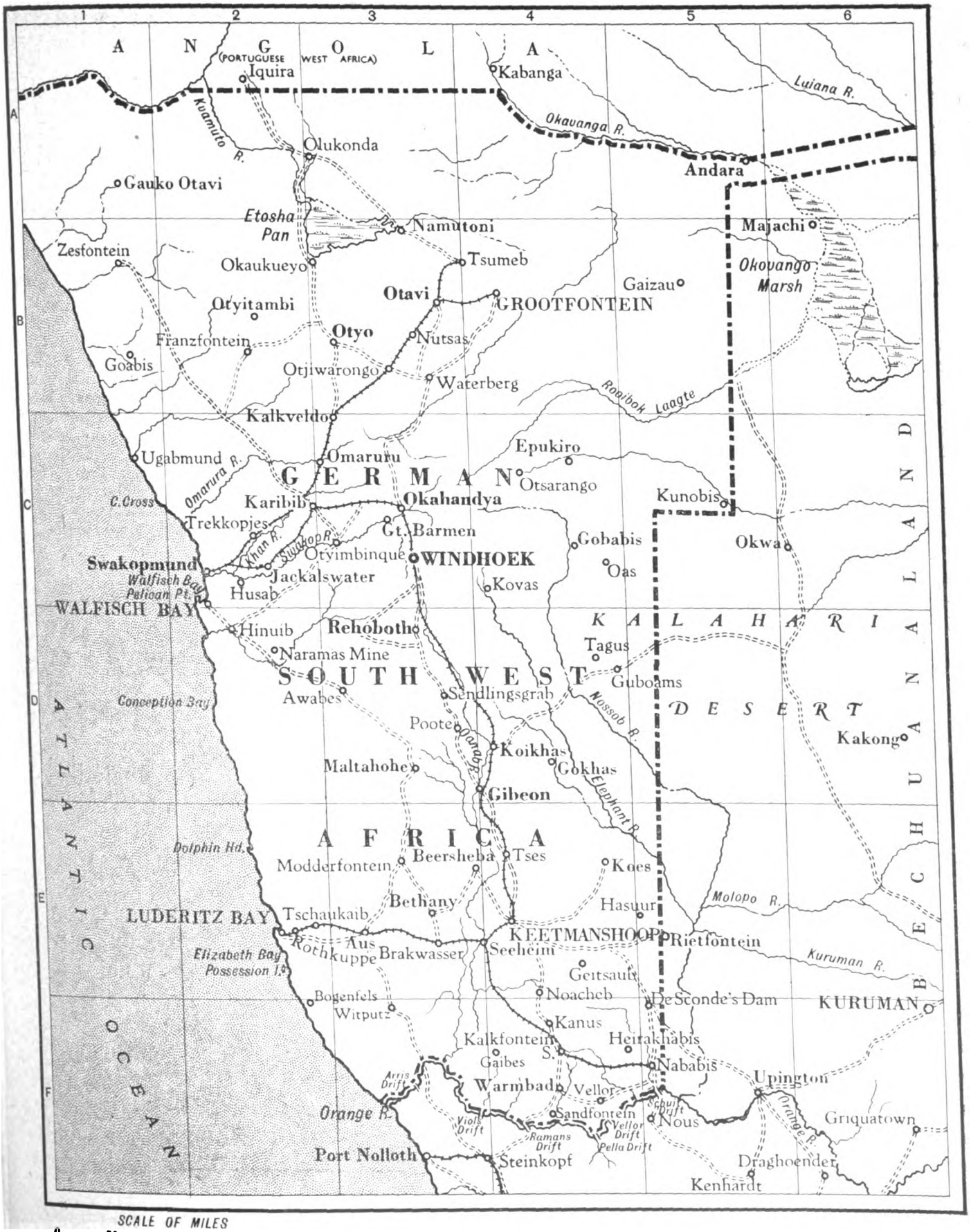

GERMAN SOUTH-WEST AFRICA IN 1914–15.

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it gave rise to a fierce anti-German feeling amongst the natives, which was of considerable assistance in our conquest of the country during the Great War. In the second—and here the advantage was to be with the enemy—it gave the German commanders and troops great knowledge of the country and great practical experience of warfare in it.

The conquest of German South-West Africa was to be a task differing considerably from the other African campaigns of the Great War, which led eventually to the subjugation of the Cameroons and German East Africa. Except in the extreme north, "German South-West" is much less tropical than the other theatres. There is not the same jungle or bush; and, on the whole, the climate is dry and healthy. But against that is the fact that much of the land is very sandy, and even desert. Water was always an important, and sometimes a very serious, problem.

There were thus likely to be distinct difficulties accompanying any attempt to wrest the colony from its German owners. On the other hand, German South-West was extraordinarily well supplied with communications for a territory of its kind. There was a railway system which linked up practically all the townships of note, and all the districts, with the two ports of Swakopmund and Lüderitzbucht (or Lüderitz Bay, as we shall hereafter call it). The extent of railway communication was, of course, far beyond the trade requirements of the colony.

German publicists freely admitted that the railways had been built primarily for military reasons, and one member of the Reichstag had gone so far as to state openly that they were built to "facilitate considerably our attack on Cape Colony."[1] At the opening of the Great War there were over twelve hundred miles of railway working in the colony.

The white population amounted to merely 15,000 or so. Speaking generally, the country was very largely pastoral, with farms averaging about 20,000 acres. The exports, however, were chiefly diamonds, of which nearly £3,000,000 worth were exported in the year before the War. Germany regarded very seriously this first-born colony of hers, and it is worth noting that the Kaiser himself owned a diamond mine and two farms.

[1] Rayner & O'Shaughnessy, *How Botha and Smuts Conquered German South-West*, p. 14.

A Fine Wireless Station

In such things as telegraphy and telephony the colony was particularly well equipped. The same remark applies to wireless; and the reader is asked to bear in mind that the wireless station at the capital, Windhoek, was one of the most powerful in the world.

When the bottom fell out of the world in the first week of August, 1914, it was natural that the existence of this German colony should cause considerable anxiety to the British Cabinet and the British Admiralty in particular. Walfisch Bay, of course, became German at once; and the continuance of that fine harbour, most unpleasantly situated on the Cape route to India and the East, in German hands, could not be regarded with equanimity.

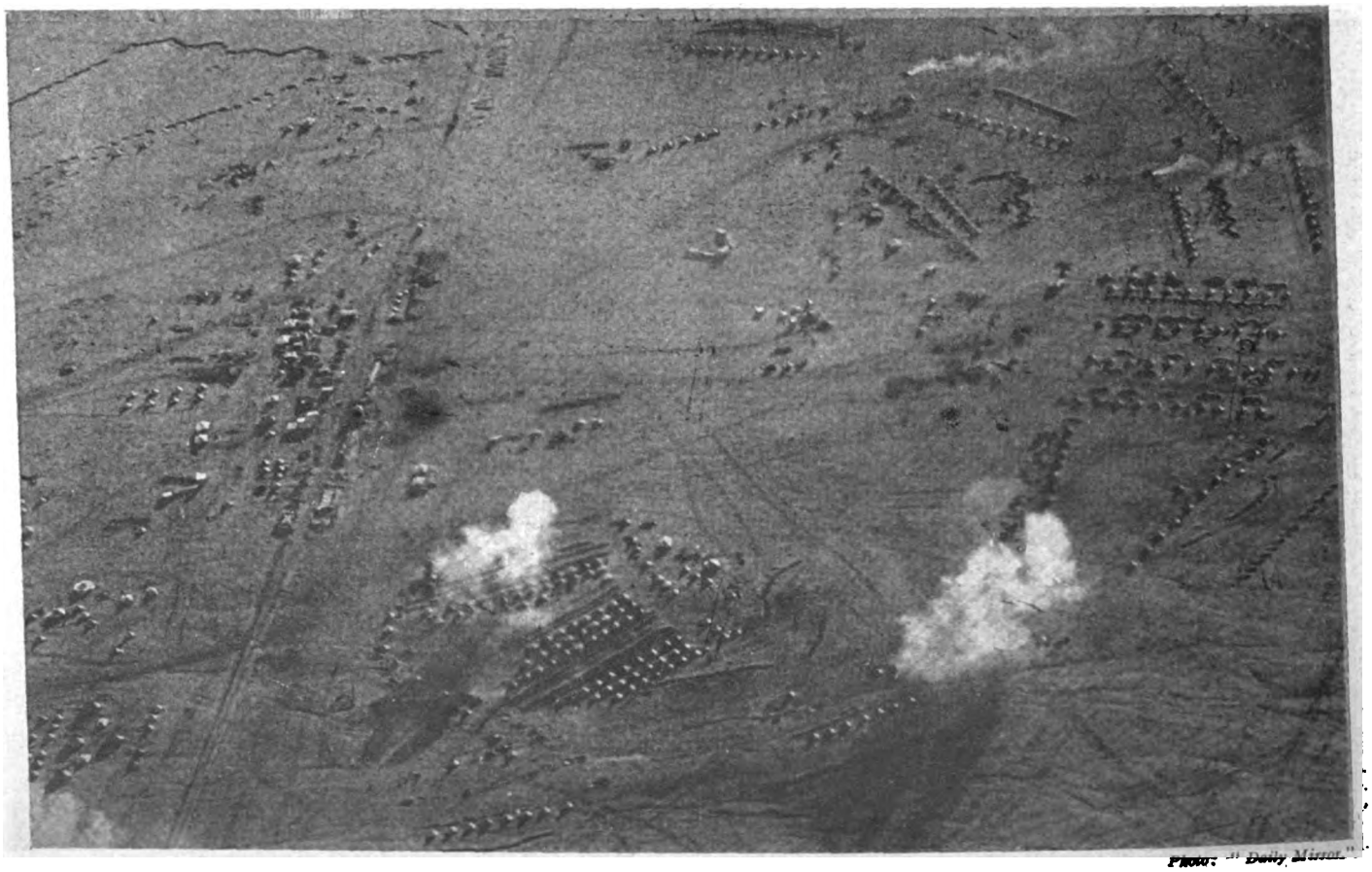

Photo: "Daily Mirror"

TELL-TALE WHITE PUFFS

The puffs, indeed, mark where enemy bombs are falling on General Botha's camp in "German South-West" during 1915. The aerial view gives a good notion of the flat, bare country which characterises most of the colony. Large areas of the north are still almost unknown to white men, and but for the presence of diamonds, and to a lesser extent of copper, tin, and marble, South-West Africa would be a possession of very little worth, despite her recent entry nto the chilled-meat export market. Germany annexed the territory in 1881.

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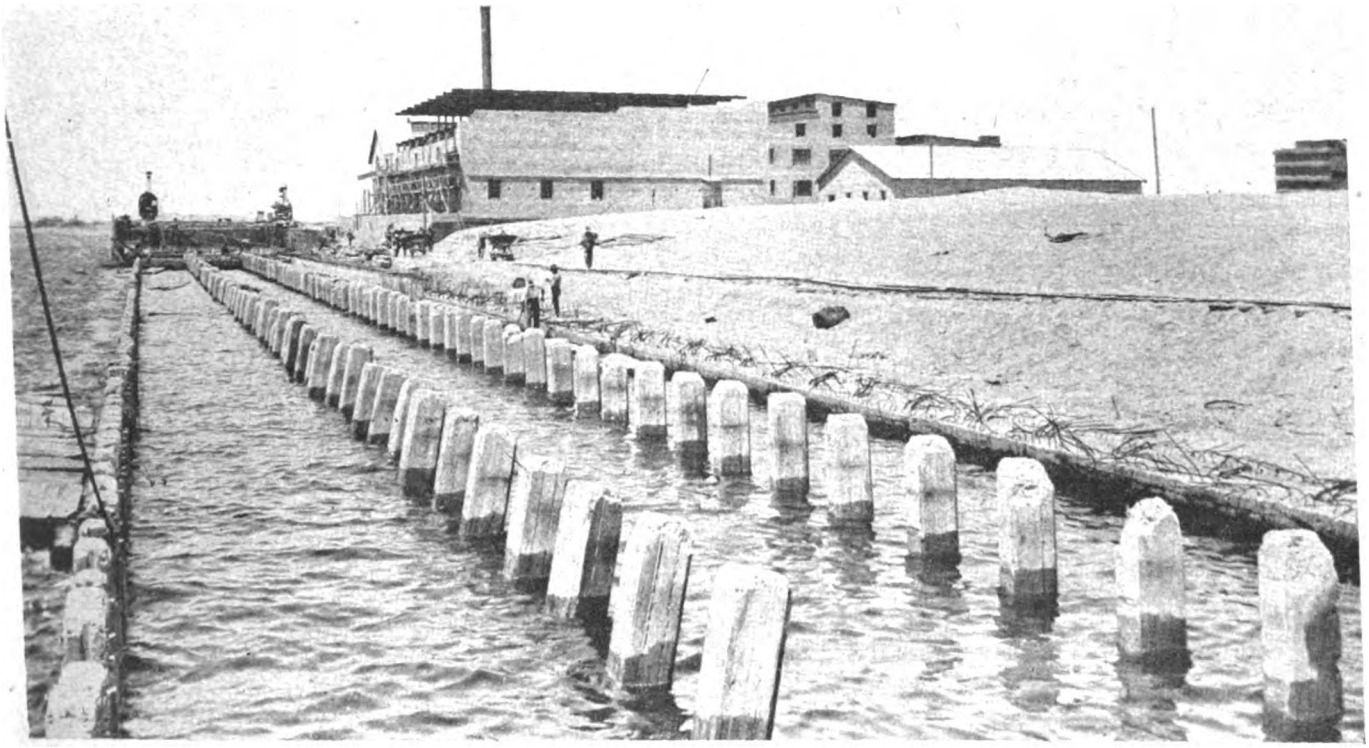

Photo: E.N.A.

WALFISCH BAY

Before the War this port constituted a tiny enclave, belonging to the Union of South Africa, midway up the coastline of "German South-West." Although geographically the best port anywhere along the shores of the colony, it was rigorously shunned by the Germans, who concentrated instead on their own harbour of Swakopmund, 21 miles farther north; and the description of the forlorn British settlement which will be found in the accompanying text is both amazing and highly amusing. Above is a modern view of Walfisch Bay, showing, alongside the harbour, the cold-storage works recently erected for the chilled meat trade.

Further, the Admiralty could not forget that when Admiral Rojdestvensky had led the ill-starred Baltic Fleet to Japanese waters in 1905, he had received ample facilities for refitting at the port of Angra Pequeña in German South-West. The Cape route might at any time take on special importance. Italy had started by proclaiming her neutrality; but neutrals often "come in" later, and were Italy to enter the War on the side of Germany and Austria (with whom she was allied), the Mediterranean route might have to be temporarily given up by us.

It was therefore all important to see that the Cape route was kept open. And although the full possibilities of submarine attack were not fully understood in August, 1914, it was nevertheless clear that to allow the Germans the free use of 1,000 miles of South African coast-line, including such a harbour as Walfisch Bay, and of the wireless station at Windhoek, would simply be asking for trouble. Also there was the fact that the Germans had a very efficient squadron under Admiral von Spee in Far Eastern waters, making it very important to deny him the use of friendly harbours and of wireless communication in the South Atlantic.

Even though these were, in fact, denied him, he gave us quite a lot of bother. And what would the gallant little *Emden*—could she have kept afloat awhile longer and have moved into the South Atlantic—not have given for Windhoek and Walfisch Bay?

South Africa Assumes Responsibility

The trouble, however, was that we could spare very few ships, and not a single soldier, for such a remote overseas campaign. We had, indeed, a Regular garrison in South Africa, but it was very small, and in any case was badly wanted in Europe. Great, then, was the relief when, immediately after war had been declared, the newly-formed Union of South Africa undertook to assume all military obligations resting upon the British Regular garrison, and to replace that force by South African troops.

This offer was at once accepted, and four days later the Union Government further undertook to send a military expedition of its own against German South-West. To this the British Government replied with an urgent request that the seaports and the big wireless station at Windhoek might be the first objectives.

This was all to the good. But although the Union Parliament confirmed the Government's decision by an 8 to 1 majority, there was considerable opposition among the Dutch population of South Africa. Such opposition was not unnatural. The South African War had terminated only a dozen years before, and the Boers had not forgotten the fervent interest which the German Emperor had taken in their cause, not only during the war, but before it.

The ignorant back-veld farmers, however, were not aware of the military advice which the same Emperor had freely been giving the Prince of Wales[1] during that war as to the best method of beating the Boers—advice "from one who has seen active military life, since now 23 years, and who commands and

[1] Later King Edward VII.

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Photo: E.N.A.

A PANORAMA OF LÜDERITZ BAY

Lüderitz Bay and the town bearing the same name lie 280 miles south of Walfisch Bay. Lüderitz was, in 1914, the only place on the coast except Swakopmund to be connected with the interior of the colony by rail, and was therefore of some importance. It was occupied by South African forces on September 18th, 1914.

directs the training of the German Army since '88, i.e. 12 years." [1]

The antagonism to the proposed expedition culminated, in October, 1914, in open rebellion. The opposition to the Union Government has been described as "numerically insignificant" [2]—but the rebels amounted to nearly 12,000; and during the last stages of the South African War it had required six months and a quarter-million soldiers to beat down a force of only twice that number. Further, this rebellion was supported by some of the finest guerilla leaders of the past—Christiaan De Wet and De La Rey amongst them.

Delayed by Rebellion

Actually, owing to the sporadic nature of the outbreak and the enormous extent of the territory over which it was spread, the employment of 30,000 troops was required for its suppression. The result of this was that offensive action against German South-West was delayed for four months.

Some preliminary movements had, nevertheless, been carried out, and it is worth noting that the Germans were the first to launch an "invasion"; for, very shortly after the outbreak of war, and certainly before the 14th August, a strong patrol of their troops advanced over the Cape border at Nakob and entrenched itself in Union territory.

This, however, can have been little more than a gesture. More to the point were the movements of South African forces. At the beginning of September, 1914, a column under Brigadier-General Lukin, consisting of five regiments of South African Mounted Rifles, the Witwatersrand Rifles, and three batteries of Transvaal Horse Artillery, sailed from Cape Town for Port Nolloth (on the west coast of Cape Colony), 280 miles away. An advance was made into German territory, and a German post at Raman's Drift was seized; but later a detachment of Union troops—257 of all ranks, with two field and ten machine guns—was "scuppered" at Sandfontein by a German force over 1,500 strong. The Union casualties amounted to 12 killed, 40 wounded, and 205 officers and men captured.

A general retirement was ordered about the middle of October, and the whole force returned to Steinkopf. While in camp, the Witwatersrand Rifles received orders to join the force at Lüderitz Bay—of which more later. The Mounted Rifles and Horse Artillery were commanded to proceed overland to Bloemfontein, to help in the suppression of the rebellion. After a trek of 230 miles, which was performed in ten days, Birdfield—the terminus of the Malmesbury line—was reached, and there the troops entrained.

Against the unfortunate set-back at Sandfontein could be set the occupation of the port of Lüderitz Bay. The force

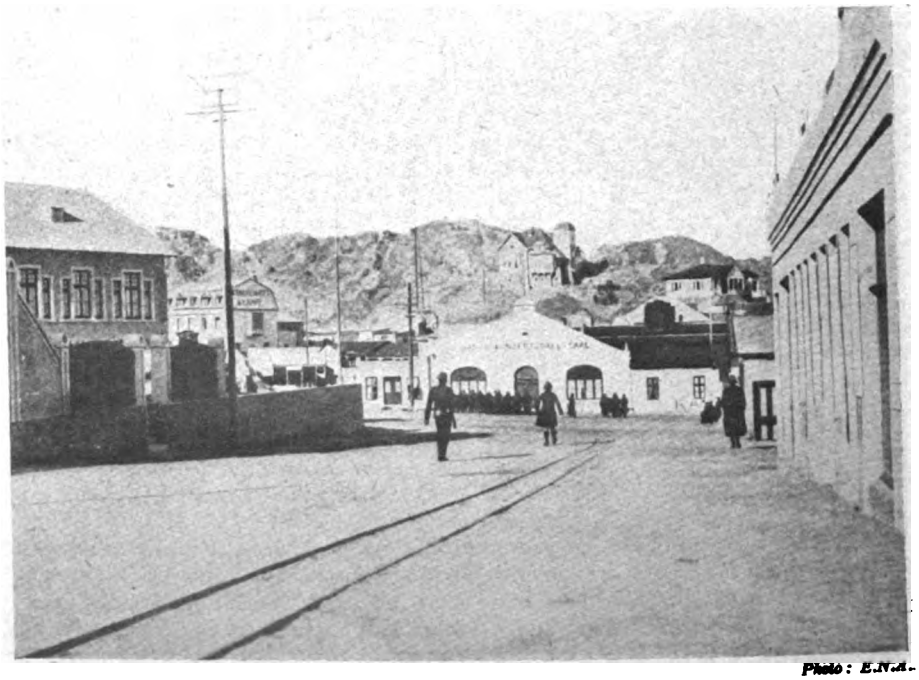

Photo: E.N.A.

LÜDERITZ BAY: THE MAIN STREET

Both this photograph and the one above are modern, and show a town considerably better developed than in 1914. The German names on the buildings testify, however, to the large percentage of the colony's former masters still to be found among the population. Lüderitz Bay, originally called Angra Pequeña by its Portuguese discoverer, owes its present name to one Adolf Lüderitz, who founded the town in 1883.

[1] Sir Sidney Lee, *King Edward VII*, Vol. I, pp. 755, 756.

[2] *Encyclopædia Britannica* (12th Edition); article on *German South-West Africa*.

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Photo: E.N.A.

SWAKOPMUND FROM THE AIR

Swakopmund stands just outside the northern boundary of the Walfisch Bay enclave, with which it was not connected by rail before the War, although two lines led from it in other directions. This well-developed German settlement—its condition was in complete contrast to that of the British port—was occupied by the Union forces on January 14th, 1915.

detailed for this operation was under the command of Colonel P. S. Beves, the main portion of it being made up of the 1st Transvaal Scottish and the Rand Light Infantry. It left Cape Town on September 15th in four transports, escorted by H.M.S. *Astrea*, some 2,000 strong of all ranks. Practically no opposition was encountered, for the Germans evacuated the place; and when the Union troops landed half the population were assembled to "welcome the victorious British troops."

Lüderitz Bay Occupied

Among the residents was a fair sprinkling of naturalised British subjects, mostly Russians and Roumanians who had at various times migrated from the Cape. At noon on September 18th the white flag at the Town Hall was hauled down and the Union Jack hoisted in its place.

The Union troops had now gained a footing in German South-West, but the capture of Walfisch Bay was particularly urgent, especially from the point of view of prestige. This was British territory which the Germans had promptly seized on the outbreak of war, taking prisoner the magistrate and the solitary policeman who assisted to maintain order. In December, therefore, Admiral King-Hall ordered the *Albion* to Walfisch Bay as guardship, and himself returned to Table Bay with the *Hyacinth*, *Astrea*, and *Weymouth*, to fetch the advanced troops of what was to be known as the Northern Force.

On Christmas Day, 1914, this body of troops, some 5,000 strong, and consisting of two infantry brigades, with the Imperial Light Horse, Grobelaar's Scouts, and an artillery brigade, all under the command of Colonel P. C. B. Skinner, landed without opposition, and made good the defences of the place against attack from Swakopmund.

It seems doubtful if the landing was known to the enemy. The morning, as are most mornings on that part of the coast, was foggy, and it was not until next day, when a weak German patrol came into collision with an outpost of the Rand Rifles—one German being wounded and captured—that the enemy appears to have known that anything had happened.

"Miles and miles of unutterable desolation" adequately describes Walfisch Bay and its environment on that Christmas Day more than twenty years ago. The township consisted of a disordered array of ramshackle wooden structures, mostly in the last stages of decay, and conveying the impression of having been abandoned at least a century before. The harbour had no facilities whatever. There was a crazy jetty, with an even crazier crane, which, in its youth, was reputed to have been capable of lifting three tons. Roads there were none. Indeed, had roads been constructed they would have been swallowed up in the everlasting sand within a month.

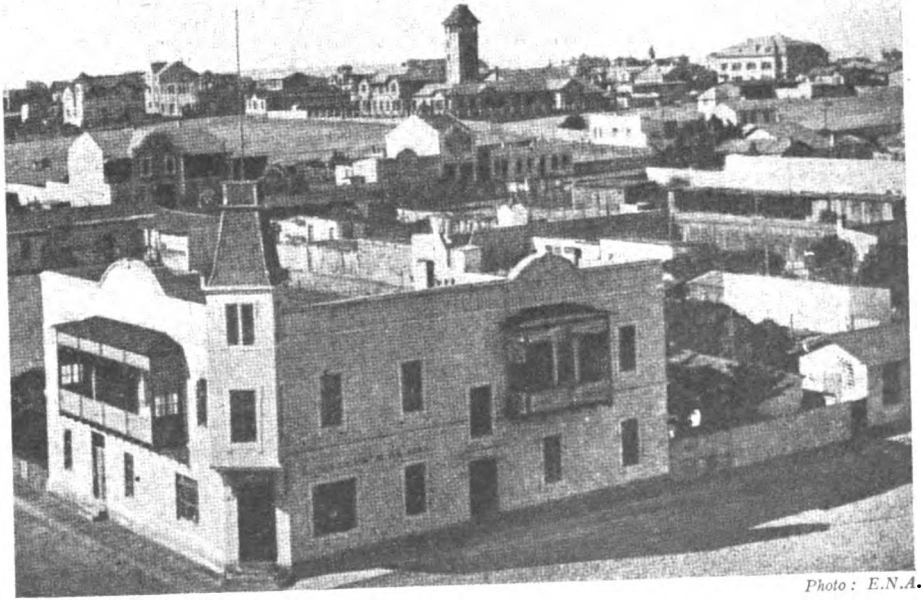

Photo: E.N.A.

A SECTION OF THE TOWN

Owing partly to silting, and partly to the development of Walfisch Bay, Swakopmund is now officially closed to shipping, and is chiefly known as a holiday centre. Indeed, in this particular view it is not unlike the newer portions of some of our own seaside resorts. Despite its sterile surroundings the town is attractively planned, and its rail-connections make it easy of access.

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The Boycott of Walfisch Bay

The German railway system ended at Swakopmund—20 miles away—and the German policy had ever been to isolate and boycott Walfisch Bay as much as possible. To such extent had they carried out this idea that they had actually declared the immediate hinterland a "game reservation." Everything had therefore to be created; and, if the South African departmental troops had accomplished nothing else in the War, the story of their work in those early days at Walfisch Bay would be monument enough of their untiring efficiency and devotion to the business in hand.

Lighters and floats to convey railway material and rolling-stock ashore from the transports had to be built on the spot. A slipway for landing locomotives and other heavy gear was constructed. Water tanks had to be erected, for the bulk of the water required for the troops had to be brought by sea from Cape Town.[1]

The work of the South African Engineer Corps—"The Galloping Gasfitters," as they were irreverently but affectionately called—has been well summed up by Mr. O'Shaughnessy: "Multifarious were the duties which fell under the scope of this extremely useful unit. While some were levelling the drift sand in the streets with dam scrapers drawn by teams of mules, others were hauling ashore material too heavy to be handled at the crazy little jetty, over hastily improvised slipways.

"The carpentry section were hard at it building stout lighters with which to convey the enormous quantities of cargo from the ships to shore, the electricians were busy installing electric light in the principal headquarter offices, and a demolition gang was employing itself razing a portion of a building to the ground to make room for an additional tram-line from the jetty to the Supply and Ordnance Stores. These were but a few of the duties upon which the Engineers were speedily employed."[1]

Having re-possessed themselves of Walfisch Bay, and having made a start to repair the years of absolute neglect of the port by the British Government, the invaders were now faced with the problem of an advance into the interior. The first and obvious step was to seize the German post of Swakopmund, the coast terminus of the whole northern and central railway system; and, after that,

1 Whittall, *With Botha and Smuts in Africa*, pp. 12, 13.

1 *How Botha and Smuts Conquered German South-West*, p. 165.

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

AFTER THE BRITISH RECAPTURE

A pair of "detailed" views of the Grand' Place at Douai appeared on pages 110 and 111 of this volume; here we reproduce two more panoramic photographs, of which the above example was taken on October 18th, 1918, from the top of the splendid tower seen on page 110. Douai was too far out of the real battle-area to suffer much from bombardment; and the extensive damage shown here is the work of delay-action mines, or booby-traps, left by the Germans before abandoning the town.

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Photo: A. J. Insall.

DOUAI ON MARKET-DAY

Immediately after the Armistice, German officers were ordered to cross to our lines by car, under the white flag, and to indicate where the various mines were concealed; but during the month or two before November 11th, 1918, our advance, victorious though it might be, was rendered perilous in the extreme by these infernal gadgets, and in every town and village as many articles as possible had to be left untouched. There is a British cemetery on the outskirts of Douai, and in the Communal Cemetery lie 222 United Kingdom and Empire troops who died while prisoners-of-war.

to link up Walfisch Bay with Swakopmund by a new line, to be constructed.

Land Mines and Poisoned Wells

The troops advanced on Swakopmund, which was found abandoned by the Germans, and occupied it on January 14th, 1915. The town itself was in marked contrast to the dreariness and desolation of Walfisch Bay, for there were well-built houses, cinemas, good hotels, and a music-hall. The Germans had, however, taken care to destroy everything of use in the port, and had wrecked the railway terminus. Further, following a custom adopted by them (in the earlier stages of the campaign, at any rate), they had poisoned all the wells. And lastly, in this occupation of Swakopmund the Union forces were to make acquaintance with an important feature of this campaign—land mines.

There can seldom have been a campaign in which this "weapon"—if it can be so called—has played, relatively, so large a part. The explanation is simple. There was not a country in the world where the supply of high explosive, per head of the white population, was so great. Much of the dynamite was required for mining operations—honest-to-God mining, that is, of copper, diamonds and gold; and it was also used to no inconsiderable extent for blasting rocks in an attempt to find water. The result was that the Germans had, ready to hand, all the material for the construction of military mines—a class of destructive weapons which made an immense appeal to the German mentality.

Considerable ingenuity was displayed in their construction and siting; but, as a matter of fact, the members of the Union forces, although there were some hair-breadth escapes, enjoyed marvellous luck, and the casualties from mines were astonishingly few.

So far the operations in German South-West had been in the nature of preliminary work, and the actual commencement of offensive action by the British may be taken as beginning early in February, 1915. On the 6th of that month General Louis Botha left Cape Town to take command. On the outbreak of the rebellion he had assumed supreme command of the forces of the Union, and, on its suppression, had resolved to proceed in person to German South-West.

A Man of Personality

To great experience in the field—he had been one of our most redoubtable opponents in the South African War—

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Photo: G. T. Watson.

MODERNITY

This characteristic specimen of post-war architecture is the new church at Ficheux, a village lying 2 km. east-north-east of Blairville, and 7 km. south of Arras. Like Blairville, Ficheux is not upon any of the main roads leading from Arras southward, but lies at the meeting-place of several country lanes, of which the most important lead respectively from Neuville-Vitasse—Mercatel, and Boiry-Becquerelle —Boisleux-St. Marc. Ficheux is stated to possess 349 inhabitants.

he added wide vision, unconquerable determination, and the intangible quality of personality. It is related of him that before leaving Cape Town he called up 35 officers who had served under him in the Boer War. Telling them his plans, he said he wanted 15 of them to accompany him as officers. Then he left them for five minutes to make the selection among themselves. When he returned, their spokesman replied, "Take the fifteen you want; the other twenty will go with you anyway as privates."

It will here be of assistance to the reader if, in summarised form, and subject to the qualification that some alterations were subsequently made, a kind of "general idea" is presented of the campaign as projected. The Union forces were to penetrate into German South-West from four points, and in four columns which varied considerably in size. The Northern Force, in which the greater proportion of combatant troops was mounted, was to operate from Walfisch Bay and Swakopmund, with the capital Windhoek as the main preliminary objective.

The Central Force, based on Lüderitz Bay, was to operate on the line of the southern railway. On the southern border was the Southern Force, based on Upington, and entirely mounted; while the Eastern Force, considerably smaller than the rest—it consisted of four mounted regiments with two field guns—was to advance westward from Kuruman along the Kuruman and Malopo rivers.

It will be convenient to deal first with the Northern Force, the operations of which were directed by General Botha himself; and it may as well be said in advance that the campaign in German South-West as a whole was distinguished by no very serious fighting, the casualties among the Union forces comprising merely 122 soldiers killed or fatally wounded.

On the other hand, the enterprise represents a triumph over immense difficulties, and a fine victory for human organisation over obstacles of terrain and extremes of climate. Barren, waterless tracts greatly militated against rapid movement, and water was generally extremely scarce throughout the country. The so-called "rivers" were usually mere dry channels; and such water as existed was almost entirely below the surface. The country is very sandy and often rough, offering formidable impediments to every kind of transport; yet with such energy and such resource, and with such fertility of invention was the campaign prosecuted, that it was found possible even to use a few armoured cars.

Defence had Every Asset

On the whole, the topographical and climatic difficulties were an asset to the defence, and provided the Germans with an opportunity of protracting the campaign. But the enemy were foiled by the dash and energy of General Botha, aided by highly mobile mounted troops and by infantry of great determination and extraordinary stamina.

On February 11th, 1915, Botha arrived at Swakopmund to take up his active command of the Northern Force. The week of his arrival was marked by two events which augured well for the success of the coming operations. The first was the completion of a line of railway from Walfisch Bay to Swakopmund, so that there was now—in theory, at any rate—rail communication from Walfisch Bay and Lüderitz Bay right into the heart of the country, thus joining the two ports with the long backbone of line which traversed it from north to south. The second was the indication that heavy rain had fallen somewhere in German South-West. For some days the water level in the wells had been

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steadily rising, and then, on Monday, February 15th, the Swakop River came down in flood—a thing that had not happened in the previous ten years.

General Botha's first object was to clear his front and gain elbow room. With this in view, a column under Colonel Skinner was sent out on February 23rd for twenty miles or so, where it occupied a position above Trekopjes. Next it pushed up the Swakop Valley, and successfully engaged with the enemy on March 18th at Riet and Pforte.

The former encounter was practically an artillery duel between four guns of the Transvaal Horse Artillery and six German pieces of similar calibre. Twenty miles to the north, a strong German position at Pforte was rendered untenable by a typical Boer flanking movement undertaken by a mounted brigade. The enemy force was compelled to surrender; and, seeing the burghers converging at the gallop from all points of the compass, a German officer is said to have muttered sadly, "This isn't a battle; it's a hippodrome."

In these two separate actions, two guns, nine officers, and 275 other ranks were taken. The Swakop Valley was thus secured for a distance of 60 miles, and the railhead could be pushed out to Arandis, 30 miles from Swakopmund. Preparations were now made for a "big push" forward up the valley, and this began on April 26th. On that day a German force made a smart attack upon Colonel Skinner's column at Trekopjes, but was beaten off.

"Fighting the Desert First"

The advance to the capital, Windhoek, was a case of "fighting the desert first and the enemy afterwards." Mr. O'Shaughnessy put it well when he wrote, "In a country boasting about as much sustenance as the polar regions, every mouthful of food for man and beast had, in consequence, to be transported mile upon mile, along loose sandy tracks, through steep ravines and over rocky mountain passes; and if it is remembered that each load must include fodder for the draught animals themselves, for the forward journey as well as the return to the base, some conception of the magnitude of the task upon which the commissariat was engaged may possibly be conveyed to the lay mind."[1] The Germans themselves, it may be mentioned, had been under the impression that an advance through the desert from Swakopmund was beyond possibility.

The first stage in the movement on the capital was to be the seizure of the railway junction at Karibib, over 100 miles from Swakopmund. The force to be employed was mainly mounted; two

[1] Rayner & O'Shaughnessy, *op. cit.*, p. 203.

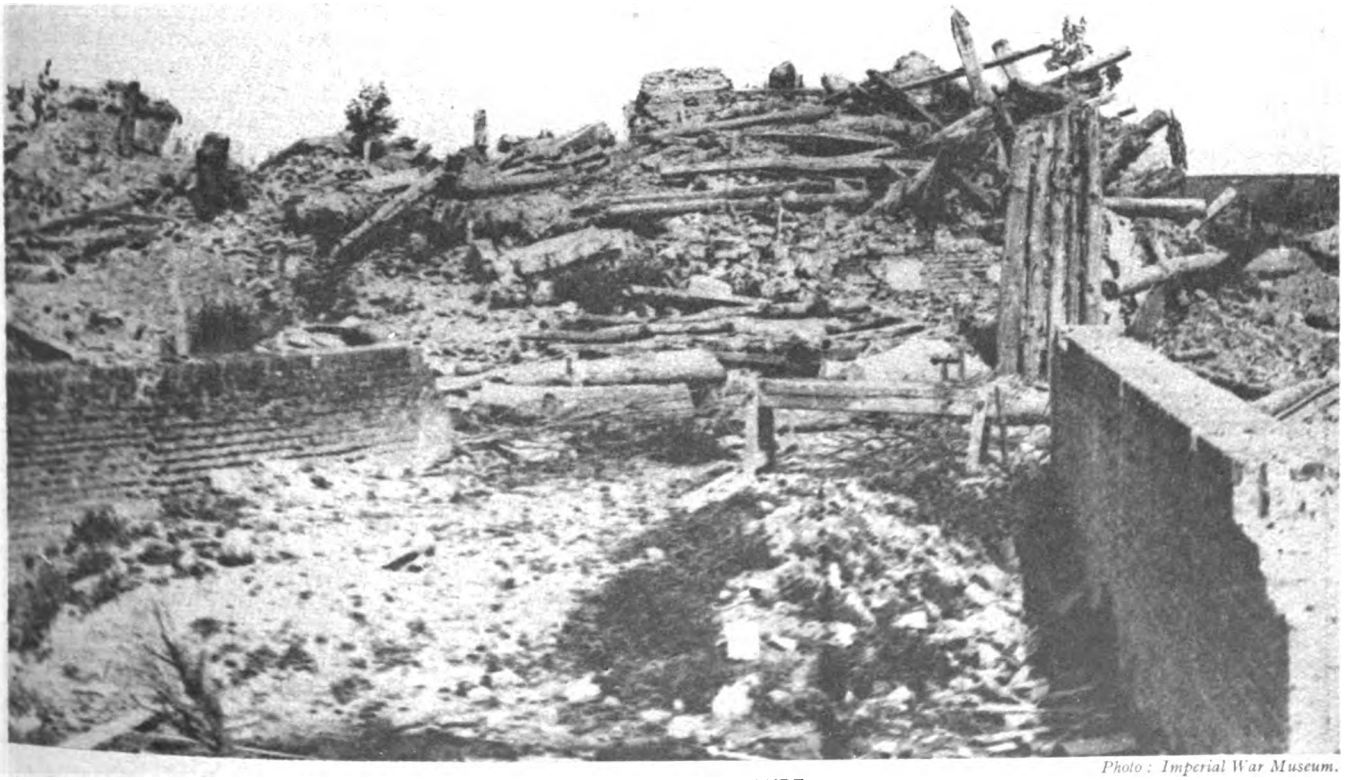

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

A FINE MESS, TO BE SURE

The mess is Ficheux's old church in the summer of 1917. Despite the village's unhappy condition, however, it must be classed as one of the places where "nothing ever happened," for it was behind the battle-line during the whole duration of the War, and, at any time during the British tenure of this part of the front, was far too battered even to serve as a billeting-spot. It is probable that gunners knew it best, for the ruins offered a wealth of likely battery-positions.

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Photo: E.N.A.

GENERAL BOTHA IN THE FIELD

The general (seated on campstool) is seen in the field with some of his officers during the course of the campaign. Not only were he and General Smuts both of Dutch extraction, but about half the Union forces, including the majority of mounted men, were Boers: a remarkable fact when one considers the comparative recentness of the South African War.

brigades under Brigadier-General Brits, and one each under Brigadier-Generals Myburgh and Manie Botha respectively. In addition there were an infantry brigade and detachments of artillery.

Adopting the well-known Boer strategy of an advance aided by wide flanking movements of mounted troops, the contingent successfully turned Karibib, and when Botha pushed forward with the burghers of the main body, he at once sent in a flag demanding the surrender of the town. During the afternoon another flag was sent out by the burgomaster with an intimation that the entry of the South Africans would not be opposed. General Brits therefore entered with his mounted troops.

A few shots were exchanged between our advanced patrols and the rearguard of the retreating Germans, but otherwise the enemy gave up this important railway junction without a struggle; and a large quantity of rolling-stock of both narrow- and broad-gauge railways was found in the station yards, as well as a couple of locomotives. (At Karabib the 3-foot 6-inch gauge line from Windhoek meets the 2-foot gauge track from Swakopmund and the north.)

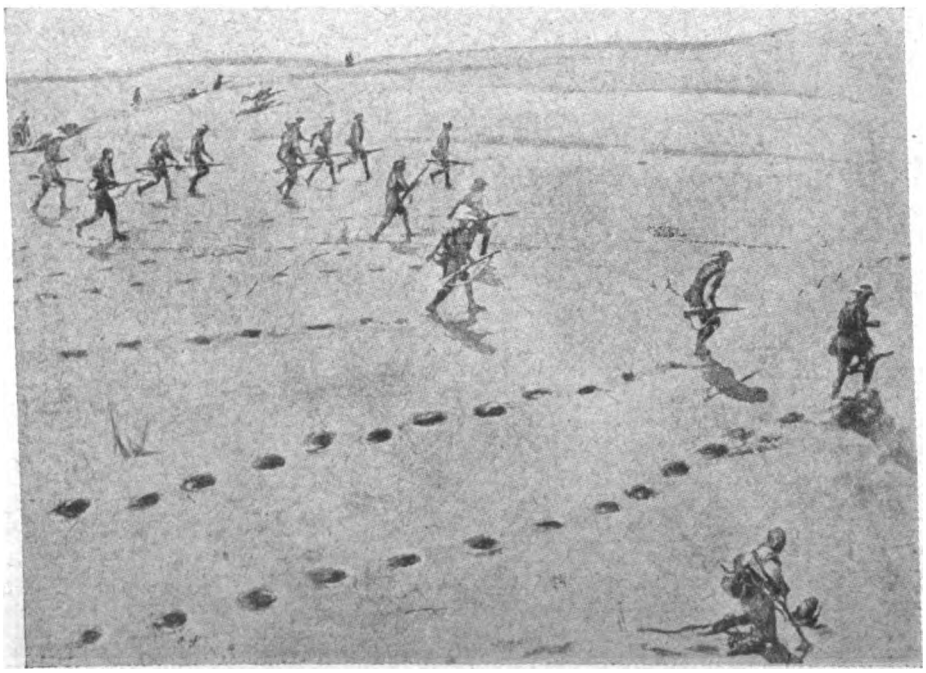
Beer at 8 Bob a Bottle

"One thing there never seemed to be any dearth of in the country, and that was beer."[1] The statement means among the Germans, for, as will be readily understood from what has been said of the difficulties of transport, it was "a long time between drinks" with the South Africans, even between drinks of water. However, in Karabib the German shopkeepers did a roaring trade selling beer at eight shillings a bottle; and it speaks much for the restraint and discipline of the South Africans that such a price was paid, and that there was no looting or violence. Imagine the circumstances being reversed, and thirsty German soldiers occupying, as victors, a small South African town full of beer!

The capture of Windhoek, over 100 miles to the south-east, was the next problem to be tackled, but the facilities of the telephone obviated any major operation. Conversations over the line, from Karabib, with the Mayor of Windhoek, brought the reply that the entry of Union troops would not be opposed. Accordingly General Botha, taking with him a small escort, proceeded by motor car—there were 17 cars in all—over atrocious roads to the town. Two nights had to be spent in the bush, and then on May 12th the formal surrender of the capital was made.

Apart from the entire absence of luxuries, Windhoek was under no privation whatever. Of fresh meat there was an abundance; the bread, made from mealies, was quite palatable; and sugar, tea, and coffee, though scarce, were obtainable in limited quantities at the hotels and restaurants.

With the occupation of Windhoek, and the consequent denial to the Ger-



IN THE SANDY DESERT

This picture shows a running fight in progress amid some of the sandy wastelands of which so much of South-West Africa is composed. The former German colony is now a mandated territory under the Union of South Africa; but, as readers may be aware from the Press, the Union is not wholly satisfied with this arrangement, and is agitating for complete affiliation.

[1] Whittall, *op. cit.*, p. 60.

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mans of the great wireless station there, the main objective of the campaign had been achieved; although it may be said that with the sweeping of the German flag from the seas, the importance of the station had much diminished.

This transmitter was, in power, the second in the world, with several steel masts well over 300 feet in height, and aerials a mile long. No damage, in the sense of destruction, had been done by the Germans, but many of the essential parts of the apparatus and instruments had been removed, so that it was quite impossible to get the station into working order again.

Towns Won, but Garrisons Free

With the fall of the capital it may be said that the southern half of German South-West (we shall deal in a moment with the other three forces of Union troops) was lost to the Germans. But it must be remembered that although Karabib and Windhoek offered no opposition, that does not mean that the German garrisons surrendered. On the contrary, the object of leaving these towns "open" was to enable the troops from them to concentrate elsewhere.

It was decided to prolong the resistance in the far north of the colony. The campaign could now, of course, have but one result. Nevertheless, the German commander played the right game in making Botha follow him northward. It was in Europe that South African soldiers were required, and the longer they could be kept in German South-West the better for the Germans in France.

Before dealing, however, with this final portion of the contest, it will be necessary to turn for a moment to the operations of the Central, Southern, and Eastern Forces respectively.

On February 11th the Central Force, considerably augmented since its arrival in September, 1914, was at Lüderitz Bay under the command of Brigadier-General Sir Duncan McKenzie. Advanced detachments were in touch with the enemy 40 miles inland, and by March 30th the strong enemy position at Aus, some 50 miles from Lüderitz Bay, was occupied without fighting. No booty was secured here, for the Germans had evidently evacuated the town at their leisure.

It was a small place with a couple of hotels and half a dozen stores; but Sir Duncan McKenzie had now got a base of operations clear of the desert, and at a place where forage was obtainable, if in limited quantity, for his animals. The bloodless occupation of Aus had been largely due to the swift converging movements of the Southern and Eastern columns, which, in operations under General Smuts, had joined hands at Kabus. This rapid manœuvre had rendered the town really untenable for the enemy.

But although Aus had been evacuated, the Germans demolished the railway, and left their mark behind them in the shape of mines and poisoned water-supply. In the station-master's office

Photo: E.N.A.

GERMAN FIELD GUNS

This photograph was taken at the German military station on the heights known as Johann-Albrechtshöhe. The colonists had steadily been amassing guns, aircraft, and other military material for some while prior to the outbreak of hostilities, in the hope of profiting by a Boer revolt in the Union. By the rebellion of De Wet, however, they gained little or nothing.

Photo: E.N.A.

THEY HAD SOME TOO

Not Anzac Cameliers, but troopers of the German Colonial Camel Corps in "German South-West" prior to the conquest. Fairly late in the campaign the total enemy forces were estimated at 5,000 Regulars and reservists, the latter constituting a high proportion of the white population of 15,000-odd. The South African forces under Botha and Smuts totalled at least 50,000.

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Photo : Imperial War Museum.

GOUZEAUCOURT UNDER ENEMY OCCUPATION

Gouzeaucourt lies 19 km. north-east of Péronne and 15 km. south-west of Bapaume, on one of the two main routes linking those towns. It was first captured by the British (8th Division) on April 12th–13th, 1917, in the southern area of the operations comprised in the Battle of Arras. This photograph shows the village while in enemy hands. The church is being used as a hospital, and the furthermost cottage on the right has been turned into a canteen.

an ordinary table-lamp was found to be a gadget for firing a mine.

Cavalry in the Picture

Hitherto the work of the advance had been essentially an infantry job, but from now onwards the mounted troops come much more into the picture. By April 14th it was possible to concentrate the bodies of horse, and the work of the Central Force entered on a new phase. The horsemen were formed into a flying column under Mackenzie himself, with the necessary artillery and engineers, while the infantry were told off for garrison and line-of-communication work. The damaged railway from Lüderitz Bay was also repaired, and by the evening of April 22nd the railhead had advanced to Aus.

McKenzie led his mounted force out of this place on April 15th, his object being to strike at the Keetmanshoop–Windhoek section of railway, which was now the life-line, so to speak, of the enemy troops in the southern portion of the colony. There was no need for him to follow the line of railway eastwards, which would have entailed a march along two sides of a triangle; accordingly he decided to move by the short cut through Bethany and Beersheba. This route, too, would have the advantage of avoiding part of the German line of retreat, and of reducing the inconvenience and danger of poisoned wells and dynamite " booby-traps."

Bethany was reached in due course without incident, and here were found cattle. There was also plenty of water, but hot and strongly impregnated with lime. From now on scouts working far ahead began to " feel " small parties of the enemy, and at Beersheba there was a regular round-up, one German being killed and 29 made prisoners. The South Africans also captured 700 head of cattle and 5,000 small stock. The Germans in this part of the colony were now experiencing the force of converging operations; for, a few days later, patrols from the Southern Force, working up from Keetmanshoop, also raided the district round Beersheba.

McKenzie had been pushing along fast, sparing neither himself nor his men. Everyone was on quarter rations, and the horses, now living entirely on the country, were but scantily fed. The force left Beersheba during the night of April 24th, and although next day it found itself in the midst of good grazing and water, there could be no delay, for the enemy was still keeping well ahead. Officers and men, indeed, were inclined to become dispirited, until in an hour the whole situation changed.

Some Useful Eavesdropping

It was noticed that the telegraph and telephone wires were intact. These were tapped, and the messages read. The gist of the intelligence gained was that 12 miles ahead, at Gibeon, a German force was about to retire northward; the advance of the South Africans had been reported from the south, but the news was believed to be greatly exaggerated.

General McKenzie determined to push on with all speed to " bag " this German

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force. By nightfall his column was some five miles south of Gibeon station, and it was decided to send a party ahead to blow up the railway north of there as the first step. The charges were duly fired about 11 o'clock, but all element of surprise had now, of course, vanished, and the Germans came swarming out like angry bees.

They had the great advantage of being familiar with the terrain, and by 2 a.m. so hot had become the engagement that the South African detachment was ordered to retire. Unfortunately the order did not reach the whole party, and 70 officers and men of the Natal Light Horse were cut off and forced to surrender when daylight appeared.

This was really the undoing of the Germans, who still clung to the obsession that the news sent up by the wires as to the advance of a strong South African column had been grossly exaggerated. They returned into Gibeon with their prisoners, where they gave themselves up to wild rejoicings over their "victory." Unfortunately for them, McKenzie was coming along with the main body, furious to avenge the minor disaster; and by dawn Gibeon was surrounded on three sides.

Then followed a real "show," in which the Germans were chased from position to position for about 20 miles, until the exhaustion of the horses of the pursuers put an end to the fighting. The bulk of the enemy got away, but they lost 8 killed, 30 wounded, and 166 unwounded prisoners, besides a whole train, with a quantity of dynamite in it. The Union prisoners taken by them at dawn were recovered.

This action at Gibeon brought the Southern campaign to an abrupt conclusion. The following day General Smuts declared in a proclamation that all German South-West Africa south of Gibeon was occupied by Union forces. Some of the troops were brought back to the Cape, while others were transferred to the Northern Force, whose doings under General Botha will soon be related.

Railways Linked Up

Here it is worth mentioning that another nail was quickly driven into the coffin of German rule in South-West Africa. By the end of June, the southern railway system was linked up with that of the Union, so that troops and stores from any part of South Africa had now two alternative routes—either rail all the way, or by sea to Lüderitz Bay or Walfisch Bay, and thence by rail inland.

The defeat of the Germans at Gibeon had occurred on April 26th, the day on which General Botha had started his offensive from Swakopmund. The precipitate surrender of the capital, Windhoek, can therefore be readily under-

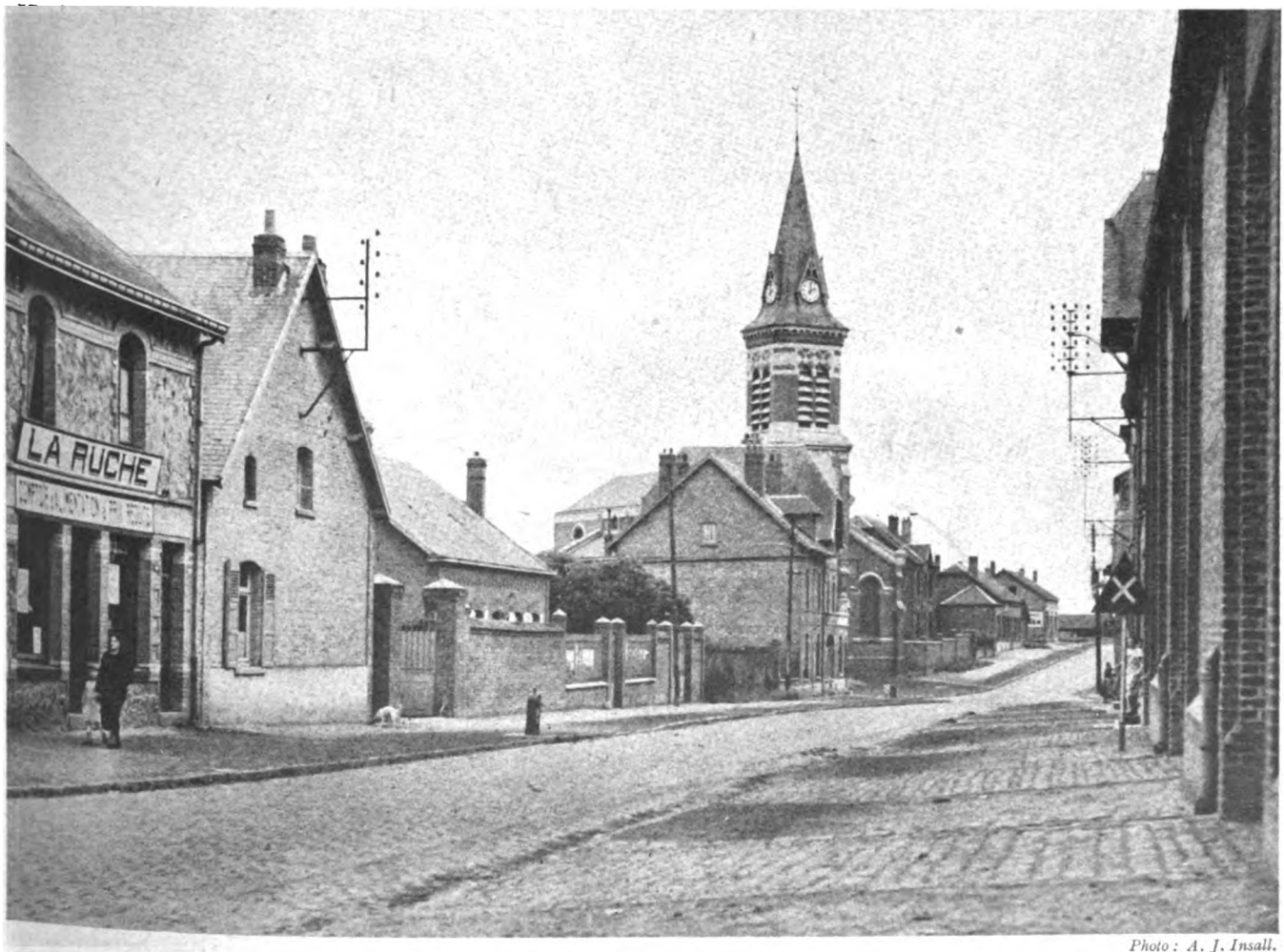

Photo: A. J. Insall.

NEAR THE CROSS-ROADS

The enemy again entered Gouzeaucourt during his heavy attack on our new positions before Cambral on November 30th, 1917, but was driven out the same day by the Irish Guards, assisted by a party of the 29th Division and a company of North Midland R.E. Three tank battalions later came up to aid in securing the position. In our final advance the outskirts of the village were reached on September 9th (1918), its wood was secured on the 12th, and the 21st Division drove the enemy from the ruins on the 28th. There is a large British cemetery.

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stood, for, threatened from both the north and the south, the town was clearly untenable. In fact, so serious had the enemy situation now become that the Governor of the colony, Seitz, thought that the time had come for "conversations" with General Botha.

Overtures to this effect were made, and Botha returned to Karabib, from which place a correspondence took place with the Governor, whose headquarters were now at Omaruru. An armistice of forty-eight hours was eventually arranged from midday of May 20th, and a meeting-place fixed at Giftkop, about 30 miles north of Karabib. Here General Botha, accompanied by an escort, met the Governor, who was accompanied by the military commander, Colonel Francke.

The Germans had the *naïveté* to propose that operations should be suspended, and that all territory north of the latitude of Windhoek should remain in German hands. General Botha, however, had himself known what it was to be forced to surrender unconditionally, and after hard and honourable warfare for over two-and-a-half years. He was not inclined to grant "arranged" terms to an enemy who had done practically no fighting at all, other than by poisoning wells or fixing booby-traps.

He bluntly intimated that he was not prepared to grant any concessions; it must be unconditional surrender, or nothing. The Germans were not yet prepared to drain this bitter cup, so negotiations were broken off, and the armistice terminated.

Model Locomotive Works

While these events were taking place, the force which had been acting under Colonel Skinner, on the left of the original advance from Swakopmund, was engaged in converting to the standard broad gauge the railway which led towards Omaruru and farther north-eastwards to Otavi. This was at present a narrow-gauge line—merely two feet—which had been constructed mainly for the conveyance of copper down-country from the Otavi copper mines, and had, later, been taken over by the Government of German South-West.

The labour was continued as far as Usakos, where the railway works of the Otavi line were situated. These works were a model organisation, for the Germans had had there a plant and machine tools which would not have done discredit to any big engineering works in Europe, and must have been equal to anything up to the building of locomotives.[1] Although all essential parts of the machinery had been removed, no damage had been done by the enemy, who were probably labouring under the delusion that the War, as a whole, would go in their favour, and that South-West Africa would be eventually restored to them.

The town of Karabib now comes prominently into the picture, for it was to be the "jumping-off place" for

[1] Whittall, *op. cit.*, p. 79.

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

INCHY WITH THE LID OFF

There are two Inchys in France, both on the former Western Front. Inchy-Beaumont, the larger, is on the road from Cambrai to Le Cateau; Inchy-en-Artois, here illustrated, stands on the loop-road from Arras to Marquion which passes through Guémappe, Hendecourt-les-Cagnicourt, and Pronville. This Inchy is situated 3½ km. south-west of Marquion, 13 km. due west of Cambrai, and 3 km. north-west of Mœuvres, and probably owed such military importance as it ever gained to the fact that it lay almost at the junction of the Hirondelle river with the Canal du Nord.

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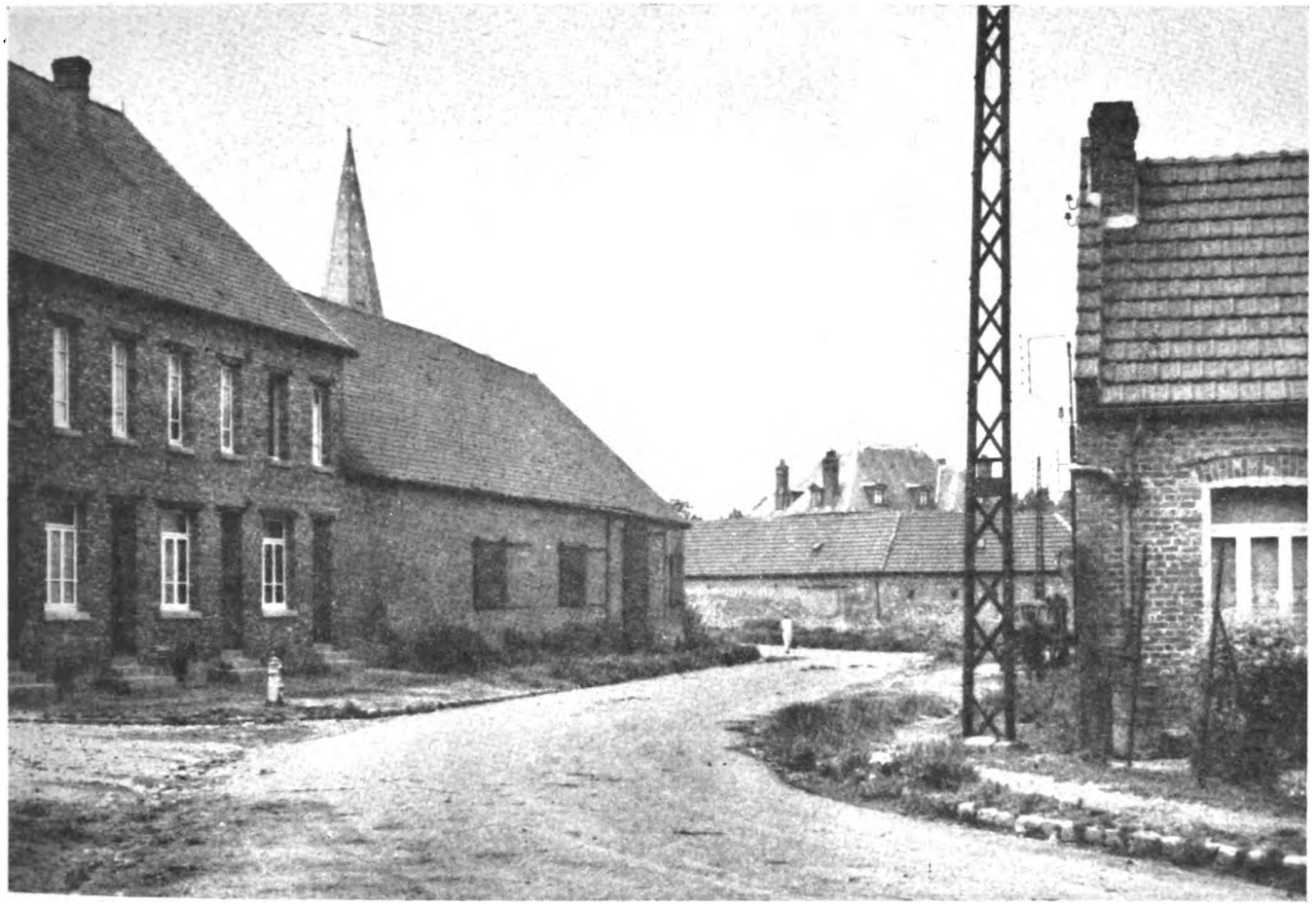

Photo: A. J. Insall.

INCHES ADDED TO ITS STATURE

This is a good "Then and Now" pair, for the curves of the various roads exactly correspond in both photographs, although the modern buildings seem in some cases to have acquired an extra storey. Other changes wrought by time include the disappearance of the two windmills which used to stand just south of the village, and the drying-up of the once important Canal du Nord. In the enemy's second line prior to his 1918 offensive, Inchy-en-Artois was recaptured on September 3rd, 1918, by the Royal Naval Division. Our war-time photograph was taken ten days later.

Botha's push into the north of the colony, where the German forces, probably at this time some five thousand strong, had concentrated. The advance was to be made simultaneously by three columns. The main force, which Botha and G.H.Q. accompanied, was in the centre. It included an infantry brigade, but the bulk of it comprised two brigades of mounted troops; while there was also a detachment of heavy artillery, and the armoured car detachment under Commander Whittall, R.N.

The flank columns were entirely mounted, that on the right flank, consisting of one-and-a-half mounted brigades, was under Brigadier-General Myburgh; while the left column was under Brigadier-General Brits. The line of communication back to the coast at Walfisch Bay was to be under Colonel Skinner, now promoted to brigadier-general.

Advance on the Zulu Plan

Roughly, the plan of the advance was that the infantry, starting from Usakos, and accompanied at first by the mounted troops of this (central) column, was to follow the line of railway. The enveloping movement by Myburgh's Right Column would start from Okasisse and Wilhelmstahl,[1] and a similar movement would be made by General Brits on the left. This was the traditional South African crescent-shaped advance, practised from time immemorial by the fighting Zulus.

The advance of the Centre Column began at dawn on June 14th, 1915. It would obviously be a hard campaign for the infantry, since, as the march proceeded, burning days would be succeeded by nights of bitter cold. Water would often be scarce. The going would in places be exhausting. The transport difficulties would be enormous, and supplies would often be many miles behind. But the spirit of the South African foot soldiers rose superior to all hardships. One who shared with them the difficulties of the campaign has put on record his admiration of their sterling qualities:

"When the road was hard and long: when they were called upon to do a thirty-mile march, with little water and little food, under a scorching sun; when they bivouacked without blankets with the temperature seven or eight degrees below freezing-point, it was always the same. Give them the promise of a fight at the end and they were as cheery as crickets. Like all soldiers, they groused on occasion, but they had only one real grievance. Hardships they were inured to. Extremes of heat and cold they could stand. Marching on a biscuit and a half a day, and with water enough to moisten their parched mouths, was all in the game. But they had one great ground of complaint, and deeply and bitterly did they express themselves about it—the Germans would not fight.

"Most of these magnificent fellows now lie in soldiers' graves in France.

[1] Respectively about 40 and 25 miles east of Karabib.

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It was they who, after the conclusion of the South-West campaign, hastened to form the splendid South African force, brought over to stand shoulder to shoulder with the men of the Motherland and of the other Dominions on the fields of France. It was in stricken Delville Wood that they wrote the page which will remain a storied and hallowed memory so long as the Union of South Africa and its history shall endure." [1]

Four Days of Hell

Etiro was reached without any particular incident, and here the Central Column halted for four days—a period of misery, with a scorching sun by day and heavy frost at night; and no fires allowed till sunrise. By superhuman efforts the engineers advanced the railhead from Usakos, and supplies began to come right through to Etiro. The four-day halt was entailed by the necessity of waiting for the mounted columns on the flanks to come up in line.

The initial phase of this movement was accomplished when General Brits's column swooped down on Omaruru early on the morning of June 20th. The infantry of the Centre Column was now hurried to that town, in order to set free Brits's troopers for a wide turning movement to the west.

General Botha had at his disposal a small air force, which performed valuable reconnaissance work in spite of the great difficulty of finding adequate landing-places. Forty miles to the north was the village of Kalkveld, the vicinity of which was known to lend itself admirably for use as a defensive position; and the airmen were therefore despatched to examine the ground and to look out for any signs of German occupation.

They returned without having seen any indication of a German stand. The brief delay was welcome to the troops, for Omaruru was a well-timbered and prettily situated little town. Better still, there was plenty of water; and—what beat everything—there was actually *running* water, in the shape of the Omaruru River. This was a mere trickle, but even a trickle was something in German South-West.

A curious "find" at Omaruru—which is over 100 miles from the sea—was half a dozen fifty-foot surf boats alongside the railway, from which it was assumed that they had recently been unloaded. The presence of these boats so far up-country has always been a mystery. There has even grown up a legend—too fantastic for discussion—that they were to be used in a trek right across Africa, involving the crossing of Rhodesia, so that the German force in South-West might move across to join its compatriots in German East Africa.

Mystery-boats of Omaruru

Less absurd is the theory that the Germans contemplated a retirement into Portuguese West Africa—to the north—and that the boats would be required on the Kubango River; and a much more rational explanation still—though one not hitherto given—is that the boats had been constructed at Omaruru for transport to, and for use at, Swakopmund. Omaruru, as stated already, was well timbered, and it is often of advantage to construct vessels where the timber can be found.

When Napoleon was building a flotilla for the invasion of England, many of the vessels were constructed hundreds of miles inland, and floated down by waterways. The Germans had no waterways, but they had the Otavi-Swakopmund railway. The boats, therefore, had not, as was thought at the time, been brought up by rail;

[1] Whittall, *op. cit.*, pp. 99, 100.

Photo: E.N.A.

ENTERING WINDHOEK

This rare and very interesting photograph shows the actual entry of the South African forces into Windhoek, the capital of the enemy colony, on May 12th, 1915. Windhoek is situated at an altitude of nearly 5,500 feet, and has a pleasant temperature which ranges between 56 and 75 degrees, while its rainfall—15 inches—is agreeably high for so parched a land.

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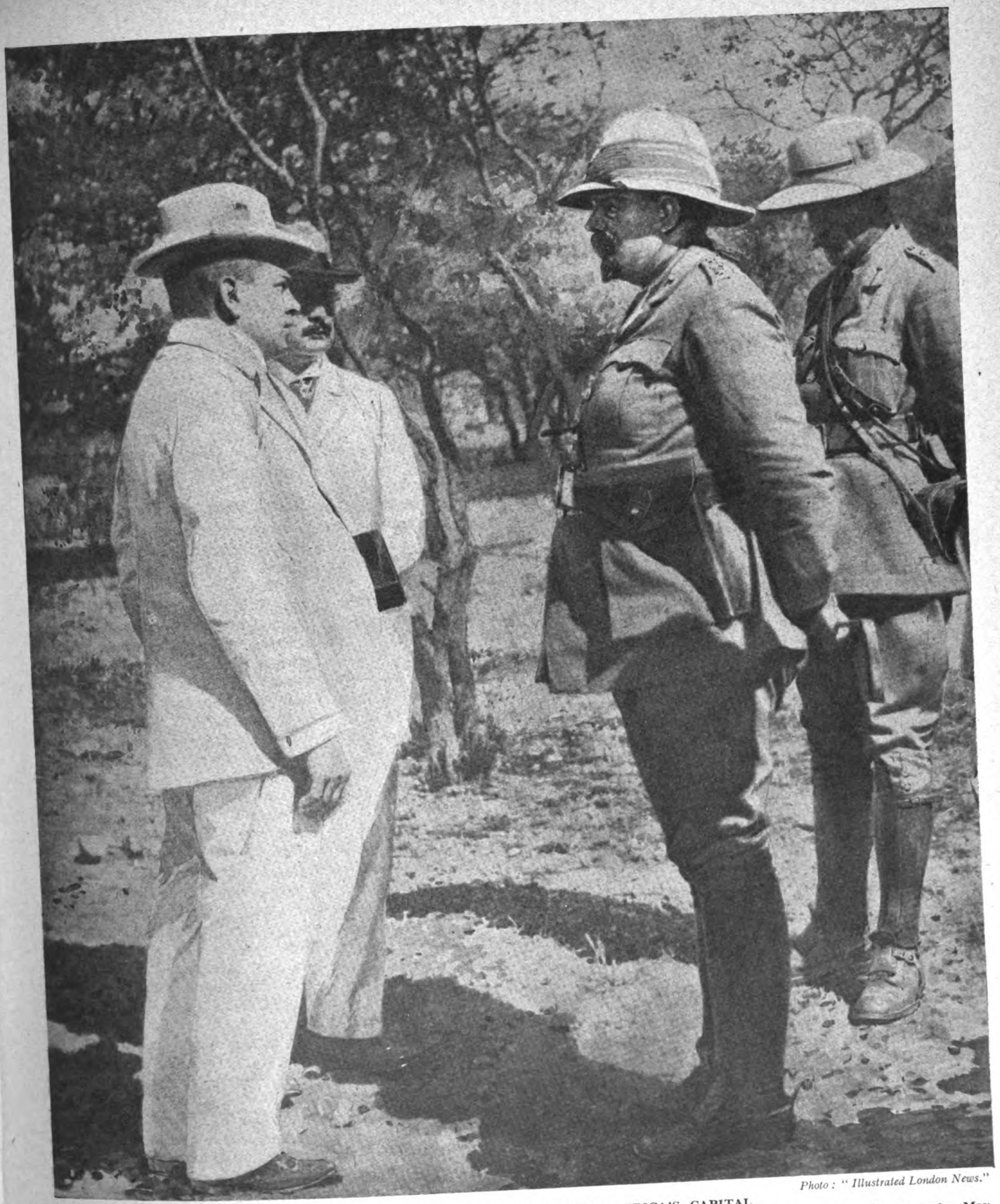

Photo: "Illustrated London News."

THE SURRENDER OF GERMAN SOUTH-WEST AFRICA'S CAPITAL

An historic scene in African annals is here portrayed: General Louis Botha confronts the Burgomaster of Windhoek and receives his surrender May 12th, 1915. The final capitulation of the colony, and the submission of Dr. Seitz, its Governor, did not take place until July 9th following; but the occupation of Windhoek is an important landmark in the campaign. It is also noteworthy as being almost certainly the only occasion on which the surrender of a capital has been pleasantly arranged, without fighting, by a discussion over the telephone.

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they were at the station in readiness to be taken down for use on the coast. This explanation seems, at any rate, to clear away a lot of " mystery."

The advance to Kalkfeld was duly carried out, and on June 23rd the infantry of the Centre Column was so close to the position that at dawn on the following day it advanced from its bivouacs to attack, flanked by one of the mounted brigades. Advanced detachments which had been sent forward to reconnoitre drew not a single shot, and very soon it was established that the position was unoccupied. The birds had flown.

And why not ? The Germans were now largely outnumbered ; they were cut off from all communication with the outside world ; their best policy was obviously to impose as much delay on the Union forces as possible. Also, war is a costly thing, and every day's delay meant the piling-up of a big bill for the Union Government. The German military commander was playing the sound game for his side, and probably no one could see this more clearly than General Botha.

All the same, Botha was extremely annoyed when a motor-cyclist came tearing in with the news. The general and his staff hurried up to the front, to find that the intelligence was only too true. There was now nothing to be done but to carry on the pursuit.

To Otyivarongo and Beyond

Another 50 miles or so brought the Centre Column to Otyivarongo, where the railway bifurcates. From information received, it was clear that the Germans had retired along the line running north-east—that is to say, through Otavi—and that the present " seat of government " was at Grootfontein, at the end of a branch-line running from Otavi eastwards. On June 27th General Botha pushed on from Otyivarongo, the advance being led by the 5th Mounted Brigade under Brigadier-General Manie Botha.

No opposition of any kind was encountered until the mounted troops were abreast of Otavi and some six miles east of it ; in fact, the chief difficulty had hitherto been the perennial one of water supply, to which was still added the hardship of bitterly cold nights after scorching days. The opposition now came from the military post of Otavifontein where fire was opened from some rocky ridges. The Germans were, however, quickly shelled out of their position, and were forced to retire, being eagerly pursued by Manie Botha's Free Staters.

The Union casualties in this scrap were four killed and seven wounded, while the German casualties were about the same, with the loss, in addition, of 24 prisoners, as well as two waggons and a cart loaded with ammunition.

When the usual contact-mines and booby-traps had been cleared up, the horsemen of the Central Column could take things easy for a while until the infantry hove in sight. There was an inexhaustible supply of fresh spring water—a godsend to both man and beast, and possibly even more to the horses than to their riders. Three days later, the infantry brigade arrived. It had covered over 250 miles practically without a break, the last 80 miles having been accomplished in four days, with a final burst of 45 miles in thirty-six hours.

This was a magnificent performance, which drew from the brigadier a well-merited appreciation wherein he declared that under the conditions of the country, where water was so hard to obtain, and heavy dust was the rule, and where the difficulties of transport had reduced the infantry to half, and then to quarter, rations, this performance reflected the greatest credit on all who had taken part.

Armoured Cars in Trouble

It was however, not the infantry alone which had a " tough " time in the advance of this Central Column. Commander Whittall, R.N., in his most readable book, has left a vivid record of the difficulties which beset his squadron of armoured cars. The sand was a terrible obstacle, and time and again, in scorching heat, the cars had to be manhandled by their crews. Wire netting as a temporary track was out of the question, for none was available. Ordinary netting was tried, but without success, for the driving wheels simply drew it under them and threw it out behind the car.

Finally, Whittall managed to secure a quantity of two-inch angle iron ; this was cut into eight-foot lengths with a short piece of wire rope and a toggle spliced into one end. Each car carried four of these iron lengths, and whenever heavy sand was encountered, one of them was dropped between each pair of twin driving-wheels.

Then, as soon as the car had mounted the first iron, another was dropped in front, and when she was clear of the first, one of the crew dragged it from the sand and dropped it again in the track ahead, and so on. Thus the car had a practically continuous railway on which to run, and the heaviest sand could be negotiated at surprising speed.[1]

Petrol was also always a problem ; and so was water. Four miles to the gallon was the petrol consumption, and water consumption was the same—a pretty serious problem in a practically waterless country. On a section of road below Usakos there were stretches of from one to three miles over which the sand made it necessary to manhandle the cars even on fairly steep down-grades.

When it was possible to use the engine, first gear had to be employed nearly all the time. The radiators would boil dry very quickly, and there was not a drop of water to be had on the road. But by something approaching the miraculous Commander Whittall and his men had the armoured cars up in their position with the Central Column all the time.

They Thought They'd Won

A feature of German South-West that is worth noting is the extraordinary illusion under which the German inhabitants were living as to the state of the War in Europe. At every place entered by the Union troops, the most astonishing questions would be put, in perfect good faith, by inquisitive Germans : " What is the capital of England now that London is occupied by a German army ? " " Do you not find it difficult to carry on, now that your navy has been completely destroyed ? " and so on.

The remainder of the campaign need not detain us much longer. The Germans were getting to the far end of their railway system, and when the Right Column under General Myburgh swooped down and occupied Tsumeb, the enemy's retreat was cut off, for without a railway he could not get away from the mounted and encircling burghers. His case was finally rendered absolutely hopeless when the Left Column under General Brits got into Namutoni.

An armistice was now arranged, and on July 9th, 1915, German South-West Africa was surrendered to General Botha. In him the German military commander had found more than his match, for the swiftness of Botha's movements, the mobility of his burghers, their ability to move " light," and the marvellous marching powers of the South African infantry, all ruled out of court the enemy's hope of a protracted and desultory campaign.

1 Whittall, *op. cit.*, p. 75.

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Around ELVERDINGHE

Then and Now

Photo: A.P., Paris

ELVERDINGHE AND ITS CHURCH

This photograph of the ruined village was taken on July 24th, 1917, a week before the beginning of the Third Battle of Ypres. Elverdinghe is situated 7 km. north-west of Ypres, on the road and railway which lead to Furnes; and it is also upon the route which runs in a diametrically opposite direction between Poperinghe, Boesinghe, and Langemarck. Troops of the British 1st Division were in it before the end of October, 1914, and a month later it had become the headquarters of a French cavalry division.

Photo: A. J. Insall

ROAD AND LIGHT RAILWAY

There are four British cemeteries round Elverdinghe, all named after once well-known farms. Two of them, which are almost as near to Woesten, are dealt with on page 163. The other two are Hospital Farm Cemetery, south of Elverdinghe village, and Bleuet Farm Cemetery, east of it. Both these farms were used as dressing stations. The former cemetery now contains 115 U.K. fallen, the latter 437 U.K., 3 South African, 1 Canadian, 1 Newfoundland, 1 French, and 1 German.

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Photo: A.P., Paris

IN "WOOD 16"

A photograph of a former German fortified post in French occupation during August, 1917. There were several woods, or their remains, on the eastern side of Boesinghe, beyond the Yperlee Canal. Some of them bore names which were merely numerical, as this one, while others had picturesque titles such as "Bois des Crapouillots"—Trench Mortar Wood. The majority of these coppices had been reduced to a series of denuded trunks by the German bombardments of early 1915.

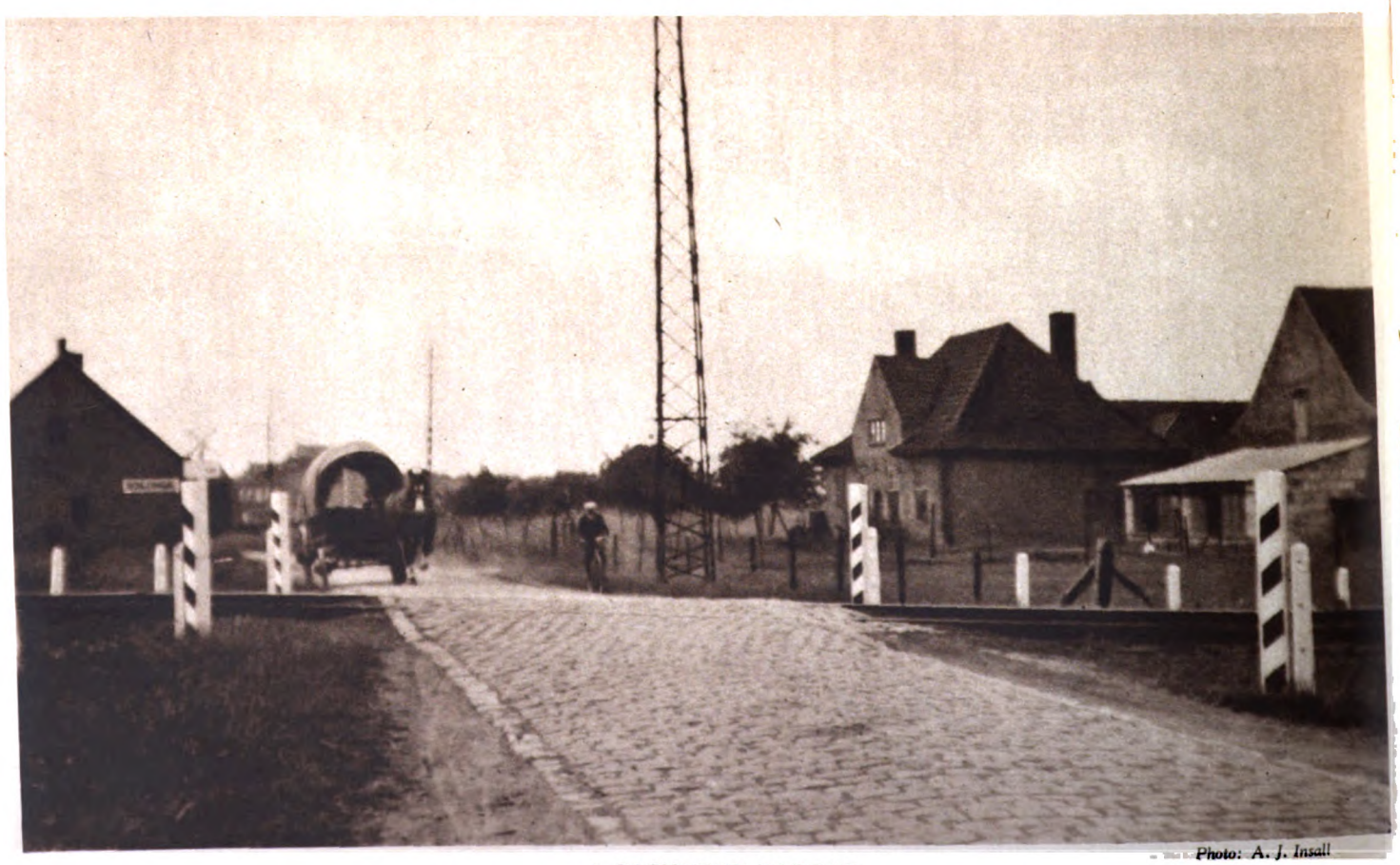

Photo: A. J. Insall

A BOESINGHE BY-ROAD

Boesinghe is 3 km. east-north-east of Elverdinghe, and stands at a bend of one of the two main lines from Ypres to Bruges. This photograph shows a level-crossing close to the station. One wood in the vicinity of the village is Artillery Wood, which the Guards Division captured on July 31st, 1917, at the beginning of the Battle of Pilckem Ridge. In Artillery Wood Cemetery are buried 1,243 U.K., 48 Empire, and 4 unidentified dead. In addition to this, there are no fewer than nine British cemeteries in or close to Boesinghe village.

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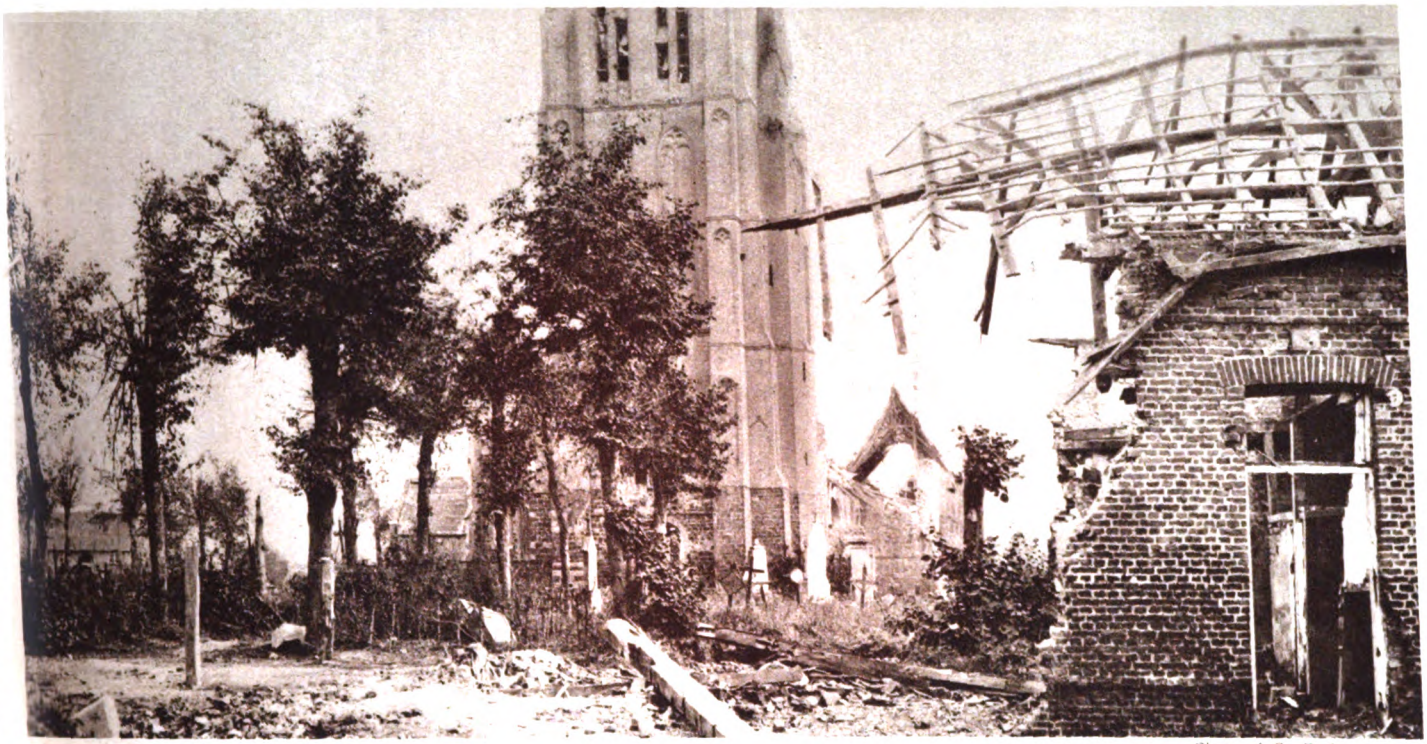

Photo: A.P., Paris

WOESTEN WORSTED

Woesten is situated 3 km. north-west of Elverdinghe, on the same road (Ypres–Furnes) and railway, and is, like its neighbour, typical of the little sleepy back-area villages " behind " Ypres. The War never reached it save at long range; but this photograph, taken on October 8th, 1917, shows once again what long-range hostilities can do in the way of destruction. Woesten was always just outside the British area proper, but must have been familiar to many a Tommy who passed through it.

Photo: A. J. Insall

THE CORNER BY THE CHURCH

There is no British cemetery actually in Woesten, but, as mentioned on page 161, two of those officially " attached " to Elverdinghe are quite close to it. These are Canada Farm Cemetery, south-west of the Poperinghe–Woesten road, and Ferme-Olivier Cemetery, due south of Woesten. Canada Farm was a dressing station from June to October, 1917, and its cemetery contains 907 British dead. In Ferme-Olivier Cemetery, used by Field Ambulance units between June 9th, 1915, and August 5th, 1917, rest 405 U.K. fallen.

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Photo: Imperial War Museum

ONLY THE SAINT SURVIVES

The holy man of stone seems to have been a good deal luckier amid the universal destruction than were a number of his flesh-and-blood comrades; although whether he survived until the Armistice—our photograph was taken on October 5th, 1917—is a moot point, for there is no trace of him in the modern church pictured below. The buildings, old and new, belong to the village of Brielen, between Elverdinghe and Ypres, and once more on the Ypres–Furnes route.

Photo: A. J. Insall

WITHIN BRIELEN CHURCH

Brielen, like Elverdinghe and Woesten, was on the " safe " side of Ypres, and escaped enemy occupation, although it was very near to the front line at the end of the German offensive in 1918. Here there is only one British cemetery, known as that of Solferino Farm, and situated to the north of the village near Malakoff Farm and Dawson's Corner. The fallen number 295, all of whom are United Kingdom men except for one Newfoundlander and one British West Indian.

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CHAPTER X

MEMORIES OF GASPERS, GENERALS, AND GAS

Not the least interesting type of war literature is that which represents one man's random recollections. If every man who served could describe on paper the more intriguing of his adventures, say, on the Western Front, what a rare treat for ex-Servicemen would thereby be provided! In this chapter a distinguished soldier writes of men he encountered in France and Flanders. He concerns himself with a number of these much as a P. G. Wodehouse character might chat "of this and that."

"HAVE a gasper?" asked the general, producing a gold case, and offering a popular brand of cigarette.

From Tobacco-fumes to Tear Gas

With a runner, I had entered his dug-out, cut in the side of a sunken road close to Mametz Wood, to get my orders for the attack on High Wood the following day. The general's suggestion evoked a vivid mental picture of a mess-meeting in India just before the War. I had been severely rebuked for smoking Virginian tobacco, Egyptian and Turkish being the fashion of the time. I laughed, lit the proffered cigarette, and reminded my brigadier that all values change in war.

"A cigarette, lad?" said the brigadier, addressing the runner, and struck a match.

Conversation brought us to the little matter of gas, at this period of the War still something of a novelty. "The Valley of Death" and "Caterpillar Valley," the two approaches to Mametz and Bazentin, were filled with the sickly pear-drop fumes of the stuff, mingled with doses of the lachrymatory variety. The combined stench of corpses, cordite, and gas is unforgettable.

The box-respirator, familiarly called "Gaspirator," had not then been introduced; but we all carried a kind of nose-bag fitted with eye-pieces and a tube. The tear-gas was simply blinding, and these ridiculous bags brought some relief; but within a few minutes a film of condensation would settle on the inside of the glass windows, and then, though the eyes no longer smarted, men were almost as heavily incapacitated as before.

They could be seen staggering and swaying, blind as bats, up and down the road leading through Fricourt and Montauban, while a tornado of shells plunged and spouted, crashed and shrieked, with terrible regularity and most alarming accuracy.

An extraordinary feature of this fire is recalled. As attack followed attack for the possession of the high ground east of Mametz Wood, the German position within the wood was gradually outflanked on both sides. Those of the defenders who were not overwhelmed withdrew to the strong position on the Flers ridge, running through Courcelette, Martinpuich, High Wood (of evil memory!), and Longueval. Yet after our posts had been well established east of Mametz, the German artillery still contrived to meet each infantry reinforcement and every ammunition convoy, as it reached the junction of the road from Fricourt and Caterpillar Valley, with a veritable shower of accurately-placed shells. It was as if the German gunners were firing over open sights, yet the valley could not possibly

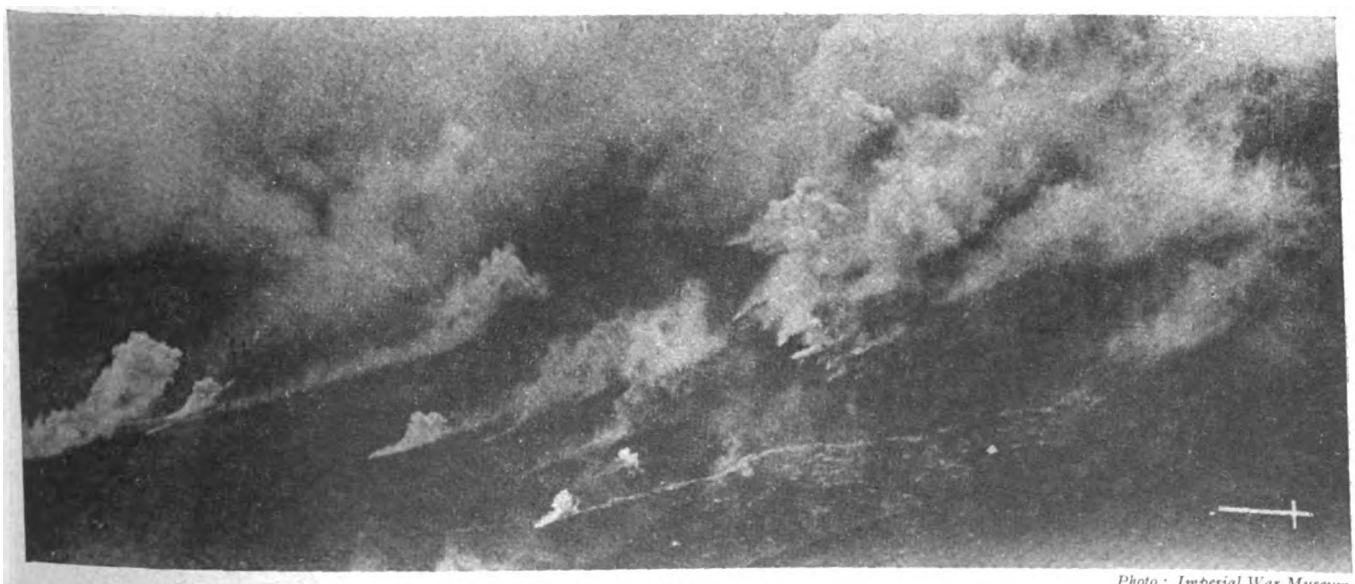

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

GAS

An aerial photograph of a barrage of gas shells on the Western Front. There can be few, if any, Service men who did not encounter the nauseating fumes at one time or another. It was amazing how far the taint would drift, and for how long it would cling. Gas was smelt in places several miles distant from the area of discharge; and many a soldier who was never "officially" gassed had his lungs and general health permanently impaired by continual breathing of the contaminated air.

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be seen from the German positions; nor was there any aerial observation. The precision of the onslaught was quite uncanny.

"Mopping Up" Mametz Wood

The wood itself, formerly a labyrinth of dug-outs, was thick and almost impenetrable with mid-summer undergrowth, while, as a result of the continuous bombardment, many of the trees lay splintered and torn, or were fantastically piled one against another.

It was determined to "mop up" the wood. In extended order, with scouts ahead, rifles ready, revolvers cocked, bombs in hand, the party moved slowly through the brush. A little ahead of the main body, peering through leaves and branches, an officer descried a German seated below a tall tree, telephone in his hand. In the upper branches of the tree had been built an O.P. in the form of a "crow's-nest," reached by a ladder; and from this commanding position a superb view could be obtained of the road and surrounding countryside.

Hearing movement in the undergrowth, the German glanced up, to be greeted by a levelled revolver. He called a last message into the receiver—"*Auf wiedersehen, Kameraden!*"—jerked telephone and wires from their connection, and rose, standing stiffly to attention. He did not flinch. Having remained behind to observe for and direct his battery, he faced death with a grim smile.

Perhaps this smile saved his life. It is to the credit of British chivalry that this brave man was taken, an honourable prisoner-of-war.

The generosity of British soldiers is proverbial. Many a man gave away his last "gasper" to a wounded Boche. In the early days of trench warfare, 1914–15, the stuff used as pipe-tobacco and in cigarettes was often unbelievably foul. Hard put to it, men will smoke almost anything. Many can recollect from boyhood the clandestine enjoyment obtained from brown paper; but, in packages one had never seen before—that tobacco!

I cannot say it was from any motive of generosity that we would hurl the offensive tins across the narrow No Man's Land which divided our trenches from the enemy's at Bois Grenier in January, 1915! Apparently, the stuff pleased the men from Saxony; for they would shout "Thank you, Tommy!" though they seldom showed a head for a sniper's shot.

A Tobacco-tin Ruse

This period of the War was the era of the "Jam-pot" bomb, before Mills had produced his iron egg; and these pots gave us the idea for a ruse. First, a few tins of tobacco as a decoy; then tobacco-tins emptied of their content, filled with nails and bits of metal, and primed to explode. But there's a profound difference between an enemy who

Photo: Photopress.

ONE WHO NEEDS NO INTRODUCTION

The appearance of General Plumer was known, it is fairly safe to say, to almost every man in the British Army on the Western Front; and few of those whom circumstance prevented from knowing his personality at first-hand failed to gain some second-hand inkling of it by means of anecdote. A continuous stream of anecdotes flowed forth concerning "Plum." The author of the accompanying article considers that no other general except Sir Aylmer Hunter-Weston is even remotely comparable in this respect; and not many, surely, will venture to contradict him.

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Photo: A. J. Insall.

THE "CABARET ROUGE"

The original cabaret stood 1¼ km. south of Souchez, on the Arras—Béthune road; and the amount of fighting which it saw in 1915—16, during the French tenure of this sector, must be almost unparalleled for a single building. On one occasion it changed hands eleven times in the course of a single day! Nevertheless, it had already been "blooded" in the witnessing of slaughter, for in 1898 the then owner and his wife had been murdered with a hammer by their son-in-law. The present hut, known by the alternative title of "The Better 'Ole," is run by a British ex-Serviceman, and dispenses English tea and beer to some of the many insular visitors to the large Cabaret Rouge Cemetery.

is ready to shoot you at sight, and one who is disarmed, a prisoner. As the War dragged on, perhaps chivalry showed a little decline; after all, when a struggle resolves itself into the killing of the unseen by the unknown, to the accompaniment of tanks, *flammenwerfer*, and gas, it's somewhat difficult to exchange courtesies! But even so, an appeal to the sporting instincts of the Briton is infallible.

Near Epéhy, in October, 1918, the redoubtable *Leibregiment* of the Alpine Corps had been heavily engaged in a bitter rearguard action. One of the officers, von Halt, remained lying wounded in a ditch at the roadside. A British corporal, grimed and weary after days of fighting, was passing the German with unconcealed contempt, when something familiar in the figure struck him. He stood and stared. Indeed, it was no small coincidence that two Olympic champions, the one representing Great Britain, the other Germany, should meet in such strange circumstances. It was the German, with a wounded leg, who, speaking in English, suggested that the Englishman would probably win the next race.

That did it. For von Halt the Great War was over. The corporal offered the most acceptable gasper. He then shouted to his pals. In a moment, dozens of British soldiers were gathered round the former hero of the running track, offering cigarettes and rations, and swapping yarns. Ritter von Halt, of course, now represents Germany on the Olympic Games Committee, and was a familiar figure at the 1936 games in Berlin, when Germany carried off the laurels.

There were many generals. Most were seldom seen, directing this and that in the obscurity of places known vaguely as "G.H.Q." and "the Base." As a rule the breed suffered from an ill-deserved unpopularity. Someone has to run every show; and there was no particular point in sitting as an exhibition on the parapet. In the early days of the War, the Army lost one of its most gallant, devoted, and able servants, General Congreve, in the trenches. I can yet picture his distinguished figure walking unconcernedly, knee-deep in slime, in the front-line—then our only line—at Armentières.

Generals in the Line

"Inky Bill," or Major-General Ingouville Williams, was killed in July, 1916, on the Somme; and another divisional commander, Bridges, lost his leg, also on the Somme. Bridges kept a lion cub at

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headquarters as a pet ; and it was always said that he presented the amputated limb to this symbol of Empire.

Few generals deserved the abuse so often flung at their heads. They were human, some good, some colourless, few bad. This is true generally of human nature. What miner cannot name an evil "gaffer"? What workman, a tyrranical foreman of his experience? When all is said and done, no general had a burning desire to throw away the lives of his soldiers. It is not so difficult to sacrifice one's own life, but the task of risking the lives of others weighs heavily on the conscience.

How considerate, too, were some, especially divisional commanders and brigadiers who, while commanding battalions and companies in the first days of the War, before the prodigious expansion of the Army, had seen heavy fighting. There must be few who cannot recall the typical soldiers' general, whom no château could tempt, no security decoy —the leader who was where the men were, and lived as they.

As temperate in living as in justice, as stern as he was kind, he could fight a battle in the morning and help Picardy farmers to stack their corn in the evening. The right force in the right place at the right moment, whose honour was our honour, whose name our name ; his disappointments ours, and his victories ours.

Who can tell the burden that must have weighed at times on the mind of a general as he returned from the slaughter of his men, when he loved those men ? Yet always there was the light of optimism lest the living should be depressed —the look of victory when the heart was heaviest !

Two generals, I think, stand apart from all others, and most men were familiar with their reputations and appearance. Sir Herbert Plumer, known as "Plum," the warden of the Ypres Salient, who made the perfect attack at Messines ; and Sir Aylmer Hunter-Weston, "Your Corps Commander," the familiar "Hunter Bunter." "Plum's" personal appearance completely belied his real character. Orpen's faithful portrait in the Imperial War Museum suggests something of the walrus. Compared with the astute face of Sir Henry Wilson, Plumer seems commonplace.

"Plum" and "Hunter Bunter"

It was his understanding, his infallible sense for the commonplace, that contributed to Plumer's genius, and made him unchallengeable master of Ypres.

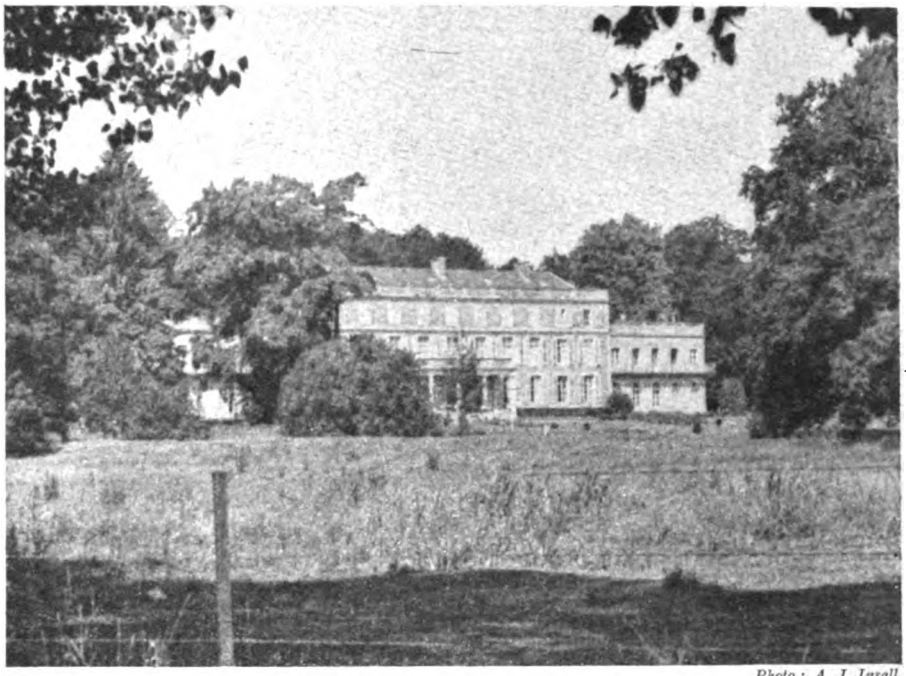

Photo : A. J. Insall.

THE CHÂTEAU, QUERRIEU

Readers of the first two volumes of *Twenty Years After* may recall the fairly lengthy account of the Fourth Army's H.Q. in Querrieu Château, during 1916, which was given in the upper caption on page 1062. At that time we had no photograph of the actual building available, but are now happy to be able to repair the omission with the above contemporary view.

Throughout the whole course of the War, the jagged ruin of the Cloth Hall kept its eastern watch. Arras, Albert, Bailleul, Armentières, British strongholds through three years, fell to the hammer blows of Ludendorff in March and April, 1918. Ypres, almost personified, stood firm.

"Hunter Bunter," although not among the highest in the Army—a corps not an army commander—has, I believe, secured immortality. Indeed, it is diffi-

Photo : A. J. Insall.

CROSS-ROADS AT HULLUCH

Hulluch, and the gas attack launched between it and Vermelles in April, 1916, have already been so fully dealt with in text and captions that little remains to be said here. Above is a modern view of the cross-roads in the centre of the village, the church being just out of the picture to the right. The commune nowadays contains just over 1,200 inhabitants.

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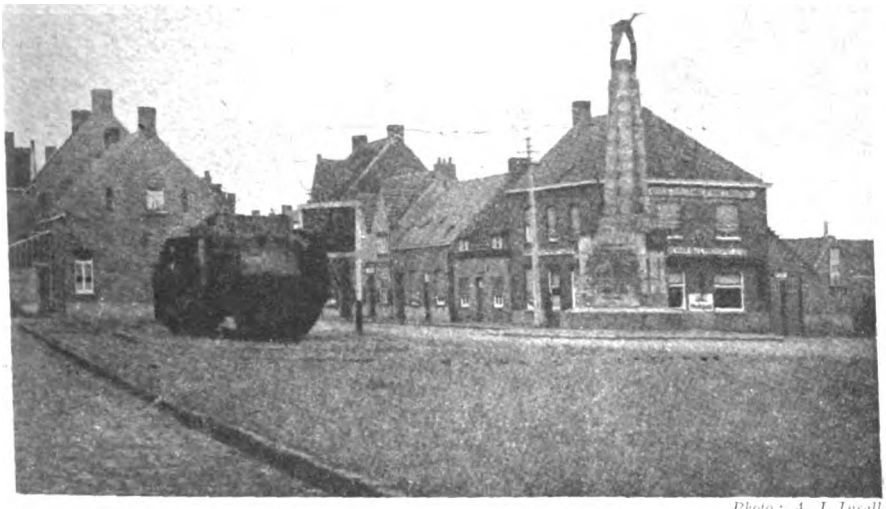

Photo: A. J. Insall.

TWO MEMORIALS, POELCAPPELLE

The British tank in this Flemish village needs no explanation. The other monument is in memory of Captain Guynemer, one of France's greatest aviators, who was brought down hereabouts on September 11th, 1917. The obelisk was erected at the instigation of two Belgian air "aces"; and the device at the top is a flying stork—the emblem of Guynemer's "Stork" squadron.

cult for those who knew him to think of "generals" without calling him to mind.

Of Army commanders — except Plumer, the only "footslogger"— Allenby was the most familiar figure, more so than Gough, Rawlinson, and Horne. Gough sprang to common notice from his ill-deserved eclipse. "Rawly," efficient and hardworking, with his headquarters in the lovely château at Querrieu, at an angle of the main road from Amiens to Albert, bore the brunt of the Battle of the Somme, with whose tactical methods he had little sympathy. He accompanied His Majesty King George V when the latter courageously visited the Somme battlefield after the first blows had been struck.

Allenby, known as "the Bull," and later responsible for the conduct of the brilliant campaign in Palestine against the Turks, was, like Gough and Rawlinson, a cavalry man. Horne was a gunner, and it is a strange fact, not possible to justify, that during four years of what was to all intents and purposes siege-warfare, in the higher command there were no sappers.

Allenby, it is said, claimed to have invented the "tin hat." One of his divisional commanders persistently rode into the front areas in a hat of comfort: it was quite shapeless, and certainly was not made of steel. Allenby "bit him" unmercifully for so shameless an example: even as I remember his fury when he was visiting the forward area at Croisilles, where a fine view could be obtained of the Hindenburg Line, during the Battle of Arras, May, 1917.

On that occasion a hatless sergeant appeared from the cemetery, whose vaulted tombs provided good cover from shrapnel. Seeing the august figure of the Army Commander surrounded by his staff, he sprang stiffly to attention.

It is tragic for an inventor to be the witness of such gross neglect of his genius. The Army commander strode forward, and with no great gentleness struck the sergeant. "Where's your steel helmet?" he thundered.

Allenby was impatient of inefficiency. Upon an aide-de-camp, seated in the front of Allenby's car, was laid the duty of directing the chauffeur along the tortuous by-ways and sunken roads of the devastated area around Arras. "The Bull" moved at high speed, and the chauffeur, like Jehu, drove furiously. If the A.D.C. hesitated, requiring the car to slow down, thwack would come the Army commander's stick on the top of the lad's head. Who knows but that this habit gave rise to the notion of the steel helmet?

A friend of generals as of privates was the late lamented "Woodbine Willie," the gallant padre who acquired the nickname from his custom of carrying endless "gaspers" in his pockets. They were the "pipe of peace," the informal introduction, which broke down that natural shyness between Britons concerning the more profound matters of life.

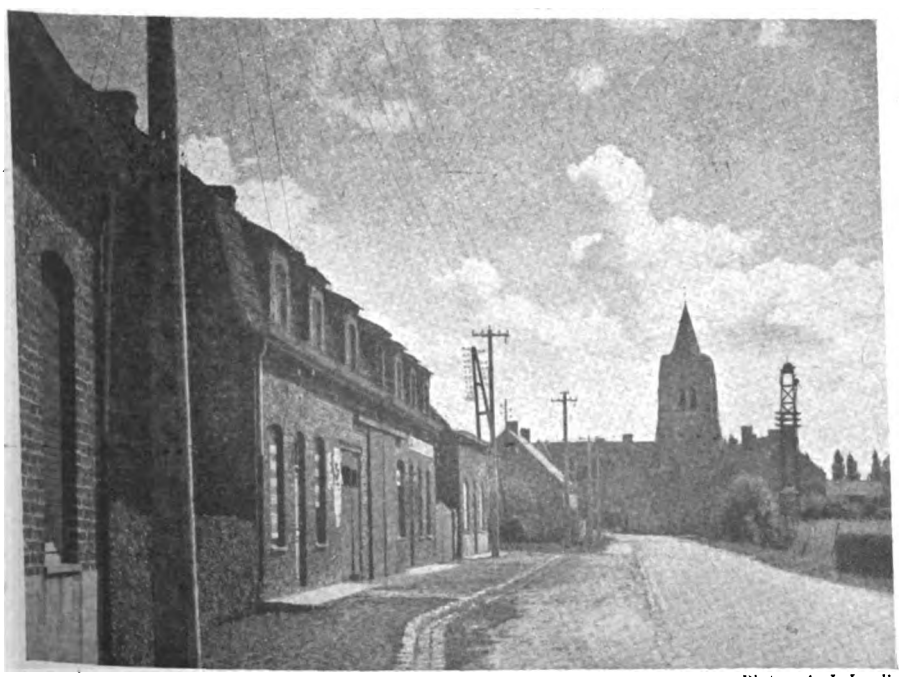

Photo: A. J. Insall.

CLOUD AND SUNSHINE AT MERCKEM

Merckem, 3 km. to the west of Houthulst Forest, stands at the junction of the Dixmude—Ypres and Dixmude—Poperinghe railway lines. It was occupied in 1914 by the Germans, who were driven back on it from the western side of the Yperlee Canal (2 km. distant) by Belgian troops on April 6th, 1915. The French finally freed the village on October 27th, 1917, taking 200 prisoners.

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Photo: A. P., Paris.

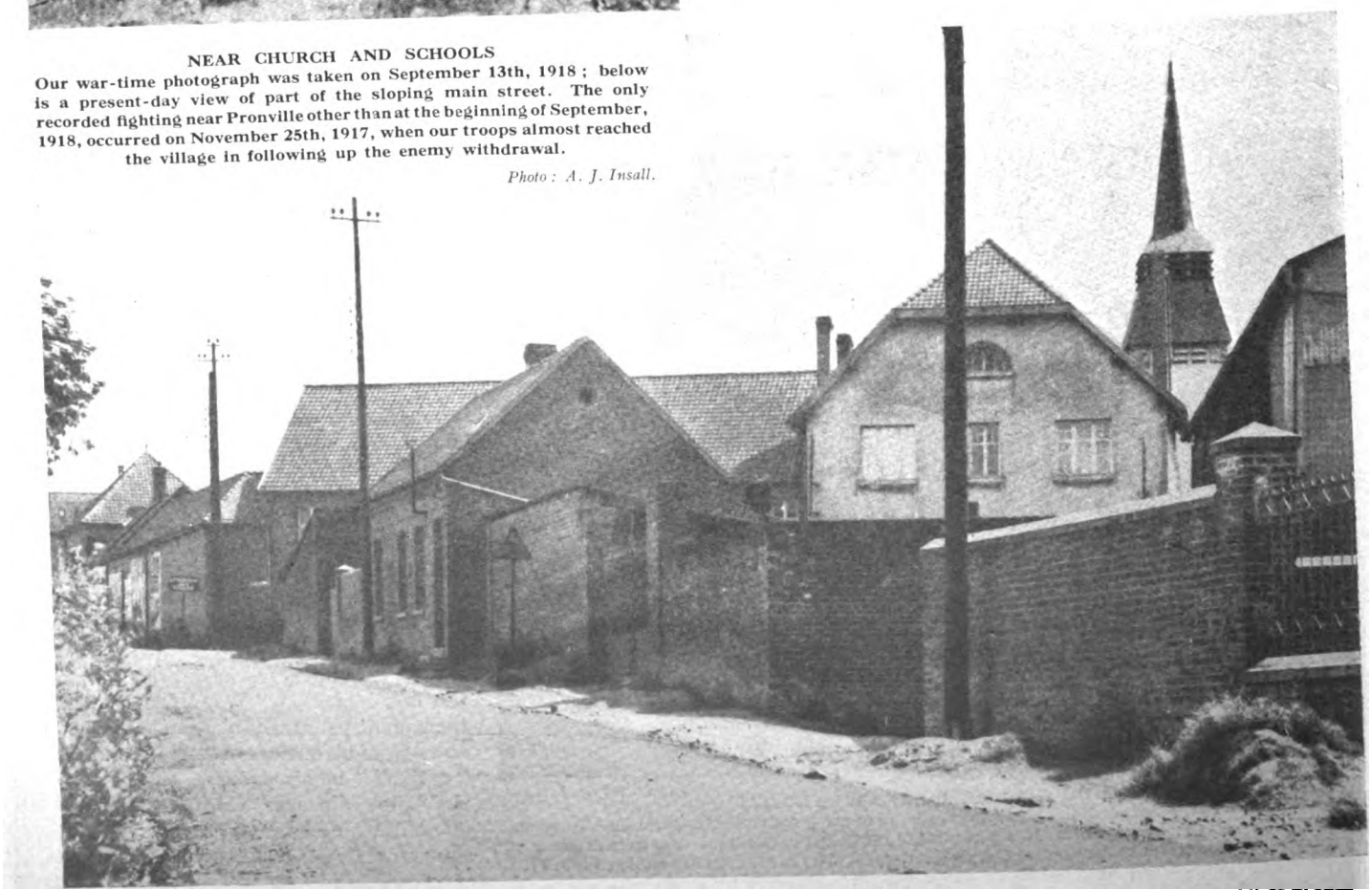
DISHEVELLED PRONVILLE

Pronville stands on the Hirondelle, less than 2 km. east of Quéant and 7 km. east-south-east of Croisilles, and latterly was in between the first and second belts of the Hindenburg Line, which hereabouts ran double. The village fell during our successful attack on these defences on September 2nd—3rd, 1918.

NEAR CHURCH AND SCHOOLS

Our war-time photograph was taken on September 13th, 1918; below is a present-day view of part of the sloping main street. The only recorded fighting near Pronville other than at the beginning of September, 1918, occurred on November 25th, 1917, when our troops almost reached the village in following up the enemy withdrawal.

Photo: A. J. Insall.



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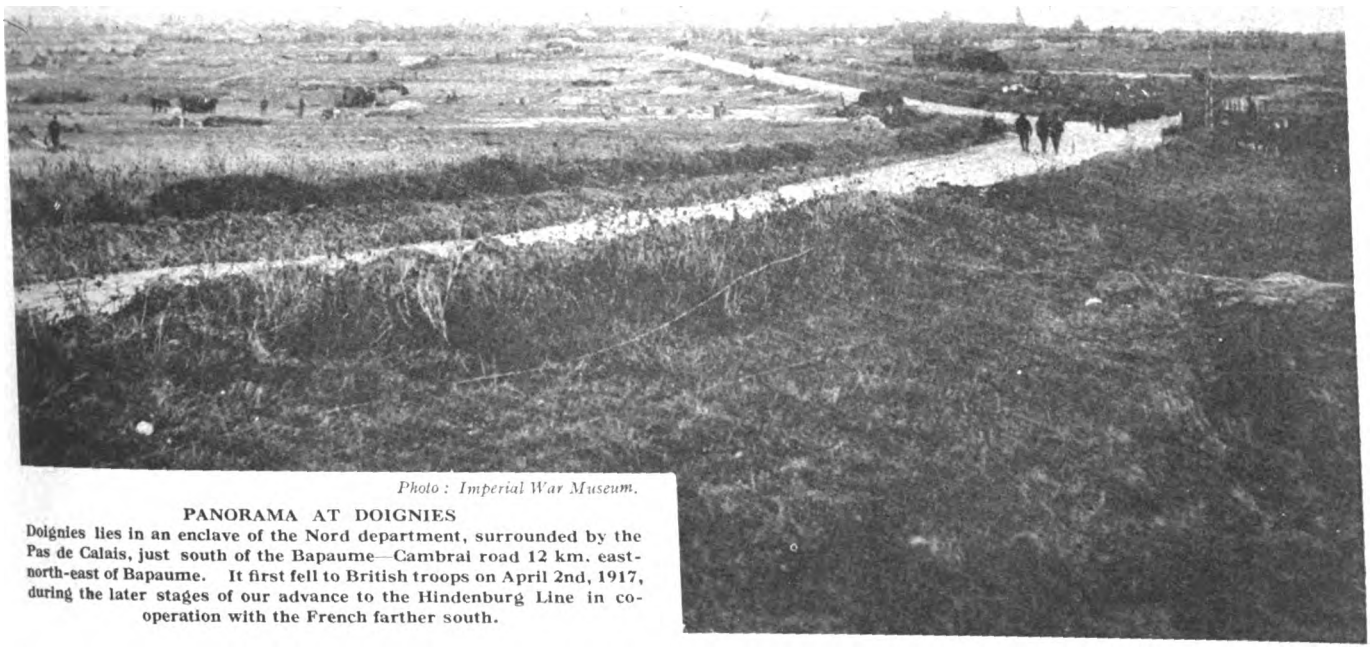
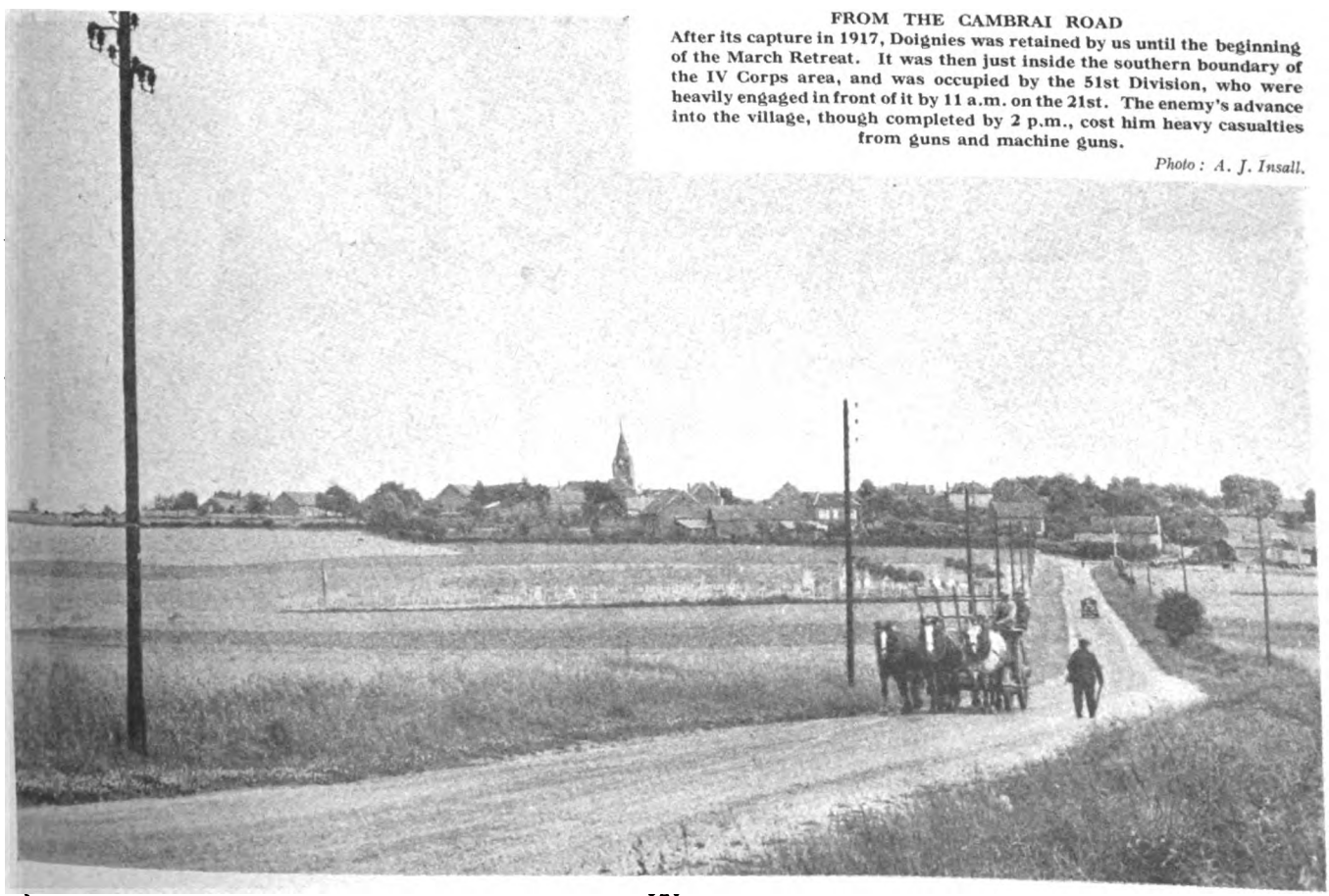


Photo : Imperial War Museum.

PANORAMA AT DOIGNIES

Doignies lies in an enclave of the Nord department, surrounded by the Pas de Calais, just south of the Bapaume—Cambrai road 12 km. east-north-east of Bapaume. It first fell to British troops on April 2nd, 1917, during the later stages of our advance to the Hindenburg Line in co-operation with the French farther south.



FROM THE CAMBRAI ROAD

After its capture in 1917, Doignies was retained by us until the beginning of the March Retreat. It was then just inside the southern boundary of the IV Corps area, and was occupied by the 51st Division, who were heavily engaged in front of it by 11 a.m. on the 21st. The enemy's advance into the village, though completed by 2 p.m., cost him heavy casualties from guns and machine guns.

Photo : A. J. Insall.

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"Woodbine Willie"

The soldier did not carry his heart on his sleeve, but "Woodbine Willie" often captured the heart by the welcome gift in his pocket. A cigarette was always welcome, and the greatest vexation of a gas attack was that no man can smoke inside a box-respirator. It's all he can do to breathe!

The idea of using gas was no novelty, for the famous Florentine, Leonardo da Vinci, had proposed its employment, primarily for suffocating an enemy at sea, by discharging it when to windward at close quarters.

The Germans first released gas during the Second Battle of Ypres, April 22nd, 1915—a surprise measure, which caught the British unprepared and inflicted heavy casualties, especially among the Canadians. This form of gas was discharged from cylinders and carried forward by a favourable wind.

Prior to the Loos attack, on September 25th, 1915, cylinders were brought into a section of the British front line and embedded in the parapet. The instructions issued were of the vaguest character—"'Ere you are, Jock, 'ere's the key!"—a spanner with which to loosen the valve. The wind unfortunately was unfavourable, and the gas blew back into our front and support lines and hung heavily in shell holes, inflicting considerable casualties.

When tear-gas shells were first employed on the Somme, men thought they were "duds." The sound of their passage was a soft whine, then a sigh, followed by a gentle *pfft!* exactly like that of a small-calibre shell which had failed to explode. Showers of these pestilential tear shells fell in the Somme area.

The Americans in France during 1918 widely circulated, by way of a "Gas Alert," a printed slip bearing these words:

"In a gas attack
There are only two Crowds:
The Quick and the Dead.
Be Quick and get that Gas Mask on."

Most dreaded of all forms of this lethal weapon was mustard gas, with its scorching effect upon lungs, eyes, and skin. The action of poison gas was not immediate. I recollect the scene at a wayside tea canteen on the Zonnebeke road, near Potijze, in December, 1917. A division was being relieved from the line, and was heavily shelled. Men exhausted from the long trudge across the muddy wastes leading to Broodseinde Ridge, and harried by shell-fire, stopped in small groups at the canteen for the welcome cup of tea.

Lace-edged Trews

Many, as they drank, sank down coughing and retching, with the grip of

WASH AND BRUSH-UP—FREE

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

An intimate scene in an officers' dug-out near Roclincourt, January 9th, 1918, with shaving and washing in full swing. Quarters appear to be somewhat cramped, which is perhaps the cause of the not altogether happy countenance on the extreme left. Roclincourt is a village just east of the Arras—Vimy road. In 1918 it was outside the limit of the enemy's infantry activities, but well within range of his shells.

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gas on their lungs. The physical strain of the journey suited the chemical action of the poison fumes to perfection, for the only safe remedy is absolute rest. Sargent's immense canvas in the Imperial War Museum remains as a wonderful, yet poignant, record of gas.

Like everything else in war, as indeed throughout life, even gas had its humours. A Highland regiment in the line at Nieuport, in August, 1917, was subjected to its first experience of mustard gas. Many casualties were incurred from burns to the legs. National pride and devotion to the kilt fought with the desire for immunity.

The quartermaster, a genius at "scrounging," produced hundreds of pairs of ladies' drawers, Heaven and he alone knew whence. Clad in this protection, the regiment of strange appearance, with kilts swinging above female fripperies edged with lace, marched, on relief, through the streets of La Panne, amid the ribald jeers of their English comrades.

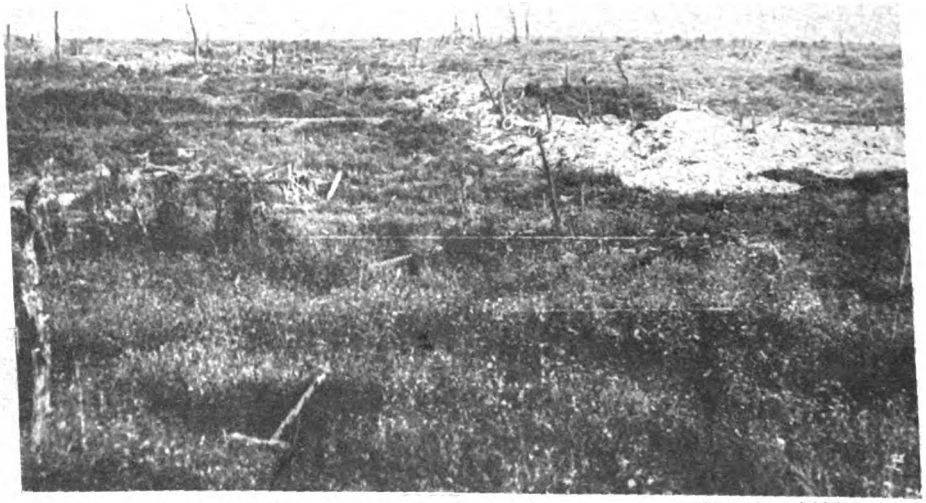

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

BOUCHAVESNES ONCE MORE

Views of Bouchavesnes-Bergen village appeared on pages 1218-1219 of Volume Two; here, to complete the picture, we offer what we believe to be "Then and Now" views of the church. The "Now" view is all right, but in the war-time version there is not much to distinguish the holy edifice from the local "pub."

Photo: G. T. Watson.

HE PREFERS A BOW AND ARROW

No wonder, if he ever saw some of his native village before they had rebuilt it all. Bouchavesnes-Bergen, it may be recollected, lies just east of the Péronne—Bapaume road, 6 km. north of Péronne and 4 km. north-east of Cléry-sur-Somme. The stirring and tragic events which befell the South African Brigade, just west of here on March 23rd and 24th, 1918, were related at some length on page 1219.

In the French Army, a brigade commander held the rank of Colonel; in the German, that of *Oberst*—the commander of a regiment of three battalions; in the British, that of brigadier-general, shortened to general. Most men knew their brigadier, and considered the equation of generalship in terms of the red-and-gold braided gentlemen who ordered their destinies, for better or worse. A few were cordially hated, no doubt deservedly; others—the majority—were beloved, or at least admired.

There was little scope for the employment of surprise, the first element of success in battle, nor room for ingenuity in trench warfare. For many months the War resolved itself more and more into one of stagnation and boredom, accompanied by increasing shelling and discomfort; while the major attacks relied for success upon sheer weight of

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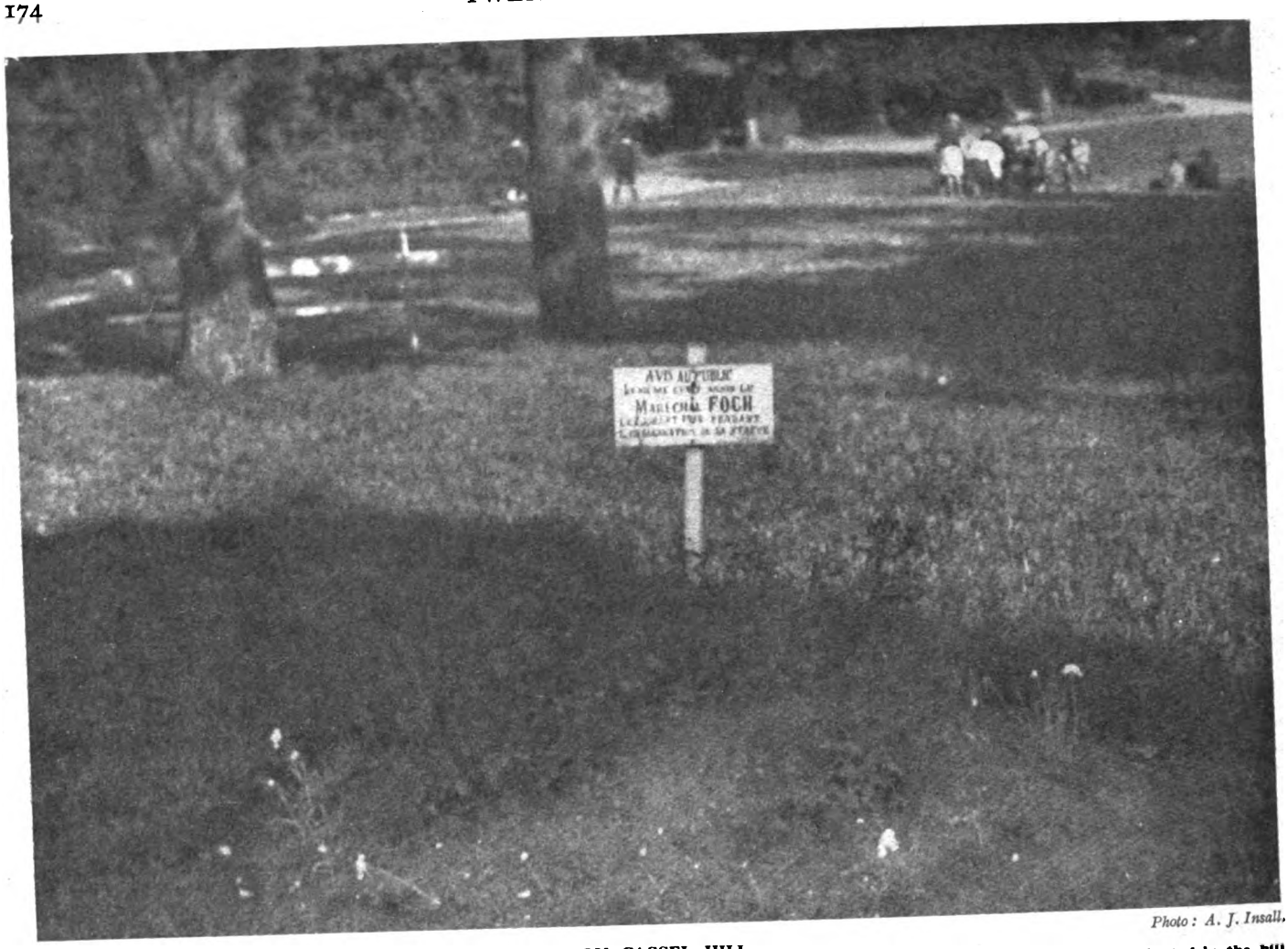

Photo: A. J. Insall.

ON CASSEL HILL

Just to show that the French had their generals, too, we reproduce a contemporary photograph of a significant little notice-board planted in the hill on which stands Cassel. The scene is the public gardens containing the memorial statue to Marshal Foch, and the board reads (in translation): "NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC—On this spot sat Marshal FOCH on the 7th July, 1928, during the unveiling of his statue."

men and metal. For all of these things generalship was held more or less responsible.

Brilliant Leadership

Instances of brilliant leadership, however, were by no means absent. Had it not been so, the terms of the Armistice would no doubt have been vastly different. In the attack on the Hindenburg Line between Fontaine-les-Croisilles and Bullecourt, "Ginger Baird," ginger in both hair and temperament, deployed his brigade by night with muffled accoutrements, and without a shot being fired, on tapes in No Man's Land.

The usual "Zero Hour" was at dawn. Not a move: the men lay prone, shielded by tufted grass, in shell-holes, and sometimes hidden by the dead. The moments of anxiety, when British and German alike "stood to," passed by: and, with the thankfulness of peace, the Germans turned to breakfast. At 9 a.m. the brigade, lightly clad and bombs in hand, rushed the short distance between tapes and trenches, and surprised Jerry at his breakfast or asleep in dug-outs.

The surprise was completely successful, hundreds of prisoners being taken at the cost of only two casualties. This success was obtained after the line had been assaulted with appalling losses time after time. A victory for ingenuity.

"Comic Cuts," as the Daily Intelligence Summaries produced by G.H.Q. were known, were valuable to those who cared to study their content. A people unused to conscription, and with nearly all its knowledge of military matters confined to a small professional army most of which had been scattered in the four corners of the Empire, could only treat the War as a joke, a kind of new, hazardous, and usually most unpleasant compulsory sport, whose rules they held in profound contempt and, on occasion, disregarded.

The Link of Comradeship

No doubt such a cynical regard for the usages of war contributed to British morale, that factor which no less a general than Napoleon assessed in comparison with numbers as being worth three to one. Yet ignorance often added heavily to the casualty lists. "Comic Cuts" were so much "gas"; and gas was a thing to be avoided at all costs. The average British soldier, as a free man, being also averse to authority, avoided generals like the plague.

"Ssh! the General"—as crown and anchor boards, and amusements far more innocent, were slipped away. Yet how matey that gasper smoked everywhere by all ranks, the common link of comradeship. "The General gave me a gasper!" And with faces hidden behind grotesque glass windows and indiarubber trunks we all looked very much alike!

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CHAPTER XI

ZEPPELIN RAIDS OVER BRITAIN

The subject of air raids is one that increases in importance with every passing year. Precisely how unpleasant a strong air force can make things for the civilian population of an enemy country that is itself well equipped in the air Arm, has still to be seen. From such data as are available it would seem that there is perhaps a tendency to overestimate the destructive powers of a bombing fleet if stoutly opposed by fast fighters. This, however, is a matter of opinion. What we do know is that during the Great War German air raiders, even at that comparatively early stage in the development of aircraft, did, in fact, succeed in doing a considerable amount of damage, and in making things more uncomfortable for the folks at home than was generally appreciated by the men in the front line.

WHEN war broke out in 1914, aviation was as yet in its infancy—so much so that "flying the Channel" could still be regarded as something in the nature of a feat. This type of venture, however, was more or less limited to the aeroplane, the "heavier-than-air" machine; and it was the heavier-than-air machine which had claimed almost the whole attention of aeronautical circles both in Britain and France.

Development of the Zeppelin

In Germany, progress in aviation had tended in another direction. The success of Count Zeppelin in designing his "dirigible balloon"—that is, a "lighter-than-air" machine—had led the German Army to place great faith in such an instrument of war; and so it had been developed. Accordingly by August, 1914, the Zeppelin airship possessed a radius of action far superior to that inherent in the aeroplane, while it had other important qualities.

It was quite clear, then, that hostilities with Germany would see the Zeppelin aspiring to play a considerable offensive rôle in the campaign. In the aeroplane, on the other hand, resided potentialities then unknown—and unattainable until great technical improvements had been introduced into its construction. War was shortly to force the pace in its development, until eventually it was to outstrip the airship in almost every direction.

The Zeppelin airship depended for the maintenance of its shape, which must be ensured regardless of the expansion or contraction of the hydrogen gas contained in the interior gasbags, on a rigid aluminium framework of amazing lightness; and it was driven by reliable engines. These characteristics thus endowed it with a noteworthy capacity for navigation, even against or athwart a stiffish breeze; it was far more a "dirigible" aircraft than the navigable balloon, or "non-rigid" airship, which depended on the state of pressure of the lifting gas in its envelope, in order to maintain its shape and navigational qualities.

Attacks by German airships on Great Britain could therefore be regarded as more than within the bounds of possibility. To meet such a risk, as early as 1912 the Admiralty and the War Office had ordered a number of small anti-aircraft guns to be mounted at the principal points of great naval and military importance, especially along the south-eastern coasts of England and up the Thames estuary. It was not considered necessary to defend London in this manner, as it could not then be foreseen how far "open," or at least unfortified, towns would soon become a target for hostile aircraft. The whole question of bombardment from the air of undefended or open towns had been left in an unsatisfactory state by the Hague Convention of 1907, wherein the problem had been discussed. No proper definition had been made as to what were and what were not legitimate objectives for aerial bombardment. Article 2 of the subsequent Naval Convention had, indeed, exempted from the definition of "undefended places" all "military works, military or naval establishments, depôts of arms or war material, workshops or plant which could be utilised for the needs of a hostile fleet or army."[1]

Pretext for Bombing Towns

That provided endless pretexts, valid or otherwise, for any belligerent Power wishing to bombard an enemy town; since, as the War went on, it would have been difficult to deny that every town capable of producing war material was fully occupied in that type of manufacture. In the case of Paris and London, moreover, the Germans might justly claim that both cities were so far the real centre for the higher direction of the War as to form a sort of enemy "super-G.H.Q.," and thus constituted legitimate targets.

Also there was the known difficulty of aiming bombs from an aircraft flying at speed and at great height above its target. In the early days of the conflict, when bomb-sights were primitive instruments, there can have existed only a vague idea in the mind of an airship or aeroplane pilot, when aiming at his target, as to where his projectile would fall. In fact, in some of the earliest Zeppelin attacks of 1914 there is little doubt that the bombs were simply dropped overboard by hand. It can be said, therefore, that the inaccuracy of the bomb-dropping, aggravated as it often was by the total darkness of the towns concerned, might more than counterbalance any desire of a pilot to attack only such buildings as were genuinely employed for the conduct of hostilities.

Then, as the War went on, yet another fertile cause of the promiscuous bombing of larger cities arose in the presence and action of anti-aircraft defences. Once anti-aircraft artillery was set up, the place so protected became "defended," and therefore could be claimed as a legitimate target.

In answer to this view, it could be urged that attacking aircraft should never have flown over any ostensibly civilian target. By bombing such targets they were laying themselves open to the charge of being "baby-killers." To such accusations the raiding aviators would reply that if munition workers must live in the vicinity of their factories, they must also run the risks inherent in any aerial attack on such places; that if Governments will employ, for the conveyance of troops and stores to the front, railways which lead through populous centres and there form im-

[1] *Official History: War in the Air*, iii, p. 69.

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portant bottlenecks, all dwellers in close proximity to such railways must run the risk of being attacked from the air.[1]

The Importance of Aircraft

The gist of the matter must be sought in the fact that, until the advent of the aeroplane, the possibilities of bombarding towns, railways, munition-producing centres, and the like were limited by the range of the artillery of the day, and the destructive capacity of the shell. Even in 1871, when Paris was besieged and fired upon, the damage inflicted was negligible compared with that which the city might have suffered under like conditions during the Great War.

The true potentialities of aircraft had never been foreseen, and so a tradition, based on the nature and weapons of the armies of the pre-flying era, had grown up that the civilian population was always to be protected and respected—largely because it could not be reached by the then existing armaments. Under present conditions, when a whole nation is virtually fighting another nation for independence, prestige, and everything that is believed to make life worth living, there seems little hope of ever putting an end to this aerial threat to centres of population unless a radical change of heart occurs in *every* potential belligerent in Europe.

The closing phases of the Great War showed plainly that the surest remedy for the bombing of large cities is the fear of reprisals; and this fear can be effective only after proof has been given that the will and the capacity to take such reprisals exist. Unilateral disarmament in this respect seems little better than the spontaneous offer of the neck to the executioner's axe.

The first act of war in the air was committed on August 6th, 1914, when the German military airship *Z.VI*, bombed the fortress of Liége. A few

[1] In the case of London, the railway bridges over the Thames formed most important routes for the conveyance of munitions to the Channel ports.

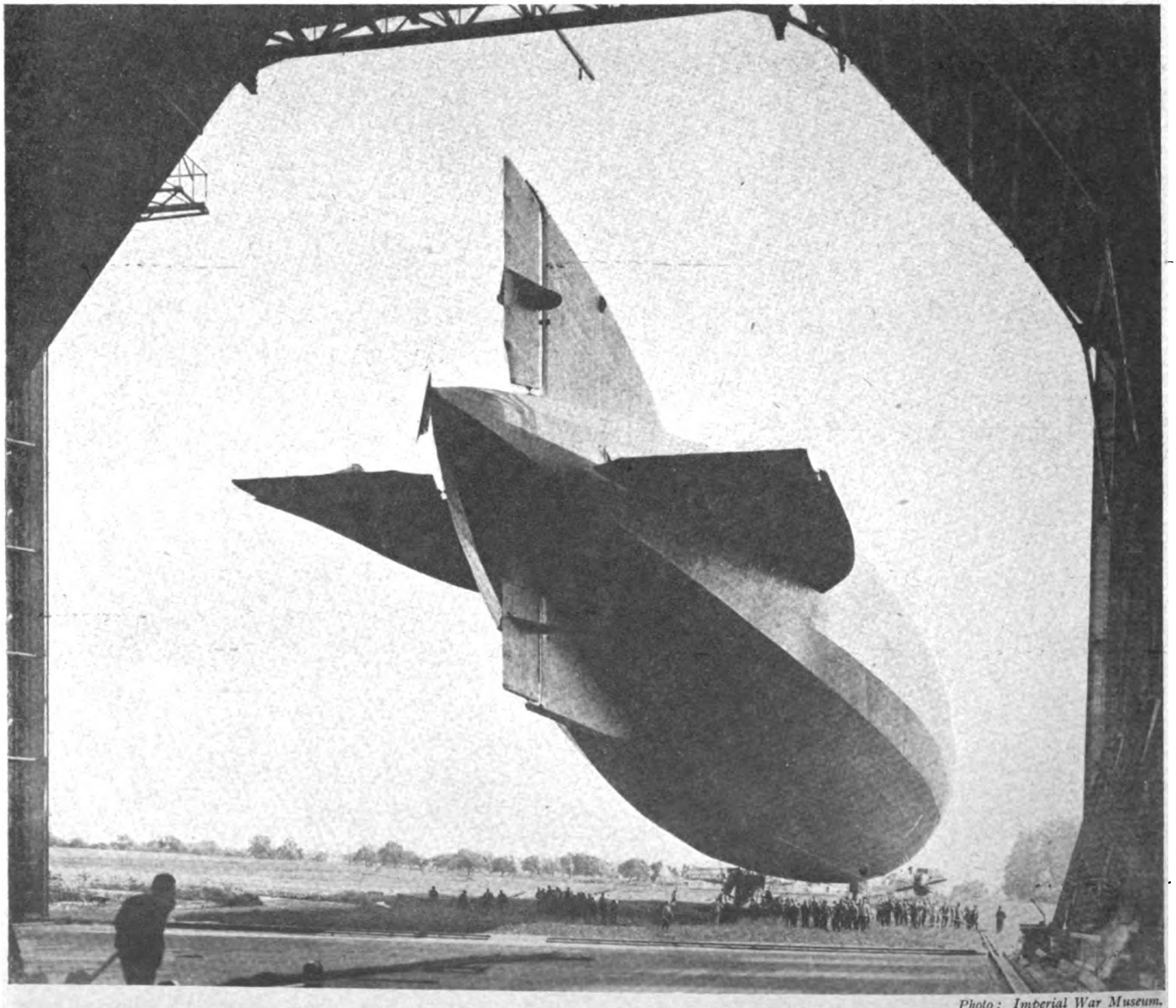

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

BEFORE MEETING HER DOOM

A photograph of the German Zeppelin *L.53* on the ground outside her hangar not long before she was shot down in flames by Lieutenant S. D. Culley, in a Sopwith "Camel," off the Borkum Riff lightship on August 11th, 1918. This incident occurred during a fight between British naval light forces and aeroplanes engaged in reconnoitring the west coast of Frisia, and German aircraft. British coastal motor-boats Nos. 40, 42, and 47 were sunk during the encounter.

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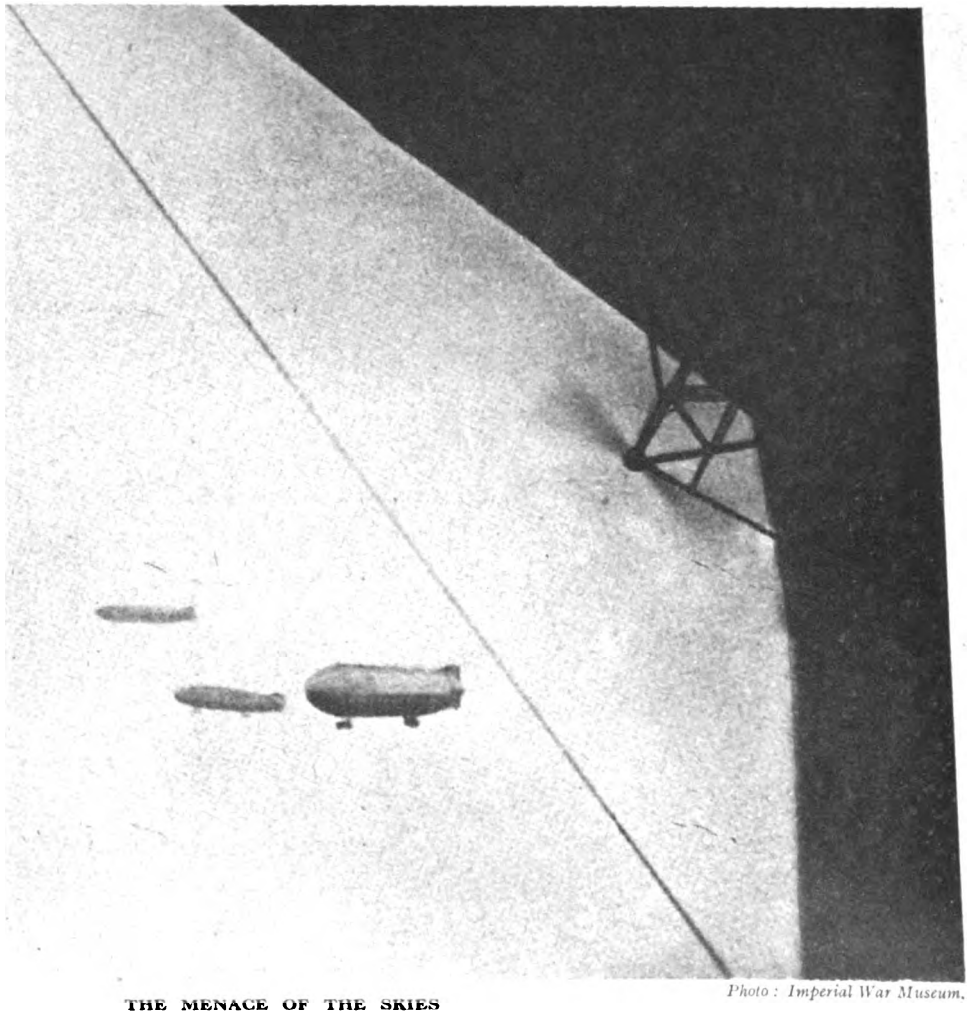

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

THE MENACE OF THE SKIES

In point of fact, the airship was a far less formidable raiding-aircraft than, if properly handled, the Gotha aeroplane would have been; yet it was the Zeppelin which struck terror into civilian hearts, and in years to come it will be the Zeppelin which is remembered when the Gotha and the "Giant" have faded into oblivion. This striking illustration shows, from a gondola of one of them, the German airships *L.10*, *L.11*, *L.12*, and *L.13* in flight.

weeks later *Z.XII* was busily bombing another Belgian fortress, namely Antwerp, where purely civilian casualties were caused. As a result of these episodes, it was recognised after the Battle of the Marne that Britain would surely suffer a like attack as soon as the Germans should choose to erect airship bases in occupied Belgium.

Steps were therefore taken to guard against this eventuality, while as a further preventive, British aviators carried out three of the boldest aerial attacks of the whole war on the German aircraft sheds and factories. On October 8th, 1914, Lieut. Marix flew over the Rhine and bombed the airship shed at Düsseldorf, thereby destroying the new airship *Z.IX*. On November 21st, Friedrichshafen, the great Zeppelin factory on Lake Constance, opposite the borders of Switzerland, was also bombed; and an airship then approaching completion was severely damaged. Lastly, on Christmas Day, British seaplanes carried out a daring raid on Cuxhaven, at the mouth of the River Elbe, where they intended to attack the airship sheds in that vicinity, but failed to find them.

A Succession of Mishaps

In the meantime, the German military authorities were bitterly disappointed by the relative failure of the airships in the early stages of the War. *Z.VI* was wrecked in returning from Liége; *Z.VII* was shot down in Poland; a like fate befell *Z.VIII* in Alsace; *Z.IX* had been destroyed in her shed. The upshot was that airships were taken up by the German Navy in exact proportion as they fell out of favour with the Army. In August, 1914, the Navy possessed but a single airship, *L.3*, and it was several weeks before a few more were ready for naval service with trained crews.

It cannot be too strongly emphasised that the German naval airships were not primarily intended for raiding. Their duties in connection with their fleet were infinitely more important. In particular, by maintaining a daily patrol of the Bight of Heligoland, they were rendering their Navy immense service. Without that patrol, far more British attacks would undoubtedly have been made on the German naval forces in their home waters. It was currently stated in the German Navy that one Zeppelin was worth as many as five light cruisers, and that view seems to be not far off the mark. The naval airships were sent to raid England only as a side issue—an increasingly important one, it is true—to their principal duty.[1]

During the autumn and early winter of 1914–15, the Germans had neither

[1] In the German services the early Army airships were numbered *Z.I* to *Z.XII*; and later craft were named *LZ.31* to *LZ.50*. Then came a break, and the numbers began again at *LZ.74* onwards. The Navy named their ships from *L.1* almost consecutively to *L.64*. The airships bearing numbers beginning "*SL.*" were constructed by the Schutte-Lanz firm at Mannheim; their frames were most ingeniously built of three-ply wood.

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Photo: Imperial War Museum.

THE ZEPPELIN'S "BRAIN-BOX"
The control gondola of airship *L.54* photographed during 1917. One of the later craft, *L.54* set out, with ten companions, to raid England on October 19th, but turned back owing to bad weather. She was destroyed in her shed during May, 1918, by aircraft from H.M.S. *Furious*.

energy nor material for developing an aerial campaign against England. This gave us a breathing space, and preparations to meet what was now regarded as an inevitable attempt on London were intensified. At the very outset of the War the responsibility for the air defence of London was made over to the Admiralty by the War Office.

At first sight this may seem to have been a singularly inappropriate measure. But in point of fact Lord Kitchener, who authorised the step, was unquestionably right, his reason being that the Army barely had the aerial resources necessary for action on the Western Front; whereas the Navy, which had instantly established air bases on either side of the Channel and along the eastern coast of England, was in a far better position to deal with attacks coming from overseas.

Darkening of Towns

In addition, the darkening of the towns open to nocturnal attack proceeded apace. The Home Secretary's order made under the Defence of the Realm Act, on September 17th, 1914, aimed not only at rendering London less conspicuous from the air, but also at breaking up all patches of illumination which, under the normal lighting conditions, might betray the exact position of all the more vital targets—namely, the Government offices, railway stations, bridges, and the like.

It was, indeed, hopeless to try to conceal the lights of London in any way except by total extinction; but very much could be done, not only by their reduction, but also by false lighting to disguise the topography of the city from overhead. There was, unfortunately, no method of concealing the Thames, which remained to the end a

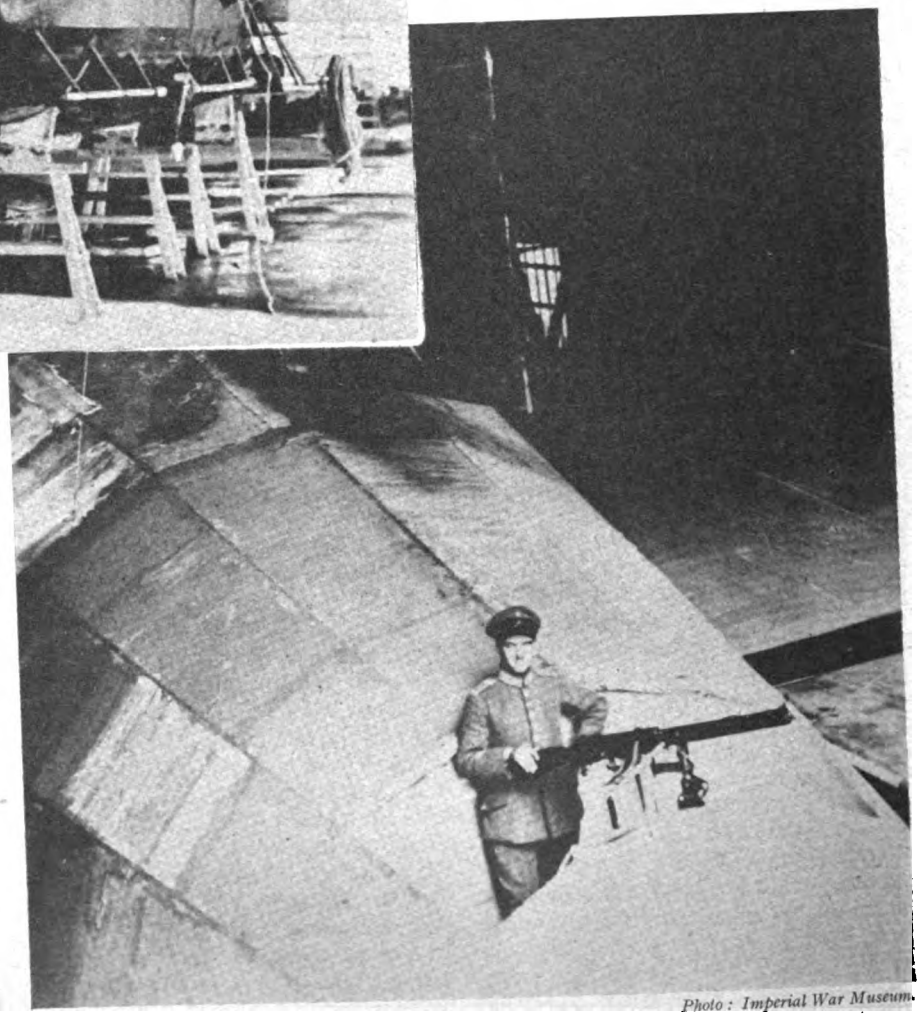

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

A ZEPPELIN MACHINE-GUNNER
As will be seen, the machine gun is placed in the upper side of the airship. The Zeppelin's great bulk and ponderous movements made her a vulnerable craft, needing but the chance ignition of her hydrogen gas to seal her fate immediately. Disregarding the relatively few Army airships, the German naval Zeppelins commissioned during the War numbered in all 61; and of these no fewer than 51 were shot down, stranded, or otherwise destroyed before the Armistice.

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winding black guide to the raiding aircraft.

The direct defence of London by means of guns and searchlights was also taken in hand. Guns were set up in Green Park, on the Tower Bridge, Cannon Street Hotel, and the Foreign Office, and at numerous other points. These were manned, day and night, by volunteers enrolled into the Royal Naval Air Service. A few aeroplanes were held in readiness to ascend and engage the raiding airships. All these measures were primitive to a degree, yet seemed the best that could be improvised at the time.

At last the expected attack materialised. Strangely enough, it was the handiwork of the German naval seaplanes in Belgium, and not of the Zeppelins. At 1 p.m. on December 21st, an enemy seaplane appeared over the Admiralty Pier at Dover, dropped two bombs into the sea, and made off. Just three days later, an aeroplane again flew over Dover, dropped a bomb (which fell among cabbages near the Castle), and escaped.

This was the very first bomb to be dropped on British soil. On Christmas Day a German seaplane, in daring fashion, flew over the Thames Estuary, passing above Sheerness at 12.35 p.m. and pushing on as far as Erith. Here it was engaged by three aeroplanes, turned back, and made good its escape. Was the enemy thinking that Christmas dinner-time would have found the defence immersed in other tasks ?

Attack on London Sanctioned

In the winter nine new German airships were taken over by the sea and land services. The Chief of the German Naval War Staff now pressed for permission to make an attack on London, which, he urged, could unquestionably be regarded as coming within the category of permissible targets. To this the Kaiser gave his assent on January 9th, stipulating that only military objectives should be attacked, and that London as a city should be left alone.

On January 19th, the airships *L.3*, *L.4*, and *L.6* left Germany on the first airship raid on England. Only two, *L.3* and *L.4*, made the Norfolk Coast, at about 8 p.m., and then, after dropping bombs at various points, reached King's Lynn, on which they unloaded their remaining missiles. Now, King's Lynn was an entirely undefended town, and so the attack caused some consternation. The airship commanders subsequently claimed that fire had been opened and a searchlight turned on to them ; but this statement cannot pass, and still less serve as an excuse for the bombing of inoffensive East Anglian villages.

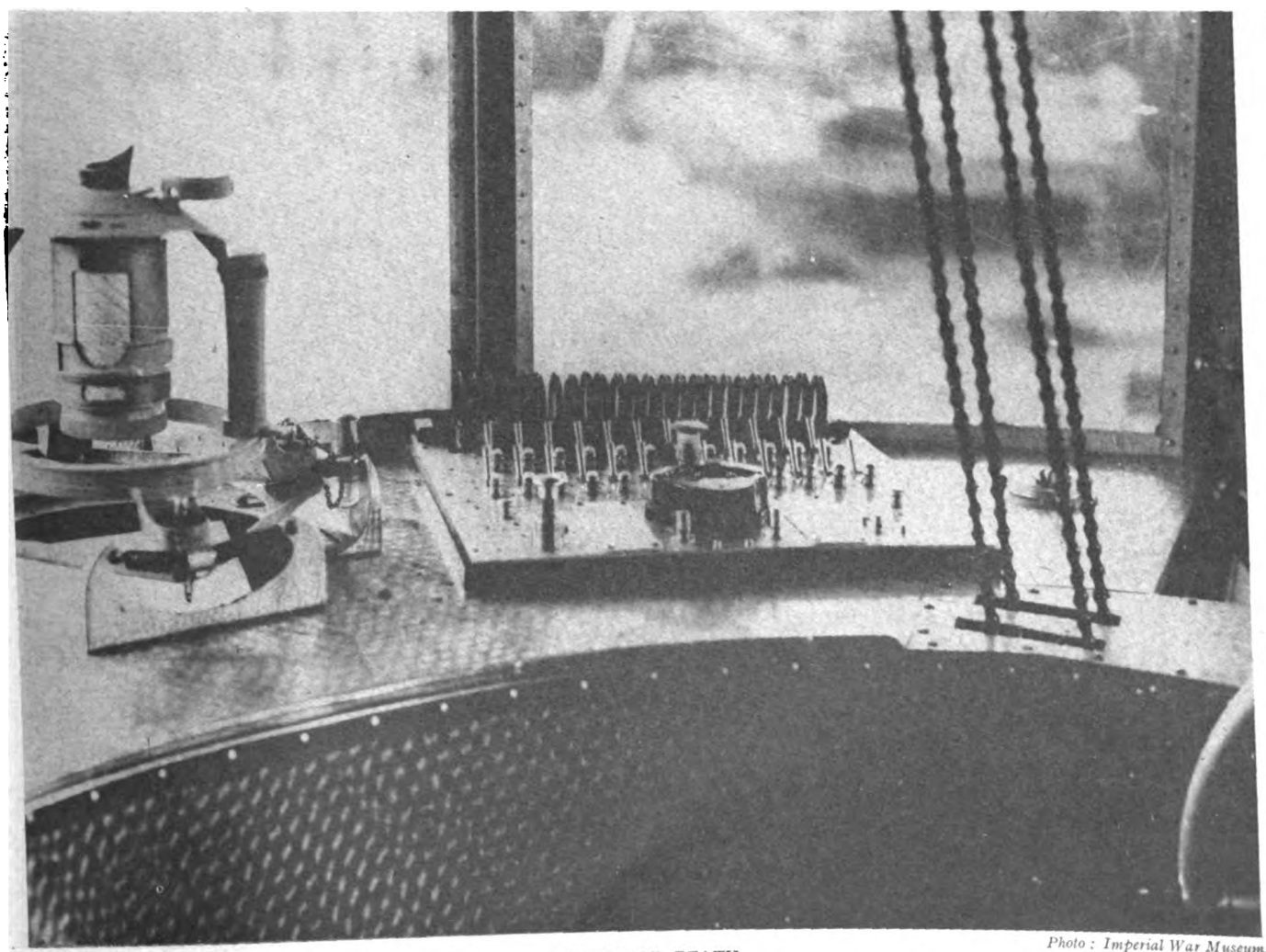

Photo : Imperial War Museum.

LEVERS OF DEATH

A close-up of the electric bomb-switches in the forward or control gondola of one of the naval Zeppelins. Altogether there were 51 airship attacks on Great Britain, as a result of which some 5,800 bombs, constituting a total weight of nearly 200 tons, were traced as having fallen on British soil. Civilian deaths totalled 498, the victims comprising 217 men, 171 women, and 110 children. Injuries amounted to 1,236—587 men, 431 women, and 218 children. Finally, 58 soldiers and sailors were killed and 121 injured, bringing the complete casualty-list resulting from Zeppelin raids to 1,913.

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Specially drawn.

OVERSEAS BADGES—FIFTH SERIES

This page completes our representative selection of Canadian badges. In the usual manner from top to bottom, across the lines, the sketches show: 1—208th Bn. Canadian Irish. 2—210th Bn. Frontiersmen, Western Canada. 3—214th Bn. Saskatchewan. 4—216th Bn. Bantams. 5—218th Bn. Edmonton. 6—221st Canadian Bn. 7—222nd Canadian Bn. 8—223rd Bn. Canadian Scandinavians. 9—224th Forestry Bn. 10—229th Bn. South Saskatchewan. 11—230th Bn. French-Canadian Forestry. 12—236th Canadian Bn. 13—238th Forestry Bn. 14—241st Bn. Canadian Scottish Borderers. 15—242nd Forestry Bn. 16—248th Canadian Bn. 17—250th Bn. Winnipeg "White Eagles." 18—253rd Bn. Queen's University Highlanders. 19—254th Bn. Quinte's Own. 20—256th Canadian Bn.

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OVERSEAS BADGES—SIXTH SERIES

Specially drawn.

The badges shown in this plate are those of Australian and New Zealand formations. From left to right, the top row first: 1—Australian General Service. 2—Aus. Army Medical Corps. 3—5th Aus. Light Horse. 4—6th Aus. Light Horse. 5—13th Aus. Light Horse. 6—New Zealand General Service. 7—Ditto. 8—N.Z. Staff Corps. 9—N.Z. Permanent Staff. 10—N.Z. Army Ordnance Corps. 11—N.Z. Pioneers. 12—2nd Queen Alexandra's (Wellington West Coast) Mounted Rifles. 13—Canterbury Yeomanry Cavalry. 14—Auckland Mounted Rifles. 15—4th Waikato Mounted Rifles. 16—5th M.R. Otago Hussars. 17—Wellington East Coast Mounted Rifles. 18—Nelson—Marlborough Mounted Rifles.

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The raid showed clearly that aerial warfare must lead to promiscuous bombing. This had two important results. Firstly, it led to an immediate increase in the anti-aircraft armament of England, both fixed and mobile, with a considerable extension of the places defended. Secondly, it stimulated a more thorough application of the precautions of passive defence, such as the reduction of lighting, throughout the country.

On the German side efforts were made to renew the idea of a raid on London, and the Kaiser with some reluctance gave way to the extent of sanctioning the bombing of the docks and factories of the capital as far west as the Tower. But these attempts led only to the loss of *L.8* in Belgium on her return from an unsuccessful raiding effort.

By the middle of April, Commander Heinrich Mathy, certainly the most daring and competent of the German airship commanders, set out from North Germany in his new airship, *L.9*, on April 14th. He made Flamborough Head and then turned north, steering a winding course over the densely populated Tyneside area. By a miracle his 10 H.E. and 50 incendiary bombs did virtually no damage. It was assumed that this result could be largely attributed to the new lighting restrictions, so lighting was still further reduced.

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

IN THE PILOT'S CABIN

A photograph of the navigating cabin in the German naval airship *L.59*. This Zeppelin, a characteristic example of the later type, is not only identical in construction with many which raided England, but is in fact the airship which—as those who have read the chapter on the campaign in East Africa will no doubt recollect—was despatched from Yamboli, Bulgaria, in October, 1917, with medical and other supplies for the troops under General von Lettow-Vorbeck. She was recalled when she had got as far as Khartoum, having made a non-stop flight thither.

Undiscouraged by Failures

This supposed success fired three of Mathy's colleagues to emulate his cruise. Next day, April 15th, three ships, *L.5*, *L.6*, and *L.7*, set out to attack the Humber. But the airships again struck East Anglia, and, after some promiscuous bombing, returned home, having achieved no practical result and inflicted little damage. The airships seem to have lost their bearings, and were gravely hampered in their navigation by the more intensive lighting restrictions.

While the German Navy was thus experimenting in raiding England, the Army was not to be left behind. On March 8th, the *Z.XII* left Belgium for London. She met fog, however, and was compelled to return, bombing Calais on her way, and was then badly damaged in landing. At the same time two other military ships, *Z.X* and *LZ.35*, went out to bomb Paris. *Z.X* crashed on her return. *LZ.35* was also wrecked, three weeks later.

But the Germans were not to be discouraged. Another new military ship, *LZ.38*, now made, from the sheds at Brussels, a series of raids in which she was gradually feeling her way towards London. On April 29th she set out and flew over Ipswich and Bury St. Edmunds, dropping some 80 H.E. and incendiary bombs. A few houses were burnt in the towns attacked, but no other damage resulted.

On May 10th, *LZ.38* attacked Southend and the mouth of the Thames; and before leaving she dropped a bomb to which was attached a placard inscribed "You English. We have come, and will come again soon. Kill or cure. German." Some 100 incendiary bombs were dropped on Southend, but only small damage was caused. On May 17th *LZ.38* reappeared at 1.40 a.m. over Margate, and then flew across Kent towards Dover.

There the ship was caught and held in the beams of our searchlights. This was encouraging to the defence, since

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she was the first raider to be thus caught by the lights. Yet once again, on May 26th, she flew over Southend, dropping 70 bombs on the district. Luckily only six casualties were occasioned. The commander of *LZ.38*, Captain Linnarz,[1] now felt confident that he could navigate his ship safely over London, and return. On May 31st he set out on his adventure, which, from his point of view, was entirely successful.

Raid on Stoke Newington

Appearing over Stoke Newington at 11.20 p.m., he steered roughly southwards, following the Kingsland Road and bombing as he went. Thirty explosive and 90 incendiary bombs were dropped. Fortunately, however, the airship navigated at an immense height, and her aim was bad, the bombs nearly all falling into gardens. The raider was hardly seen or heard, and so was entirely unmolested. Considering this fact, the damage caused by the raid was small, amounting to well under £20,000.

These exploits of *LZ.38* fired the naval airships to fresh deeds of daring, if not of chivalry, in the raiding line. By this time there is no doubt that the difficulty of traversing the North Sea had been largely overcome by the application of directional radio-telegraphy to airship navigation. Already in April the aircraft had been guided by wireless signals. But now the system was rapidly being perfected, and in all subsequent raids over England the raiding ships were to rely very greatly on this wireless control.

[1] Linnarz, as related in an earlier chapter of TWENTY YEARS AFTER, was subsequently brought down with *LZ.85* at Salonica by the guns of H.M.S. *Agamemnon*.

Photo: Sport & General.

A HOUSE IN YARMOUTH

"St. Peter's House," Great Yarmouth, after a bomb had completely wrecked it. This port, together with King's Lynn, Snettisham, and other Norfolk towns and villages, was a victim on January 19th, 1915, of the first air-raid ever carried out against Great Britain. *L.3* and *L.4*, the German Navy's earliest airships, were responsible.

Photo: Sport & General.

IN KING'S LYNN

King's Lynn suffered more severely than anywhere in the first air-raid, and it was the bombing of this undefended town which first informed the public that a new epoch in the Christian art of war had begun. The total casualties in the raid were 4 civilians killed (including 2 women), 15 civilians injured including 4 women and 2 children), and one soldier injured. [Above is a view of a bombed house in Bentinck Street, King's Lynn.

Fortunately for London, the directional stations were so placed that their readings were no longer very accurate when guiding airships approaching the English coast south of the Humber; indeed, for attacks on London this inaccuracy increased until the guidance became of doubtful advantage.

On June 4th, *L.10* and *SL.3* left Germany to attack, but failed. A military raid was planned in conjunction with the naval attempt, but was foiled by weather. On her return to Belgium, *LZ.37* was destroyed in mid-air by Flight Sub-Lieutenant Warneford, who dropped a bomb on her back; and a few days later *LZ.38* was destroyed in her shed by naval pilots from Dunkirk. These various mishaps put the German Army airships under a cloud from which they never properly emerged.

On June 15th, *L.10* and *L.11* left for England once more. *L.10* made Tyneside, and set about bombing Wallsend—still a blaze of light at the time. Under ideal conditions she next bombed Palmer's shipbuilding yard, inflicting some 100 casualties and doing much damage. This raid provoked a great outburst of feeling, and the anti-aircraft defences of Tyneside were greatly strengthened. But as yet the problem of flying at night presented such diffi-

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Photo: Imperial War Museum.

ON THE ROAD TO CAMBRAI

A stretch of the Bapaume—Cambrai road where it passes through the village of Boursies, exactly midway between the two towns. This place was among three villages on the highway captured by the British on April 9th, 1917; and on December 10th following, during the Battle of Cambrai, we mastered a strong German post just east of the hamlet. The above photograph was taken on November 29th, 1917.

culties that the Admiralty were loath to permit any attempt being made to meet the Zeppelin menace by night-flying aircraft.

Historic Buildings to be Spared

So far the German airships were having things their own way, and this fact encouraged the German Naval Staff to plan an aerial campaign against London. Admiral Bachmann, the Naval Chief of Staff, approached General von Falkenhayn, the Army Chief of Staff, with a view to having all restrictions removed in the matter of an attack on London. There was a lengthy discussion, and it was not until July 20th that the Kaiser raised his embargo on unrestricted raids on London, with the proviso that historic buildings should be spared.

Meanwhile an improved type of airship was being delivered. With dirigibles of this class—*L.11* onwards—a raid was started on August 9th. Virtually, it failed. Every airship made England, but none came within reach of the capital. *L.12* came to grief and fell into the sea at Ostend on her return.

But the raid was repeated on August 17th, when *L.10, 11, 13*, and *14* attacked. Of these *L.10* alone reached the metropolis—the first naval ship to do so—and bombed the eastern suburbs.

The military airship service was by now sufficiently recovered to take a hand in the game. Three Zeppelins made for London, and of these *LZ.74* dropped the first bomb on the city. Its commander, however, had fortunately unloaded most of his cargo on Cheshunt, which he must have mistaken for the centre of the metropolis.

This success once more stirred the naval airships to activity. On September 8th, three were sailing west, of which *L.9* was heading for the Midlands, the remaining two for London. *L.9* bombed Skinningrove benzol works, which had two miraculous escapes. *L.14* did nothing. But *L.13*, commanded by the redoubtable Mathy, bombed the city with such effect that the damage was assessed at over £530,000. Mathy appeared at 9,000 feet, and coolly went on his way, climbing to 11,000 feet to avoid gunfire, which he later reported as being so intense that "in future, with clear sky, airships would be able to remain only a short while over the city, and that it would be hardly possible to seek out special objectives."[1]

Germany Sends a Ham-bone

It was on this occasion that a large ham-bone was dropped from the ship, bearing on one side a caricature of

1 Groos, *Der Krieg zur See*, iv, p. 285.

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Sir Edward Grey, and on the other the legend, "A memento from starving Germany."

One or two tentative raids were next attempted, but it was not until October 13th that the final and most important raid of 1915 fell upon London. Five airships left Germany—*L.11*, *13*, *14*, *15*, and *16*—and crossed the coast at Bacton, in Norfolk. *L.11* quickly unloaded her bombs and went home. *L.15*, making her maiden flight, was navigated with great judgment over the outskirts of London, and reserved her bombs for the centre of the metropolis. Her commander steered over the Strand, damaging the old stained-glass window of Lincoln's Inn Chapel.[1] One of his bombs fell in front of the Lyceum Theatre, killing 17 and injuring 21 people. In the City he did more damage, and in all caused over 100 casualties.

[1] The stonework of the chapel shows the scars to this day.

L.16 miscalculated her course and bombed Hertford. After sailing over Kent and Surrey, *L.14* came over Croydon, doing little damage, and there all but collided with *L.13*, then on her way to Woolwich. This affair led to a court of honour on the airships' return to Germany.

L.13 followed a remarkable course. Passing west of London, Mathy went down to Guildford. Thence he steered for Woolwich, nearly colliding with *L.14*, as stated above. At Woolwich he bombed the barracks. This raid, in proportion to the number of ships and bombs dropped, was the most destructive—though not the most costly—of the War.

After this effort, the weather prevented any further airship attacks on England; for three and a half months the defence was never called upon to meet a raid. But there was much anxiety as to what the future might bring. The slender anti-aircraft resources of the country were increased, and concentrated for the defence of London: the outlying defences, in particular, being strengthened, for it was decided to keep the raiders at a distance from the city.

A Very Ambitious Affair

Then on January 31st, 1916, there took place one of the most ambitious and most carefully-planned German airship raids ever conducted. Nine ships participated—*L.11* to *L.21*, less *L.12* and *L.18*. Luckily the naviga-

Photo: A. J. Insall.

SPACIOUS AND TREE-FRINGED

On March 21st, 1918, Boursies was just inside the British lines, and was held by the 51st Division of the IV Corps. It is described by the *Official History* as having been for some time past "the constant target of enemy shells." The trenches, too, which lay exposed on the hillside, had been pounded to a miserable state. Aided by a lifting of the fog, which enabled our guns to break up enemy concentrations, the Highland infantry were able to hold Boursies until 10.40 a.m., after which they manned a wired trench behind the village and prevented the Germans from emerging "at a time when this check was of supreme importance."

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tional difficulties proved so considerable that the commanders had but a poor idea of where they were going. The original idea had been the bombardment of Liverpool, Manchester, and the industrial towns of Yorkshire.

In point of fact, the airships made their landfall too far south, and never recovered from that error. They claimed on their return to have bombed Liverpool and Manchester twice each, and Sheffield three times, while four of them asserted that they had reached the west coast. These claims are utterly groundless. Not a bomb fell on any of those towns, and the furthest point that was made by any airship was Shrewsbury.

Fog, mist, snow-cloud, and ice forming on the hulls greatly hampered the airships. Three developed engine trouble, and came overland only a short way into East Anglia, returning home before midnight. *L.13* commanded by Mathy, lost her way, flew over Derby and Stoke-on-Trent, and finally bombed Scunthorpe in Lincolnshire. *L.11* is stated, on German authority, to have dropped no bombs at all. Though claiming to have made the west coast, she never reached it, and turned back after wandering over the Peak.

L.21 reached the congested area between Wolverhampton and Birmingham, and there dropped her bombs. Thirty-three people, including the Mayoress of Walsall, were killed, but the material damage was not great. *L.19* also appears to have reached and bombed the same area, but to have inflicted less damage. Her return journey to Germany ended in disaster. Leaving England as late as 5.25 a.m., she fell into difficulties owing to engine trouble, and, finally, to petrol failure. At nightfall on February 1st she was sighted, and search was made for her.

It was not until the 3rd, however, that the trawler *King Stephen* came into Grimsby stating that at 7 a.m. on the 2nd she had found *L.19* floating, but in a sinking condition, 120 miles east of the Spurn Light. The captain of the airship had implored the *King Stephen* to take the crew off, but the skipper had declined, fearing that his own small crew might be overpowered by the more numerous Germans, and his steamer taken off to Germany. By the time he had made his report it was too late, and the airship had disappeared.

Attack on Derby

L.14 had reached Shrewsbury, where the ground-fog was such that her commander had no idea where he was. Turning back, he attacked Derby. Some material damage was done to railway and other works, but casualties were surprisingly few. From Derby *L.14* went straight home.

L.15 steered a course which is difficult to follow. Her commander claimed to have been over Liverpool and Birkenhead. He was undoubtedly over Burton, which he bombed before turning back. Burton had, indeed, suffered three separate attacks that night, and,

Photo: A. P., Paris.

MARQUION CHURCH

Even shell-fire could not wholly demolish the massive old tower of this church; for the photograph shows it on September 28th, 1918, at the close of its ordeal. Marquion, a fair-sized village, stands on the Cambrai—Arras road, 10 km. north-west of the former town. When the enemy withdrew to the Hindenburg Line early in 1917, the village, although still in his possession, came within easy distance of our long-range guns, and suffered accordingly. There is one British cemetery, containing 23 United Kingdom and 45 Canadian fallen.

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although the casualties were well under 100, the structural damage suffered by the town was serious.

The opposition to the raiders was practically nil; the affair had shown clearly that German airships might come and go as they chose over the greater part of England. To the authorities, the attacks came as an unpleasant shock, for popular clamour in favour of a more efficient anti-aircraft defence grew insistent. But the problem was to find the armament.

The German raids up to this point of the War—that is, February, 1916—should be studied in detail, in order to understand how the country supported the new type of warfare. It may confidently be asserted that the British people refused to be panicked into anything which might impede the conduct of the War as a whole; but to a country by tradition so entirely immune to any semblance of invasion, the airship attacks came as an unpleasant surprise, and also revealed the difficulty confronting the fighting Services when brought up against a new form of warfare. This difficulty was greatly increased by the past reluctance of the nation to envisage additional financial burdens for defence, as well as by the rooted objection to undertaking any new military obligation.

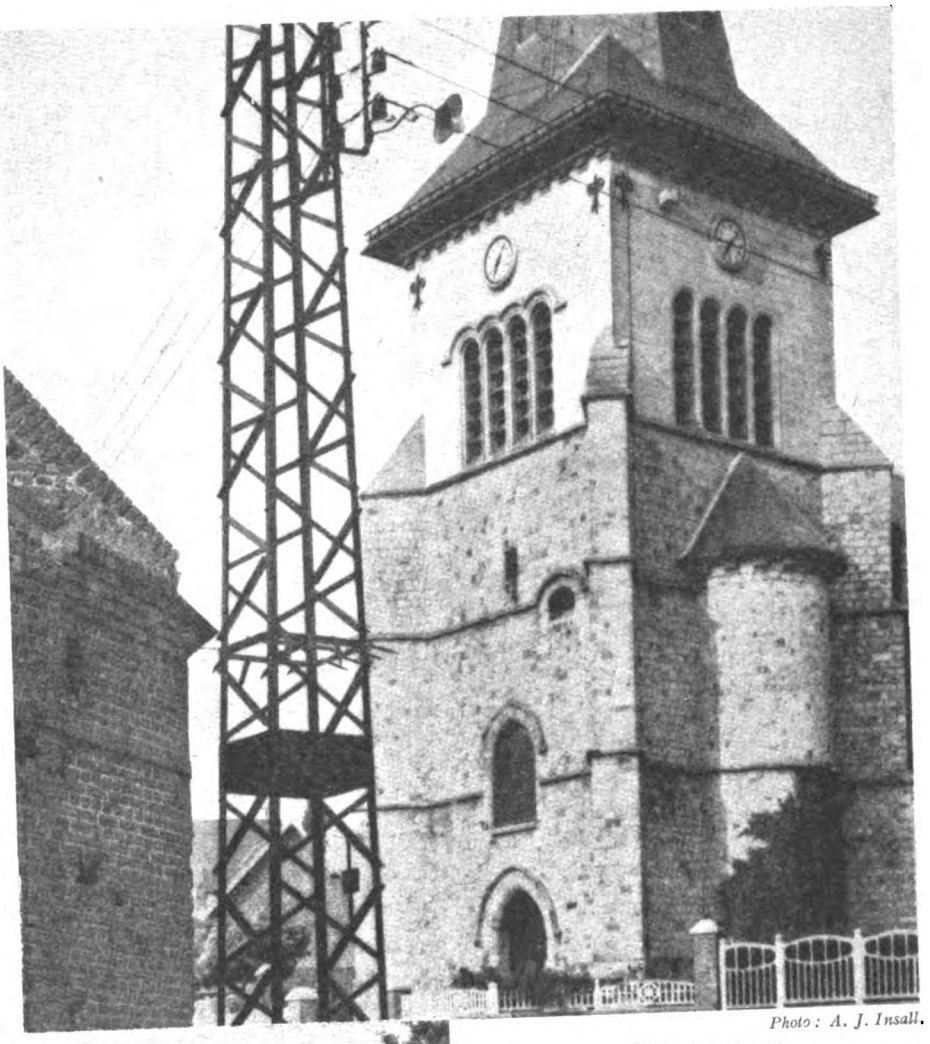

Photo: A. J. Insall.

WHOLE AGAIN

Fortunately for lovers of the mediæval, Marquion's old tower was considered not to be beyond restoration, and has accordingly been repaired as shown here, much of the original work still surviving.

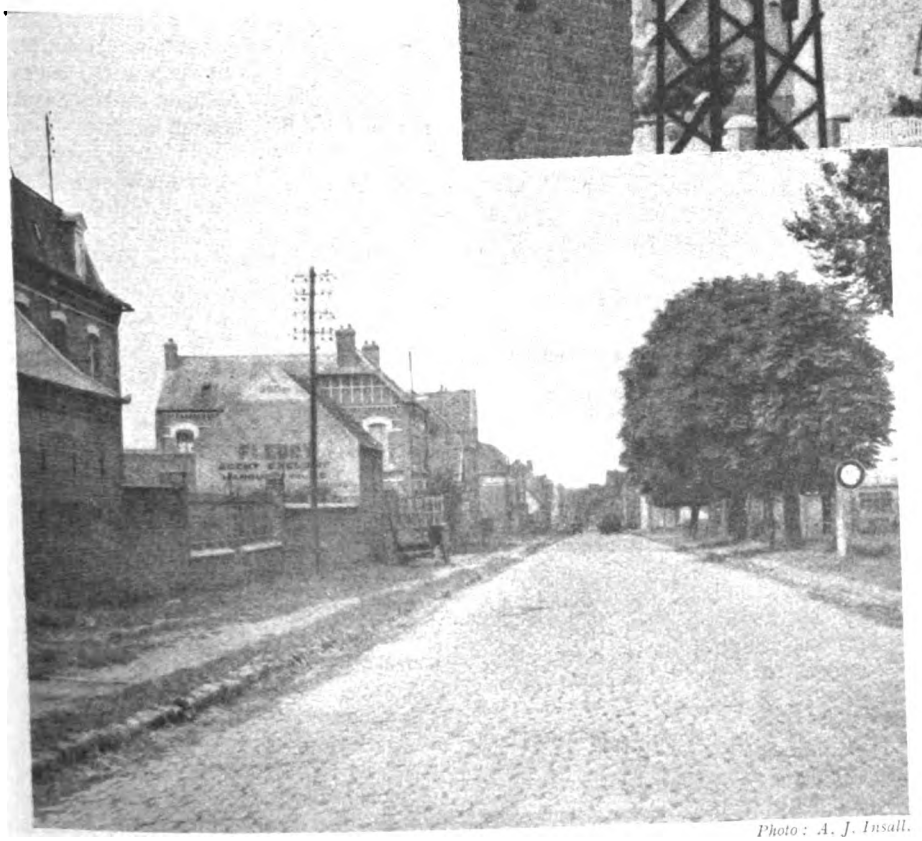

Photo: A. J. Insall.

MARQUION VILLAGE

Modern Marquion is a thriving community of some 860 souls, and includes one or two fine mansions. Its War history, owing to its long term in the uninterrupted possession of the Germans, is not very eventful. Enemy troops entered it at the beginning of October, 1914, and their successors were driven forth by the 1st Canadian and 11th Divisions on September 27, 1918.

The result was that England had been caught by the Germans utterly unprepared to withstand this form of attack. That its effect should have been no greater than it was, stands to the marked credit of the British character. Yet it has to be remembered that England enjoyed the greatest good fortune when the small nature of the damage and casualties inflicted by the airships is considered. One has only to imagine the moral effect, throughout the country, of the fearful explosions which would have taken place on September 8th at Skinningrove, had the bombs of *L.9* not failed by a hairbreadth to set off one of the greatest masses of benzol ever collected in one place.

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Photo: Imperial War Museum.

IN A CROYDON GARDEN

No. 33, Leslie Park Road, Croydon, after the final and most important raid of 1915 on London. This attack was carried out on the night of October 13th 14th by Zeppelins *L.11*, *L.13*, *L.14*, *L.15*, and *L.16*. *L.14*, which had already raided England three times, and was to visit Lincolnshire once and Scotland twice during the following year, was responsible for the Croydon damage. While over the district she nearly collided with her colleague *L.13*, piloted by the famous Mathy.

Opportunities Thrown Away

The good fortune that Britain enjoyed was great, for the German airships during the space of one year had held the whole of the Midlands at their mercy. Yet they had persisted in concentrating against London, where the exiguous anti-aircraft armament of the country had more or less been concentrated. For some years Germany had slowly developed a new weapon of war, which this country was totally unprepared to counter; but when it came to applying the novelty, German methods proved faulty, and the attempted combination of naval and military air services proved a failure.

To that fact London owes her easy escape. Combined air attacks, properly spaced and co-ordinated by the two hostile services, might have proved far more destructive. The conclusion cannot be avoided that the enemy authorities, having once committed themselves to Zeppelin warfare, failed to exploit it to the full.[1]

Nevertheless, the psychological effect of the raids was considerable. The airship menace was assuming serious proportions, and if it were allowed to grow and dislocate the industrial life of the nation, as seemed possible, there was no means of foretelling what the ultimate effect might be on the outcome of the War. Military headquarters in France could form little accurate conception of how great a shock these raids could be to an urban population powerless to meet them.

Even in London, which was not altogether defenceless and had accepted the raids with marked composure, this state of affairs was not one which could be allowed to continue. Soldiers coming home from France might say to stay-at-home relatives, "Well, now you see what we have to put up with in the trenches. What is it to you to have a few bombs dropped round you once a month? Just think of what it must be to have the things going off by the thousand day in, day out, for months on end!"

Problem of Women and Children

That line of argument will not hold. Troops in the trenches were generally keyed up to the ordeal; soldiers in their regimental life acquire a moral solidity, owing to their environment and to the force of comradeship, which enables them to suffer in the ranks that which they could never endure in civilian life. Moreover, it was the question of the women and the children which rendered the problem truly imperative of solution.

It was time to reorganise the entire machinery of air defence, and to adapt it to meet a new type of warfare. Two essentials were needed: firstly, a rapidity of thought and of communications that was, at bottom, novel in war; secondly, an adaptation of all the existing civilian organisations to the purposes of air defence. New methods of command had to be found, which would take advantage of every available service—police, railway staffs, fire brigades—to co-operate in the defeat of the airships.

The first and most urgent task was to remodel the central command of the anti-aircraft defences. At this time the Admiralty was still in full control. But it was now perfectly clear that this department of State was not really in a position to fulfil such a function. Although the War Office was contributing a fair share towards the common end, there was needed more singleness of command, and a far greater simplification of methods, than had as yet been brought to the task.

Accordingly, towards the end of 1915, Mr. Balfour, then First Lord of the Admiralty, began to urge the transfer of the anti-aircraft defence of Great Britain to the War Office. Guns and lights were accordingly handed over, but

[1] *Official History: War in the Air*, iii, p. 149.

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it was not until February 16th, 1916, that, after some vacillation, the change in responsibility as regarded London was wholly effected. That affecting the remainder of Great Britain followed soon after.

Organisation of Air Defence

The new commander of the anti-aircraft defence was Lord French, the recently-created commander-in-chief of all the forces at home. A special branch of his staff was constituted to deal with air defence, and the country was re-allotted into air-defence areas, some eight in number. In a species of warfare where seconds are of extreme importance, the system of communications by which command was exercised had to be reorganised to suit the new conditions: post office telephones as a whole were made part of the defence scheme, and every railway station and signal box was given facilities for sending instant information of enemy aircraft. In short, a system of command came to be devised which could control guns and aeroplanes over enormous distances at an instant's warning.

The extinction of lights was to be enforced with increasing thoroughness. At first, in 1914, the lights had been merely screened against the sky; but this method resulted in throwing pools of illumination on the roadway, which may even have assisted the enemy pilots. As time went on, the process of darkening had grown more drastic and thorough. But London was never really disguised, and if the raiders elected to risk a clear, moonlit night, they still had the reflections on the Thames and on the various great water surfaces, such as the Lea Valley reservoirs, to guide them.

The difficulty of effectively controlling lights persisted to the end of the War. There were individuals, and indeed entire towns, which clamoured for a complete extinction of lights. Other people and other towns professed indifference to such matters, claiming that the only protection lay in more guns, aircraft, and searchlights. In the

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

AFTER THE BALL WAS OVER

The scene in Princes Street, E., after the raid referred to on the opposite page. In this case the airship responsible was *L.15*, which was making her maiden flight. She was piloted with considerable skill over the suburbs of London, reserving her bombs for the centre of the metropolis. Her course led her above the Strand, and the damage done by one of her missiles to the chapel of Lincoln's Inn is traceable in the stonework to this day. Another bomb fell outside the Lyceum Theatre, causing 38 casualties; and more than 100 casualties, with extensive damage, were later caused in the City.

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former category, Norwich may be cited as an example. This city, of course, lay right in the track of at least two Zeppelin raids out of three. Yet it was never once bombed throughout the War.

Fined for Striking Matches

Local opinion was so explicit about the question of obscuring lights, that men were even fined in the police courts for striking matches in the street to light their pipes—although there might not be a German raider within 200 miles of the town at the moment. It escaped the comprehension of these enthusiasts that, lying as it does in a river valley, with certain types of soil around it, Norwich is covered on still nights under a veil of mist, which probably concealed it from the sight of the raiders.

Stories and complaints about motor-car headlamps being used by enemy agents to direct the raiding airships over England were rife until the Armistice, though police and military investigations of a minute nature never established that there existed even a flimsy foundation for such stories. Only in one case, which was minutely examined by magistrates, police detectives, and military intelligence officers working in common, could a prosecution so much as be contemplated; and then it was eventually abandoned.

Still, as much with a view to pacifying public opinion as anything else, drastic orders for the reduction of motor-car lamps were enforced; for it was soon found that whenever an air raid was impending, the entire civilian population was only too ready to extinguish or darken every source of light.

Railways were another and greater source of difficulty, for there is reason to believe that raiding aircraft could well direct their movements over England by the railway tracks, and by such light as was emitted from trains in normal operation. Nearly every express train travelling at night could be distinguished from the air, owing to the fiery plume which seemed to stream from the engine funnel, and to the reflected glow coming from railway-carriage windows.

Endless precautions were adopted to mitigate this danger: reduction of speed

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

IN UNION STREET, BURTON-ON-TRENT

This photograph was taken after the attack of January 31st, 1916, which the writer of the accompanying chapter calls "one of the most ambitious and most carefully planned German airship raids ever conducted." Nine Zeppelins participated, of which three, *L.15*, *L.19*, and *L.20*, made successive attacks on Burton. Structural damage was serious, but casualties fortunately totalled under 100. In all, the raid was responsible for 70 deaths and 113 cases of injury. *L.19* fell into the sea on her way home, and it was her crew whom the skipper of the British trawler *King Stephen* refused to rescue when he came upon the sinking airship.

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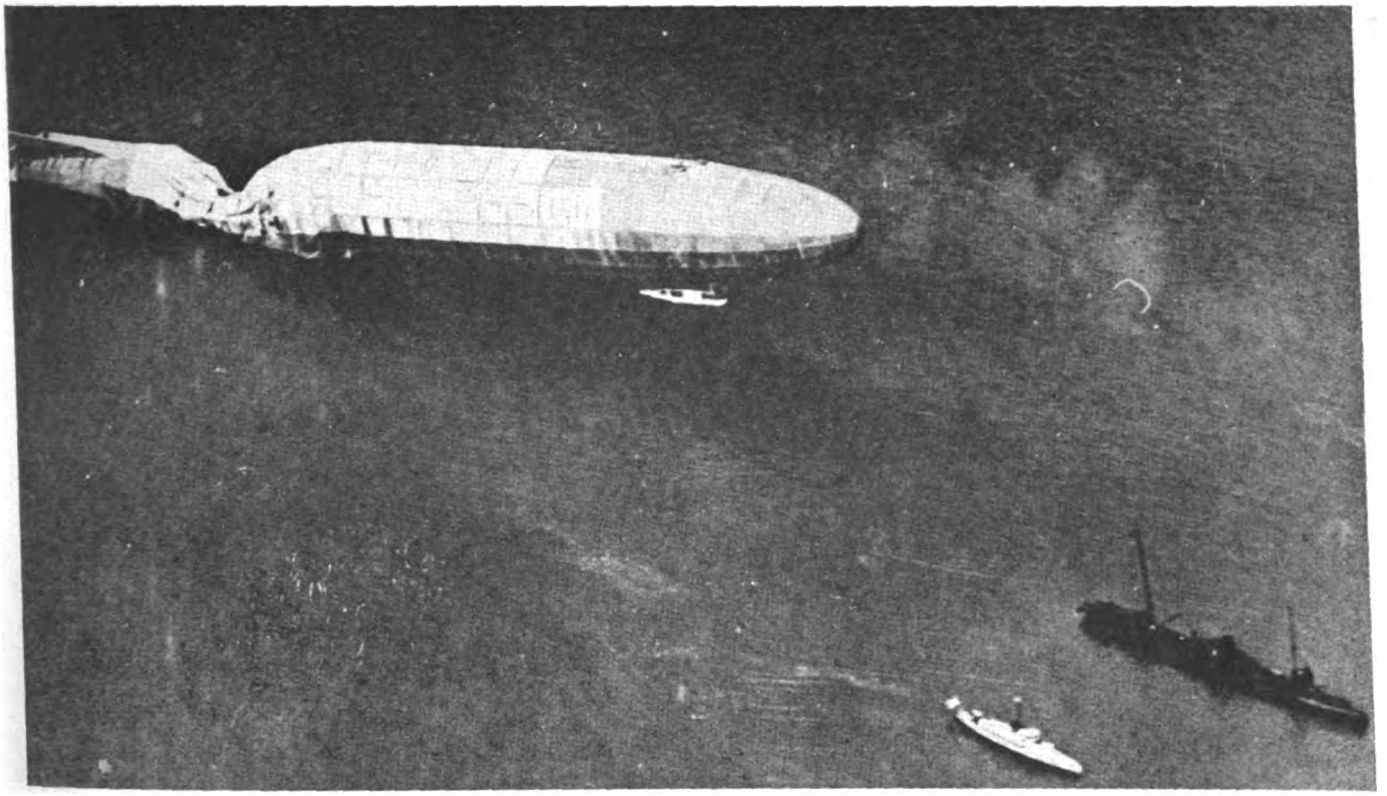

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

IN THE NORTH SEA

Here we see the fate of *L.12* after she had been damaged by gunfire, and finally destroyed by aeroplanes, at the end of a raid upon Yorkshire, Suffolk, and Dover, on August 9th, 1915. This venture constituted a try-out of a new type of airship; but it was virtually a failure, although casualties amounted to 17 killed and 21 wounded. A German destroyer is seen on her way back to Ostend with *L.12's* crew.

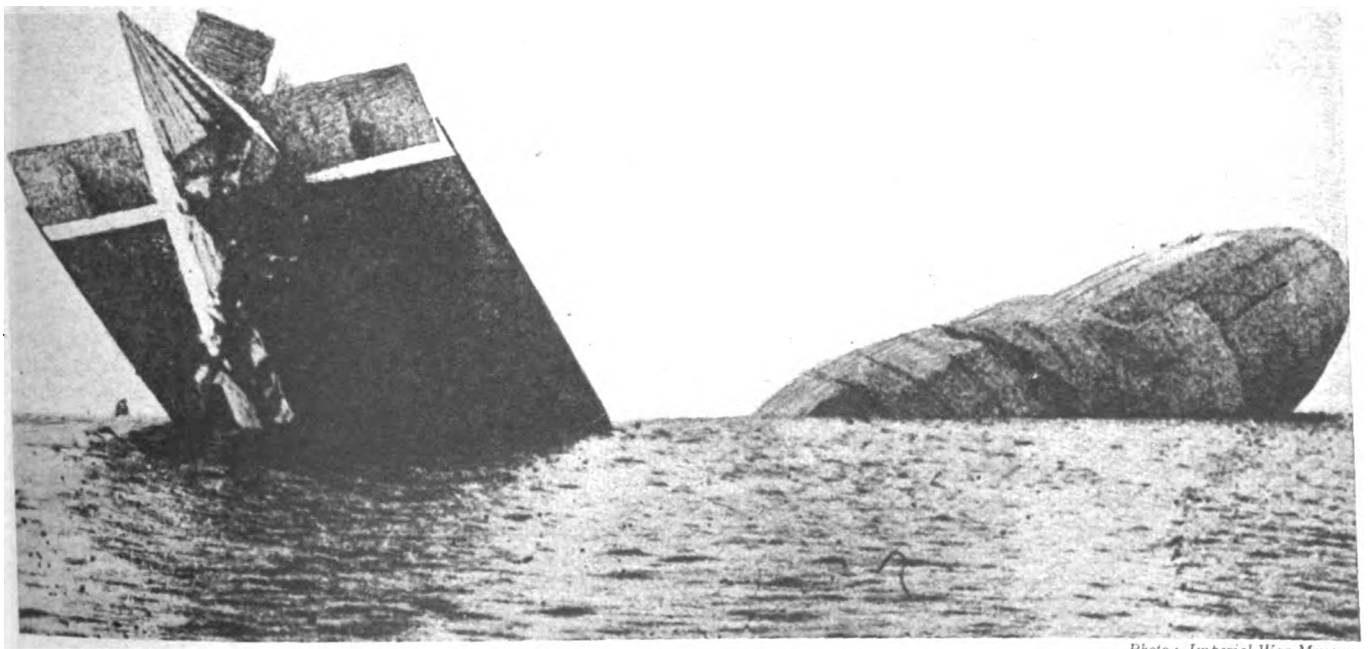

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

THE END OF *L.15*

After her exploits on October 13th, 1915, *L.15* did not raid England until March 31st, 1916, when she met her doom. Pursued by aeroplanes, and hit by the anti-aircraft gun at Purfleet, she was making for home when her back broke, and she fell, as shown here, into the Thames Estuary, where her crew were picked up. She was the first Zeppelin to be brought down by the British defences.

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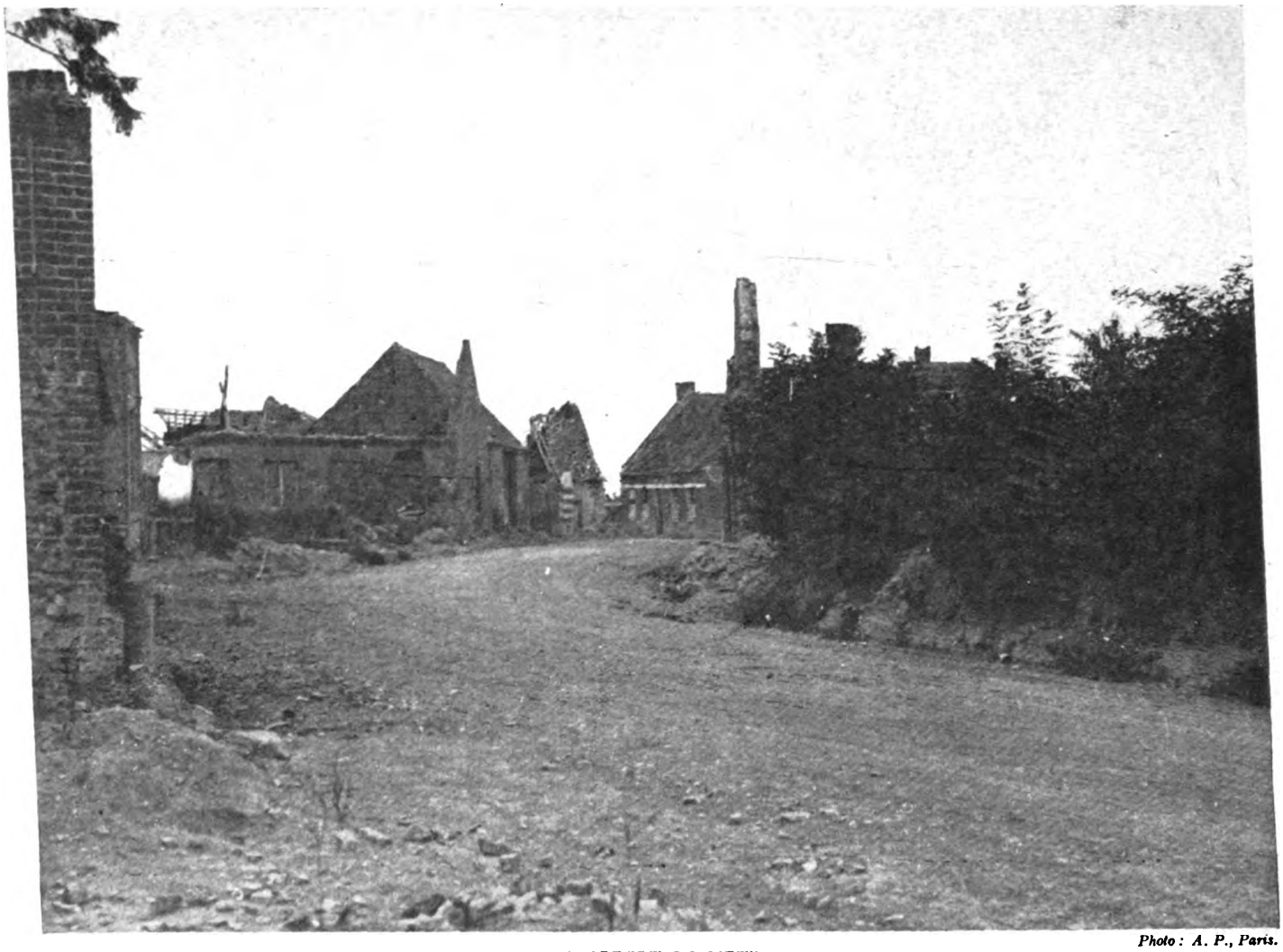

Photo: A. P., Paris.

A STREET IN METZ

Not, of course, *the* Metz, great city and one-time capital of Lorraine, but the modest village of Metz-en-Couture, on the Péronne—Cambrai road between Fins and Trescault, and just south of Havrincourt Wood. Like its illustrious namesake, this Metz experienced more than one term of occupation by the Germans, the first enduring from 1914 until the expulsion of the invader by the British on April 4th, 1917. The above photograph was taken three months later.

of trains, entire suspension of traffic in certain cases, extinction of station lights, and much else. These may have been effective from a defence point of view, but they were, also, of no little value to the enemy, owing to the disturbance caused in normal transport, particularly of munitions.

Electric "Arc-ing" on Tramways

The regulations and restrictions applying to main railway lines were also applied to electric suburban routes, as well as to tramways. In the case of both the latter, endless complaints concerning the "arc-ing" on such lines (i.e. the intermittent flashes caused by faulty contact between pick-up arm and conductor-rail or wire) gradually compelled the authorities to take more and more steps to restrict traffic in the event of air raids.

In the end, as the War went on, it was found that electric-train and tram drivers would even refuse to work on "air-raid nights," so that measures had to be instituted to keep compulsory "slow-motion" services going, in order to evacuate the crowds attempting to leave any seemingly threatened area.

During the first two years of the struggle, official warnings of impending air raids had been thought unnecessary, and too difficult to publish and enforce. But as munition works increased in numbers, and had to be kept running at night, it was at length recognised that such warnings were essential, in order to prevent workers from abandoning their factories. So the "Air Raid Warning" system of 1916 came to be instituted, and was perfected as time went on. How many Londoners must there be who can still remember the warning maroons, and the more welcome "All Clear" bugles, of 1918?

All this complicated system of air defence was neither imagined nor set in motion without much thought and many errors. It can be said that the organisation of the air-defence system, of London in particular and of the whole country in general, took some three years to elaborate. It is as well to recall these facts, since it is too readily forgotten what aerial defence really entails. And this problem must be faced, since aerial warfare possesses a "nuisance value" to the attacking side which is out of all proportion to the size of the attacking instrument.

At the present day people are far too prone to overlook, if not to make light of, the scale of organisation and military resources which any efficient passive air defence must possess before the re-

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quirements of the more offensive side of air power can be satisfied. In no aspect of war can public opinion make itself more vocal and more of a hindrance to those very authorities who are anxious to save the country from protracted suffering and unnecessary warlike effort.

Guns and Searchlights Increased

With this reorganisation of air defence under Lord French, there also took place a considerable increase in the output of guns and searchlights ; so that in the end the country could be regarded as more-or-less adequately armed to resist the airship menace. At the same time the supply of R.F.C. squadrons, armed with a suitable type of machine, was increased ; more important still, the pilots were trained and the aerodromes prepared for night flying. As a climax to these preparations, an incendiary bullet designed to ignite the hydrogen gas of the airships was invented and brought into use.

The reorganisation did not bear fruit at once. But during 1916 every raid showed that the risks to the raiding ships were growing greater—that is, that the defence was growing more effective.

The first raid attempted by the Germans after the assumption of responsibility by Lord French took place on March 5th. Three airships left Germany to bomb England in connection with an attempt by some light surface craft to raid the Firth of Forth. Running into a north-westerly wind and snow-showers, the airship commanders steered for the Tyne, but actually made Flamborough Head. *L.14* then bombed Hull at midnight. The town, covered with snow, lay defenceless—a perfect target at the mercy of the airship, which sheered off after unloading her bombs.

L.11 followed her leader, and repeated the bombing. *L.13* made a remarkable flight. Caught by the wind, she traversed England above Lincoln and Newark to Sheerness. With one engine out of action, and over-weighted with snow, she then dropped her bombs, as well as her ballast, and with difficulty got back to an airship shed at Namur.

The bombing of Hull led to considerable agitation in and out of Parliament ; and it was agreed that the defences must be strengthened throughout England. But before great progress could be made, an intensive series of raids was planned by the German Naval Command. The first took place on March

Photo : A. J. Insall.

AT THE BEND OF THE ROAD

The second period of German "rule" in Metz-en-Couture began on March 23rd, 1918. At that time the village was held by the 47th Division, V Corps, on the extreme right of the Third Army. The situation was complicated by the existence of a gap between the Third and Fifth Armies, as a result of which the enemy during the morning made a flank-attack on the 140th Brigade of the division ; but, assisted by the two other brigades, the defenders splendidly staved off repeated assaults until 1 p.m., the hour fixed for a general withdrawal of the corps. Machine-gunners were especially conspicuous in the operations.

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31st, when seven airships left Germany. *L.9* and *L.11* developed engine trouble, and went home. *L.22* also experienced trouble, but managed to reach the Humber, and dropped some bombs on billets of the 3rd Manchesters, of whom 29 were killed and 53 injured.

A Valiant Battery

Mathy, in *L.13*, was deterred by the weather from making London; so he found Stowmarket munition works, but failed to injure them. A little battery of two 6-pounders engaged him, and actually hit the ship. He was then at no more than 2,000 ft., and tried to silence the battery by dropping 12 H.E. bombs on it, but in vain.

L.15 made history that night. Approaching London along the Thames from the East, she was sighted and followed by aeroplanes, while the guns opened on her. Turning north, the commander then imagined himself to be bombing the northern suburbs of London, though actually he did nothing of the sort, for his bombs all fell harmlessly near Rainham. There the ship was hit by the gun at Purfleet, and he decided to make for Belgium. But the injury was greater than had at first been thought. At 11 p.m. the airship's back broke, and she fell into the sea, where the crew was picked up. This was the first raiding Zeppelin to be brought down by the defences.

The raid had been a failure, and the astounding farrago of nonsense that was published in Germany at the time, alleging the most comprehensive destruction of property and munitions in London by the two airships *L.14* and *L.15*, utterly baffles comprehension. Stranger still, these fairy tales have now become serious history in Germany![1]

After the destruction of the *L.15*, the airship raids of the ensuing spring and summer lost much of their sting. The day "of the usual little gun fire which the Zeppelin had come to look upon as both innocuous and normal when raiding England"[2] was over.

The raids of the next few months are soon described. The main object of the German Naval Staff was to maintain a continuous pressure, if only by means of semi-effective raids, on England. On April 1st, the day following the loss of *L.15*, two craft set out for London, but owing to bad weather turned northwards. Next day, April 2nd, four airships left Germany, this time to attack Rosyth and the Forth Bridge.

1 Groos, *Nordsee V*, pp. 105–6.
2 Statement made under examination by the commander of *L.15*.

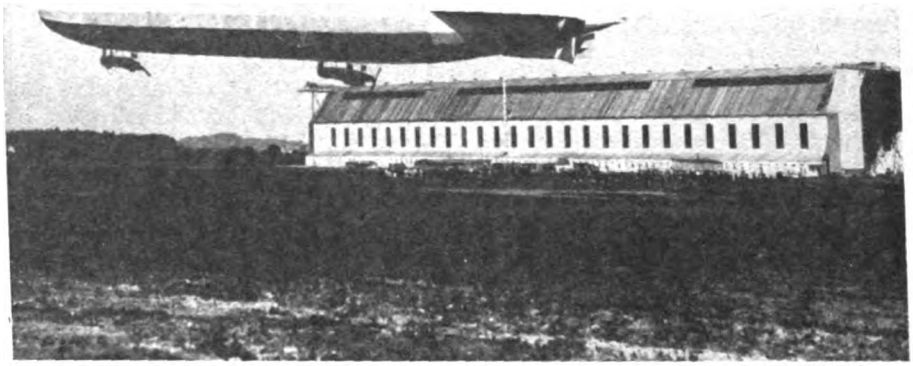

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

STARTING ON A FLIGHT

The Zeppelin *L.11* outside her hangar at the start of a flight. This airship set forth on no fewer than nine occasions for raids upon various parts of England, and was responsible for considerable damage inflicted over a period of more than two years. One of her last appearances was on August 18th, 1916, when eight airships covered the High Sea Fleet on the occasion of its putting to sea to raid Sunderland.

L.13 soon turned back with engine trouble. *L.14*, *L.16*, and *L.22* came on.

Edinburgh and Leith Bombed

The two latter made abortive raids, both far from Edinburgh; but the city was found by *L.14*. Owing to the total absence of lights below him, her commander had failed to find either Rosyth or the bridge; so he contented himself with bombing Edinburgh and Leith, which he knew well from having visited them when serving in the Hamburg-Amerika line. He destroyed a store-

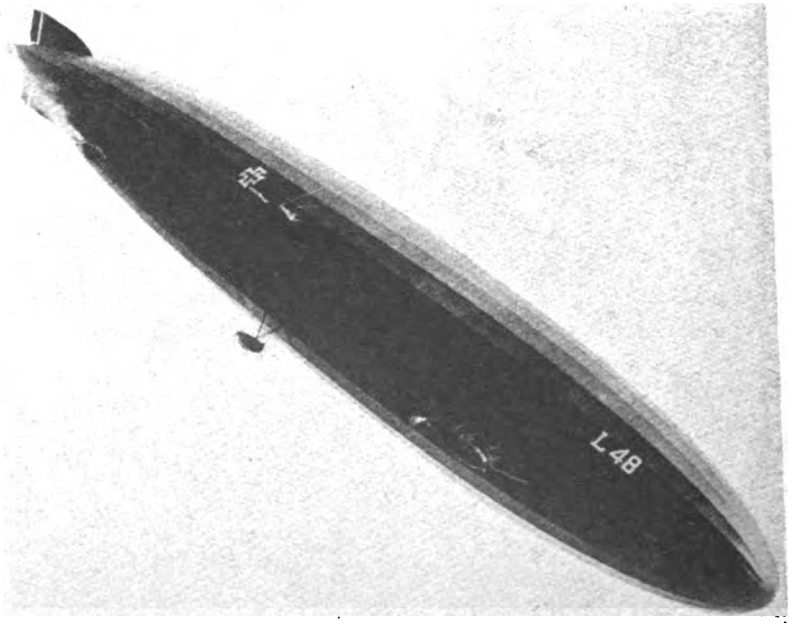

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

L.48 IN THE AIR

This airship had a short life, being brought down in flames by a British pilot on June 17th, 1917, after she had been prevented from bombing Harwich by the port's anti-aircraft guns. She had been one of four Zeppelins—*L.42*, *L.44*, *L.45*, and *L.48*—which had set out to attack London, but had been prevented by bad weather from reaching it. There were three survivors of *L.48*'s crash.

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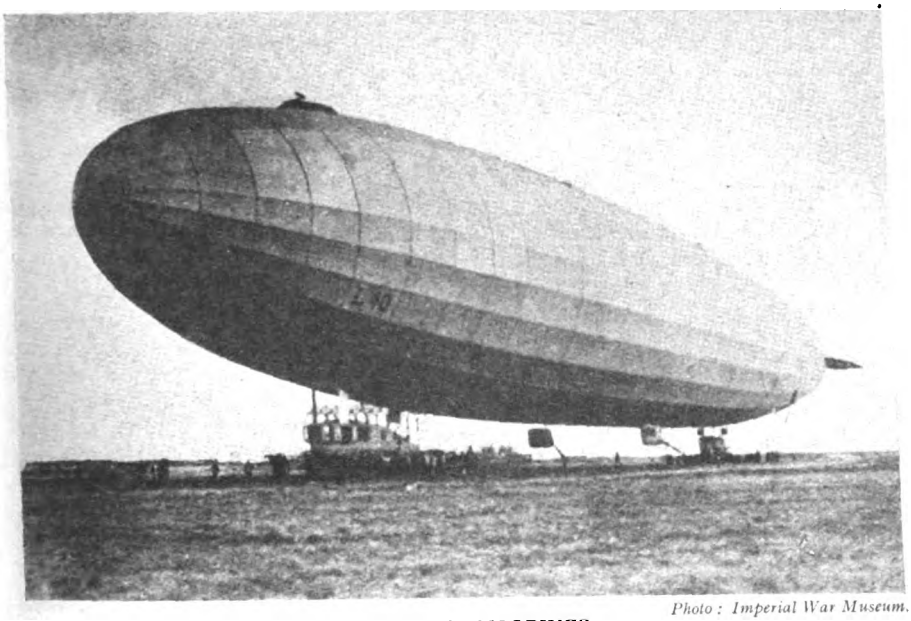

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

L.40 AT HER MOORINGS

***L.40* took part in the unsuccessful raid of March 16th, 1917, when, out of five airships which had left their shed at Ahlhorn, only two—*L.40* and *L.41*—returned. Owing to heavy weather, *L.35* landed at Dresden and *L.42* at Jüterbog, while French gunners brought down *L.39* at Compiègne. *L.40* participated in another attack on May 23rd, but was wrecked the following month while landing during a storm.**

house filled with whisky (value £44,000), and caused some 40 casualties. An incendiary bomb fell into a house in Commercial Street, crashing through a bedroom, where an old lady lay in bed, on to the floor below. The old lady coolly poured pails of water through the hole in her bedroom floor until the fire beneath was extinguished!

On April 3rd, 4th, and 5th, consecutive raids were inaugurated. On the 3rd, the *L.11* and *L.17* tried to raid Norfolk, but failed to achieve anything. On the 4th, the airships turned back. On the 5th, *L.11* bombed Hull and Skinningrove. A month previously she had bombed Hull in leisurely fashion, but this time she was received by gunfire which shook the entire ship, and she made off. *L.16* bombed the county of Durham without doing very much damage.

The next period of moonless nights and calm weather brought another series of attacks. The first, that of April 24th–25th, is of interest in that it was made to coincide with the Irish Rebellion. Visibility was bad, and so the six airships that crossed the Norfolk coast wandered about East Anglia, being occasionally picked up by a searchlight. This raid was uneventful, except for the fact that it was carried out in connection with the bombardment of Yarmouth and Lowestoft by the German battle-cruisers, for which the airships were intended to act as a screen.

Simultaneously the military airships came out, on April 25th, and one of them, *LZ.97*, reached and bombed Ongar, on the way to Ilford, where she turned back hastily on being attacked by guns and aeroplanes. A grandiloquent account of the "bombing of London" has been published in connection with this exploit,[1] and is based on sheer hallucination.

Bombing an Empty Moor

Now came another attack, by eight airships, on Scotland. The main feature of this raid arose out of the fact that raiders were driven far out of their course by a northerly wind. The first of them dropped incendiary bombs on Danby High Moor, in Yorkshire, where the heather was set on fire. Then, attracted by the conflagration, two other airships in succession came and bombed the blazing moor, under the impression that it was a group of burning factories.

Of the rest, only two airships reached Scotland, and they did nothing. *L.14* wandered over the Firth of Tay in an attempt to find Edinburgh. *L.20*, running into snow and fog, made Forfarshire, sailed over Loch Ness, bombing Craig Castle on the way, and passed homeward over Peterhead. It was now obvious to her commander that his petrol would be insufficient for reaching Germany, so he headed for Norway, the nearest land, where he landed at Stavanger. *L.20* was then destroyed by her crew in the fjord.

The remaining airships made a precarious return. Ice formed on the

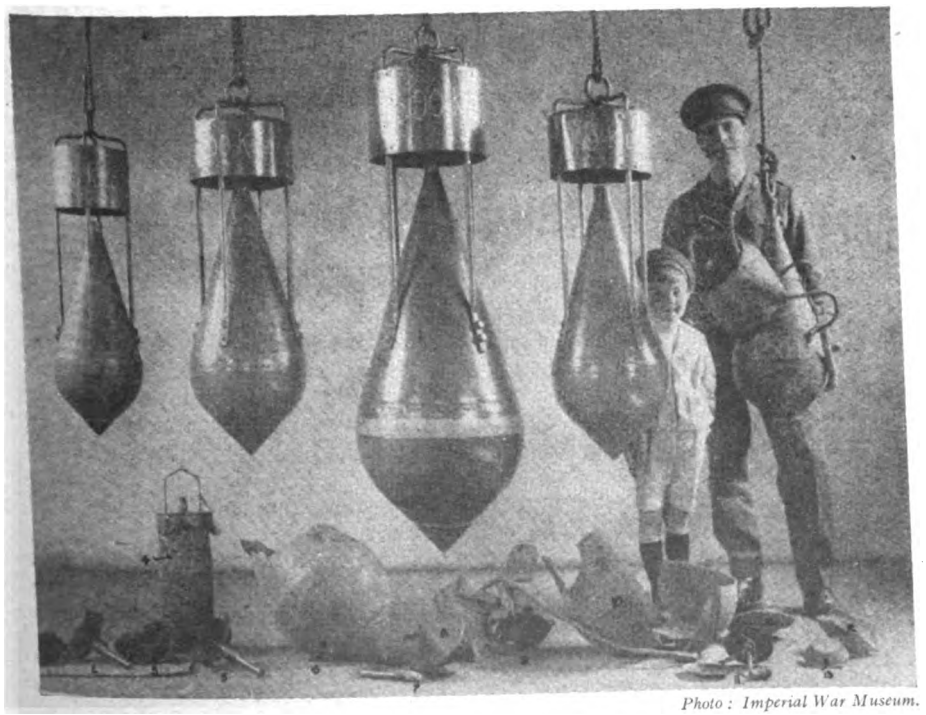

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

"WHOSE ARE THESE BIG EAR-RINGS, DADDY?"

The answer to the little chap is that they are the Devil's, for they are H.E. bombs recovered, emptied, and repaired after the Zeppelin raids of March 12th and April 12th, 1918. In size the missiles range from 110 lb. to 660 lb. Below are various bits and pieces, including (Nos. 2 and 5) repaired fuses, (No. 4) an ordinary incendiary bomb, and (No. 6) a large fragment recovered from 14 feet below ground.

[1] Neumann, *The German Air Force in the Great War*, p. 117.

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propellers, and by centrifugal force this was projected into the ships in knife-like strips which cut the adjacent outer fabric and gas-bags to ribbons.

Three months elapsed without a raid, partly owing to the shortness of the hours of darkness, partly because a new series of airships of greater size, power, and climbing capacity were being taken over, and partly owing to naval demands on the ships. At length, on July 28th, six airships set out for England, but barely reached the coast. Again on July 31st ten airships set out, but, finding conditions unfavourable, turned back. On August 2nd, six airships attacked the East Coast.

Then, on August 8th, eleven airships started. Only nine flew over land, six of which bombed the Durham coast without causing appreciable damage. Hull, however, was unfortunately attacked by *L.24* with more serious results. Ground-mist blanketed our guns and paralysed our aeroplanes; and once more the bombing of this luckless town gave rise to angry complaints against the Admiralty's inability to hold up the raiders whilst still at sea.

Twelve Start, One Arrives

Late on the 24th, no fewer than twelve airships started to raid London. Out at sea H.M.S. *Conquest* succeeded in hitting *L.13*, which struggled home damaged. Five other raiders turned back. *L.31* (Commander Mathy) and *L.32* tried a new approach; they crossed Belgium, heading for the British capital, which *L.31* reached alone. She attacked south-eastern London, where she was headed northwards by gunfire, and disappeared over Essex.

The next raid was the most important effort yet made by the airships. On September 2nd there set out 12 naval and 4 military ships in a joint attack on the City of London. Extra bombs were shipped, but the large total of 260 H.E. and 200 incendiaries was to occasion not more than 4 deaths, 8 cases of injury, and little material damage. The cause of this failure was the destruction in mid-air of *SL.11*, one of the military raiders.

After crossing Essex, this ship made a rapid sweep to the north-west of London, in order to approach the metropolis from its reputedly weakest side. Then she turned south, and began bombing the suburbs at 1 a.m. Soon detected by the searchlights, she was beautifully held, to the great benefit of the guns. Wriggling like an eel, so it seemed, to avoid the lights, she turned off towards Edmonton. There she fell in with patrolling aircraft, one of which, piloted by Lieutenant Leefe Robinson, boldly attacked her. In spite of the bursting anti-aircraft shell, the British 'plane went straight at the ship.

"I flew about 800 feet below it from bow to stem.... I then got behind it. ... I was then at a height of 11,500 feet.... I had hardly finished the drum (Lewis gun with incendiary bullets) before I saw the part fired at glowing. In a few seconds the whole rearpart was blazing."[1] The flaming airship fell like a stone, and burned furiously for two hours on the ground; for she was a wooden ship, beautifully made of three-ply material.

Her downfall was seen by all the other raiders within 50 miles, and that killed the raid; bombs were dropped indiscriminately, and all turned tail. The Zeppelin menace to London had been mastered.

L.33 Crashes in Essex

Not until September 23rd did the enemy send his airships out again to attack London. Eleven ships started, but of these only three, *L.31*, *L.32*, and *L.33*, of the latest enlarged type, actually reached the metropolitan area. *L.33* made for the eastern suburbs. Hotly engaged by the guns, she threw out her bombs in reply, and did some damage involving many casualties. But she had been hit. One shell passed clean through her; another damaged a propeller; shell splinters punctured her gas-bags.

Leaking badly, she turned and attempted to make for home. She was then engaged by an aeroplane, but did not catch fire. Nevertheless, she had had enough, and crashed near Little Wigborough in Essex, where her crew tried to burn her, but without success. They then surrendered.

L.32, after passing Tunbridge Wells, flew north, skirting the newly-established eastern defences of London. There it was held by the lights and subjected to severe fire, two hits being afterwards claimed. Trying to elude this danger, the aircraft ran straight into another: 2nd-Lieutenant Sowrey, on aerial patrol, engaged the raider, and raked her broadside with his incendiary ammunition. She then fell a blazing wreck near Billericay.

Meanwhile *L.31*, skilfully handled by Mathy, succeeded in flying right across eastern London, from Streatham to Leyton, at 12,000 feet. Using his parachute flares to distract the guns and searchlights, Mathy first crossed the south-eastern defences, and then, thanks to mist, the north-eastern guns, without their detecting him. It was a very bold flight.

Of the remaining six airships, only one really came overland—*L.17*, which reached and bombed Nottingham. Once more this attack raised a chorus of protest. A deputation of 25 mayors waited on Lord French to demand the complete cessation of railway traffic at night. The reply made to them was similar to that already addressed to a deputation from Sheffield, and was cold comfort indeed. The complete stoppage of railway traffic was the enemy's object; to give way to such a desire would be playing into his hand, while it might cause the Army in France to become short of essential munitions.

Munition Works Missed

On September 25th, yet another airship attack was undertaken. Four airships flew over the West Riding and Lincolnshire. *L.22* bombed Sheffield, but by the greatest good fortune did practically no damage to the all-important munition works, although many casualties were inflicted in streets of small cottages.

L.31 made a remarkable flight along the south coast. Reaching Dungeness from Belgium, Mathy judged the night too clear for an attack on London, so he elected to bomb Portsmouth. On his arrival near that port, after flying along the south coast, he was blinded by a sudden opening of all the searchlights on to his ship. Thinking himself to be over the town, he released all his bombs and made off, going out eastwards over Hastings. The bombs were never heard, nor ever located.

Perfect weather for raiding prevailed on October 1st, when eleven airships left Germany for England. Of these only seven came overland. *L.14*, *L.16*, and *L.21* raided Lincolnshire, killing numerous cattle but doing little else. *L.34* (the newest ship in the service), *L.17*, and *L.24*, did not achieve even this much, although the *L.24* managed to bomb the illuminated landing-ground near Hitchin.

Not so with *L.31*. Mathy sailed over Lowestoft to Buntingford in a wide arc, and decided to fly over London from the north-west. He was then attacked by gunfire so accurate that he was forced to release his bombs, of which at least five were of 660 lb. weight. The entire cargo fell on Cheshunt, 304 houses being damaged and 6½ acres of glass-houses demolished. For some minutes,

[1] Robinson's own report. He received the V.C. for this feat.

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NORTH OF BAPAUME
Then and Now

Photo: Imperial War Museum

IN THE SUMMER OF 1917

A ruined street in Ervillers during the lull between the enemy's withdrawal to the Hindenburg Line and his 1918 offensive. The village stands at a confluence of small roads on the Bapaume–Arras highway, 6 km. north of the former town. Before the retirement Ervillers was about 6 km. behind the German Lines; and probably some of the first British soldiers to see it were 100 prisoners who in January, 1917, were put to road-making there.

Photo: A. J. Insall

IN THE SUMMER OF 1937

During the greater part of March 25th, 1918, Ervillers was successfully held by the 1/10th Manchesters of the 42nd Division against eight separate German attacks, but was abandoned in the general retirement of the Third Army at 9.30 p.m. It was recaptured on August 23rd. There is one British cemetery, 200 yards south-west of the church, containing 66 United Kingdom and 1 Australian fallen. This burial-ground was inaugurated by the Germans in July, 1916, and used by the British from April until December, 1917.

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Photo: Imperial War Museum

THE PLACE DE L'ÉGLISE

The church square on view here is that of Achiet-le-Grand, 5 km. south-west of Ervillers, with Gomiécourt intervening. This village, as might be expected, enjoyed a War history closely similar in its main outlines to that of neighbouring communities, and, after the first German occupation, underwent the customary triple change of hands. It first fell to the British on March 17th, 1917, when the 7th Bedfords occupied it. Notice the curious contrast between the ruined houses and the apparently untouched trees.

Photo: A. J. Insall

COMPLETE WITH CELESTIAL WASHING

The modern churchyard of Achiet-le-Grand is apparently not above accommodating the washing, like any other court. On page 794 of Volume Two, in connection with one of the two " Then and Now " pairs of Achiet-le-Petit photographs which we have reproduced it was stated that the latter village, despite its name, was larger than Achiet-le-Grand. This is perfectly true, topographically; but in respect of population the titles are vindicated, for Achiet-le-Grand contains 842 inhabitants against Achiet-le-Petit's 432.

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Photo: Imperial War Museum

THIS IS A RAILWAY STATION

Achiet-le-Grand stands at the junction of the Arras–Albert and Arras–Bapaume lines, and the destruction of its station and permanent way before the Germans withdrew in 1917 was wholehearted. On March 25th, 1918, it was held, like Ervillers, by troops of the 42nd Division, which had just been transferred from the VI to the IV Corps. The division covered a front of nearly 10,000 yards, had very few signal communications, and was almost without horses. Retirement was not completed until 10 a.m. on the 26th.

Photo: A. J. Insall

SEETHING WITH TRAFFIC

Achiet-le-Grand was another of the many villages recaptured on August 23rd, 1918, when the main attack in the Battle of Bapaume was launched by our Third and Fourth Armies, supported by about 100 tanks. The Communal Cemetery Extension contains a large number of British graves, which include 1,244 United Kingdom, 94 New Zealand, 61 Australian, 4 South African, 3 Canadian, and 1 Newfoundland. In addition 40 German fallen are buried there, while more British dead lie in the Communal Cemetery proper.

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Photo: Imperial War Museum

"ARCHIE" MAKES A HALT

The anti-aircraft battery of 13-pounder 9-hundredweight guns, all on Mark IV motor-lorry mounting, which the photograph shows, is halted by the roadside close to Avesnes, a north-western suburb of Bapaume on the road to Biefvillers and Achiet-le-Grand. This Avesnes-lès-Bapaume, a tiny place of less than 200 souls, has, of course, nothing to do with Avesnes-le-Comte, near Arras.

Photo: A. J. Insall

AMID LUSH PASTURES

March 24th, 1918, saw Avesnes at the northern end of the line allotted to the 19th Division on its evacuation of Bapaume, the 41st Division being on the left of the 19th. Owing to the confusion and darkness, however, the 41st Division established its new line too far to the north, and through the resulting gap, a mile wide, the enemy began to trickle, until three field companies stopped him. On the 25th the pressure of the German "battering ram" against the 19th Division drove it gradually north-westward, Avesnes being abandoned. It was retaken by the New Zealanders on August 24th.

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it is said, " it was raining broken glass over several acres." Yet there was but a single casualty, a woman badly injured.

Turning west, Mathy attempted to find darkness and safety. But the searchlights held him, and three aeroplanes were in hot pursuit. 2nd-Lieutenant Tempest, in one of these machines, describes his chase thus :

" She was climbing like a rocket and leaving me standing.... I accordingly dived at her firing a burst straight at her.... Then I let her have another burst.... I could see tracer bullets flying from her in all directions, but I was too close under her for her to concentrate on me.... As I was firing I noticed her beginning to go red inside like an enormous Chinese lantern, and then a flame shot out from the front part... she then shot up about 200 feet, paused, and came roaring down. I nose-dived for all I was worth with the Zepp tearing after me... she shot past me roaring like a furnace."

The End of Germany's Best Ace

The wreck fell at Potter's Bar ; and this was the end of Mathy, the greatest and most daring of the German airship commanders. With Böcker of *L.33* and Peterson of *L.32*, not to mention Breithaupt of *L.15*, all the best of them were now gone. The Germans, however, did not accept as final a defeat patent to all the world. On November 27th ten airships quitted their sheds, including the newest, *L.34*, *L.35*, and *L.36*. London was to be left severely alone, so the raiders went north.

Here five ships made for the Tyne, while four aimed at the Midlands. Of the former group, *L.34* came to Hartlepool, where she was at once detected by the searchlights, and engaged by an aeroplane piloted by 2nd-Lieutenant Pyott. After a running fight of over five miles, the incendiary bullets took effect, and she crashed into the sea a blazing wreck. The sight of this flaming ship stifled the raiding spirit in the rest, and every commander turned home.

The southern group of raiders went further inland. *L.22*, *L.16*, and *L.13* came well into Yorkshire, one ship striking the town of York, and another reaching Wakefield. But their movements were timid, and showed that some, at least, of the airship commanders were growing demoralised. *L.22*, however, made a daring flight, somewhat after the manner of Mathy. Making for Leeds, she was headed off that town by accurate gunfire ; then, traversing the Peak country, Macclesfield, and the Potteries, she bombed Chesterton and Trentham.

But time was slipping by ; it was 1.30 a.m. when she turned for the east coast. Over Peterborough she was engaged by aeroplanes, but was saved by skilful handling and absence of lights. Again she was attacked and delayed over Norfolk. It was 6 a.m. when at last she came over Yarmouth. Dawn was breaking, and showed up the raider against the eastern sky ; and that was her undoing. Three naval pilots were after her. She was not moving well, so that Lieutenant Pulling soon succeeded in setting her alight. She fell into the sea, burning furiously, and leaving only a patch of oil on the water to mark her end.

Disaster Upon Disaster

Yet even this double loss did not complete the catalogue of disaster. On December 28th, two airships, *L.17* and *L.24*, caught fire in their sheds at Tondern, in Germany, and became total losses.

All but two or three of the remaining airship raids of the War proved trivial affairs compared with those of 1915–16. The aeroplane was beginning to supplant the Zeppelin, as will be related hereafter. But aeroplanes at that period—or, at any rate, such machines as the Germans could spare for the task—had not a sufficient radius of action to reach much beyond London. So the airships were kept in reserve, as a threat-in-being to the Midland and Northern districts of Britain, which they continued to raid at distant intervals.

The raids carried out in 1917–18 can be briefly described ; their interest is more of a dramatic than of a strictly military nature.

After the last raid of 1916, there was a pause in airship activity. New commanders and crews needed training, while the airship factories were busy turning out a new type of craft. The latter was now required not only for raiding, but for the more essential task of air reconnaissance over the sea, since the British Navy now possessed various aircraft devised for " Zeppelin-hunting." The Germans hoped to counter these new dangers by constructing a type of airship that would reach heights approaching 25,000 feet, an altitude to which the " heavier-than-air " machines of that day, and in particular the flying-boats and seaplanes, would probably not be able to rise, while gunfire was scarcely to be feared there.

This type of airship was, in fact, produced, and the new raiders, when cleared of bombs and ballast, undoubtedly had a " ceiling " of at least 23,000 feet. But their capacity was dearly bought. At such a height the strain on the crew became very great. The cold grew intense, entailing special clothing, while the danger of the engines freezing grew so acute that no motor could ever be shut off when flying. And there were also fuel difficulties.

Most important of all, at heights exceeding about 15,000 feet there were navigational problems undreamed of lower down : fierce air currents which had remained unsuspected at 10,000 feet. The task that was set them began to grow beyond the capacity of the commander and his crew.

L.39 Brought Down at Compiègne

Nevertheless, the menace still possessed all its old psychological potency. On February 16th a military airship appeared over Kent, but did nothing. Then the naval airships appeared on March 16th. They flew aimlessly over Kent and Sussex, above thick clouds. *L.39* came in over Margate, and went out at St. Leonard's.

Her commander, evidently wishing to avoid the Allied aircraft over the Strait, then made for Dieppe and flew over Beauvais. Time was slipping by, so he decided to shut off his engines and drift with the westerly wind over the Allied lines. But one engine froze up, and he was too late. At 5.30 a.m. the ship was discerned over Compiègne, and was there shot down by anti-aircraft guns ; she actually fell from 19,000 feet.

Not until May 23rd did the naval ships venture out again. Six of them made for the Midlands. *L.42*, however, wandered as far south as Braintree, then speedily made due north, managing to elude several aeroplanes in her flight from cloudbank to cloudbank, and so out to sea over Cromer. The raid was quite unimportant.

On June 17th four naval airships again tried a raid. *L.42* bombed Ramsgate and did considerable damage, blowing up an ammunition store. But *L.48* was not so fortunate in getting away. Intending to bomb Harwich, she flew over a part of Suffolk, and on approaching the port was heavily fired upon. The shell-bursts gave 2nd-Lieutenant Watkins a lead, and, after a struggle to bring his aeroplane up to the height of the airship, he successfully brought her down in flames.

The curious feature of her fall was its slowness. Though burning furiously, it is estimated that she took possibly five minutes to fall 14,000 feet. To this

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hesitating drop was due the fact that one officer and two men survived the crash and were taken prisoners.

The summer was also marked by a regular naval "hunt" for Zeppelins, carried out by patrol vessels and aircraft. By this means *L.22* was shot down on May 14th, and *L.43* followed on June 14th. Both fell into the sea and vanished.

On August 21st it was the turn of *L.23*, which was shot down not far from the Danish Coast. But on that same day the newest "height-climbing" airships, eight in number, tried to raid Northern England. The raid achieved nothing, and was even regarded by the British defence as a pure myth.

An "Invisible" Raid

Yet investigation has shown that possibly five ships did cross the coast-line, dropped a few bombs, and made off. The cause of this strange lack of notice of the airships is to be found in the great height at which they were flying, namely 20,000 feet, and in the atmospheric conditions, which rendered them invisible as well as inaudible—a truly disconcerting state of affairs, had it been appreciated at the time.

Not until September 24th did the airships try again. On that night ten raiders collected above Flamborough Head. They then scattered to their separate targets. Five ships actually attacked, but the sky was cloudy and the airships rose to the limit of their climb. They were scarcely seen; but no target was hit except the luckless town of Hull, on the centre of which *L.41* dropped eleven bombs. Fortunately the damage was unexpectedly slight, and only three women were hurt. Two ships, *L.42* and *L.46*, bombed the flares of a Lincolnshire landing-ground. The rest did nothing. But it was obvious that the aeroplanes of the defence could not climb to the height of the airships, now 16,000 to 18,000 feet.

Then came another raid, on October 19th, which revealed the full risks incurred by airships when flying at these enormous altitudes. Eleven Zeppelins left Germany to attack the Midlands. Up to a height of 10,000 feet, the air was still and the weather fair. But above that height, and increasing up to 20,000 feet, there raged a northerly gale, and it was into this tearing air-current that the ships climbed on nearing the English coast.

One craft, *L.54*, immediately turned back, but the rest went on, seemingly

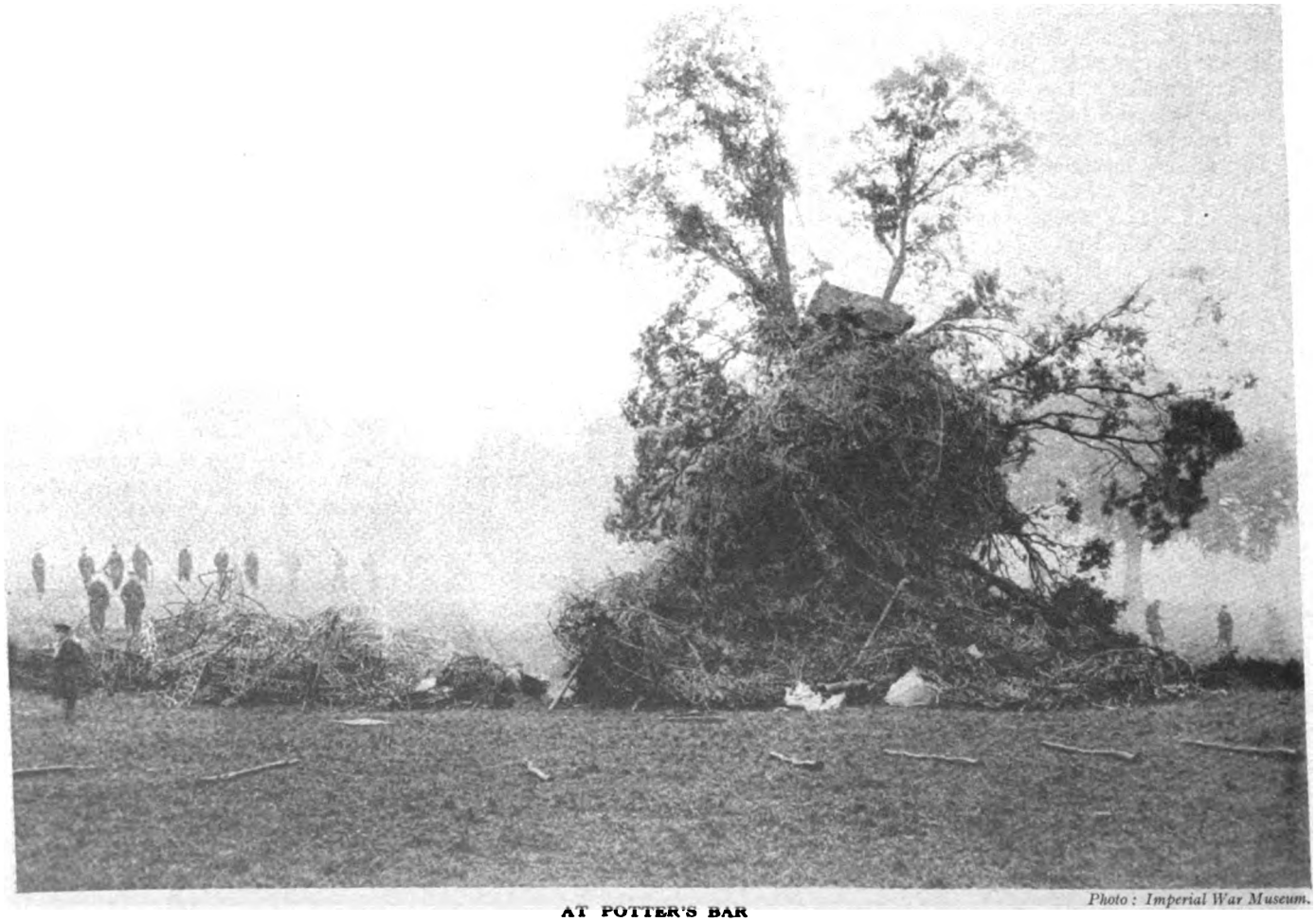

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

AT POTTER'S BAR

In the wreckage seen here perished the most skilful and courageous of all Germany's Zeppelin pilots—Commander Heinrich Mathy, who in an interview with an American journalist shortly before his death declared that he had participated in every airship attack upon this country. As his airship, the *L.31*, fell in flames on October 2nd, 1916, the crew leaped vainly for their lives, and in the glare presented a hideous sight as they fell and were broken horribly upon the meadows. Meanwhile the watching crowds, exultant, roared out the National Anthem.

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Photo: Imperial War Museum.

A SCENE IN GLENVIEW ROAD, HITHER GREEN

The damage shown above was caused on October 19th, 1917, by *L.45*, the Zeppelin which on her way home was forced down, owing to lack of fuel, near the Swiss frontier of France, her commander and crew surrendering after firing their ship. This was nearly at the close of the effective air-raiding period; the terror was waning. To-day the bombing of women and children is part and parcel of the "science" of war; and if we in England still profess to condemn it, that is simply because we do not happen yet to have been in a situation where its adoption would be expedient. The Zeppelin commanders are not to be condemned too harshly. Rather than approve the jubilation with which the death of Mathy was acclaimed, let us remember the words inscribed over the grave of another German crew in a churchyard in Suffolk: "Who art thou that judgest another man's servant? To his own master he standeth or falleth."

unconscious of the wind that was sweeping them hopelessly out of their course. Three of them later succeeded in coming down out of the current and in making their way back over Holland. Three others were fortunate in getting over the Western Front at a great height and undetected. But *L.44*, *L.45*, *L.49*, and *L.50* all came to grief over French soil.

Sensational Flights

Across England the airships steered a wild course. *L.41* appeared over the Humber and went north of Lincoln, on to Derby, and so to Birmingham, where she damaged the Austin motor works, which were still lit up. Finally she crossed the Thames and left the country above Whitstable. *L.44*, commanded by Stabbert (formerly of *L.20*; he had escaped from Norwegian internment) came in over the Wash and then flew over Boston, Bedford, Gravesend, and Maidstone, to Folkestone, where she was heavily fired upon. Crossing over towards Boulogne, she went on over Montdidier and Reims; then, caught by anti-aircraft guns near Chenevières at 11,000 feet, she made a desperate attempt to reach 20,000 feet. But long before she could do so, she was lying on the earth, a burnt-out wreck.

L.45 made a sensational flight. From the Yorkshire coast she went to Leicester, then to Northampton. On over the L. & N.W.R. main line the wind blew her, until her bombs dropped suddenly, without warning, at Hendon and Cricklewood. Only then did her commander grasp the fact that he was above London. Rising to his last foot of height, he made straight over the West End, steering above Piccadilly, where one of his largest bombs killed seven and injured 18 in front of Messrs. Swan & Edgar's store. Beyond London he succeeded in steering more eastwards, but was nevertheless carried towards the Channel over Hastings.

At length, after crossing France over Amiens and Auxerre, he found himself over Lyons. Then, seeing snow-clad mountains, he imagined that he was nearing the Swiss Alps. But a ghastly surprise sprang itself: the ship was attacked by French aeroplanes. Only the lack of incendiary ammunition saved her. At last, at 10 a.m., having insufficient petrol to make Germany, the commander decided to land—in neutral Switzerland, as he thought. Too late, he realised that the blue figures in the fields were French Annamite troops engaged on agricultural work. The ship made a bad landing along the River Buèche, and was there set on fire by the crew.

L.49, after an ineffective flight over England, was finally driven down in the Vosges Mountains by French aeroplanes. Her crew, worn out by height-sickness, tried to fire the ship, but were foiled by the arrival of French troops, who took

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Photo: A. P., Paris.

A STREET IN ROCLINCOURT

Situated 4 km. north of Arras, on the eastern side of the road to Vimy and Lens, Roclincourt as seen in this picture offers one of those curious examples of a village utterly razed except for a solitary building. The tall house in the centre must have been the target of shells innumerable, yet it survives —battered, it is true—even to its chimneys. The photograph was taken on June 30th, 1917.

them prisoner, without a struggle, ship and all. The Zeppelin was unharmed.

An Extraordinary End

L.50 had a similar experience in the gale. When dawn broke, her commander, seeing *L.49* on the ground, attempted to land hard by. Realising his error in time, he forced his ship up; but, having lost so much gas, and thereby lifting-power, she soon came down again, and caught in some trees. The heavy engine cars were shorn off, and all but four of the crew jumped to earth. Then the carcase of the machine, lightened of so much weight, rose for a last time—to disappear over the Mediterranean, never more to be heard of.

L.55 succeeded in getting back to Germany, but came to grief in making an emergency landing in the Thuringian Forest. Such was the so-called "silent" raid—silent because the airships, flying in a howling gale at 20,000 feet, were neither heard nor even seen, while the guns and lights in the London area never opened, as they were blinded by mist.

This was almost the end of Zeppelin activity. The losses in airships mounted up apace. Already, in June, 1917, *L.40* had been wrecked when landing in a storm; on December 28th, *L.17* and *L.24* caught fire in their sheds and were destroyed; *SL.12* was so severely damaged that she was broken up. *L.57* had already caught fire on her trial trip. Finally, on January 5th, 1918, a huge fire started at Ahlhorn, the great German airship station. Four out of five great sheds were burnt down, and in them were destroyed *L.46*, *L.47*, *L.51*, and *L.58*, together with *SL.20*.

Still the German naval staff would not give in. On March 12th a most ineffective raid was carried out by three airships navigating towards Hull. Next night a single ship was off Hartlepool. On April 12th, five of the new airships ("sixties," they were now!) attempted to reach the Midlands. Two of them came overland some distance; *L.61* reached Wigan and *L.62* Birmingham. Visibility was very poor, and the Zeppelins, flying at colossal heights, could scarcely be seen: certainly they had no conception as to where their bombs might fall; and these did amazingly little damage, except near Wigan, where cottage property was destroyed. But the boldness of the flight gave rise to some justifiable anxiety.

Maritime Exploits

Meanwhile, on May 6th *L.62* was again reported over the North Sea. Naval surface and air craft being in the vicinity, she was successfully hunted down, and fell flaming into the sea. On July 19th, H.M.S. *Furious* steamed into the Bight, and with her aircraft attacked the airship sheds at Tondern, in Schleswig, with excellent results, *L.54* and *L.60* being destroyed by fire.

The last airship raid, carried out on August 5th, 1918, was in many ways the most dramatic of all. *L.70*, the very latest "super" Zeppelin, with Captain Strasser, the forceful head of the Naval

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Air Service, on board, sailed out from Germany with four consorts to attack the Midlands. The weather was not good, while the barometer was so low as to neutralise the great climbing capacity of the new airships.

North of Cromer the raiders were attacked, at about 10 p.m., by nine British aircraft from Yarmouth. Major Cadbury gallantly attempted to rise to the *L.70's* height, just succeeded, and sent her crashing into the sea a blazing wreck. The death of Strasser, combined with the loss of this latest Zeppelin, proved the death-knell of the German airship service. There was just one closing act: On August 11th *L.53* was shot down off the Frisian coast, after a remarkable fight, by Lieutenant Culley.

The last two years of the airship campaign against England had proved, from the German point of view, singularly unsuccessful. It was unquestionably mismanaged, and England to that extent was fortunate. In the first place, the Germans never properly exploited the immense advantage which they possessed in the later Zeppelin airships—that is, the "height-climbing" type (from *L.41* onwards).

During 1917 the raids of August 21st and October 19th clearly showed that the defence was totally incapable of countering raiding craft flying at 18,000 feet and over.

Loss of Self-confidence

But by the spring of 1917, when the new type of ship, *L.41* and the rest, had first arrived, the Naval Airship Service had become somewhat doubtful of its own powers. The severity of the conditions and the problem of the winds when flying at over 16,000 feet, the loss of the new ship *L.48* in June, 1917, and the "Zeppelin hunts" instituted by the Royal Navy, intensified the reluctance to raid, even by flying at those immense heights. The losses arising out of the flight in the gale on October 19th, 1917, accelerated the decline, of which the catastrophe at Ahlhorn in January, 1918, was the climax. Britain was indeed fortunate.

In looking back over this remarkable tale and in taking stock of the damage done by the Zeppelins to Britain—less by their bombs than by the psychological effect of their exploits, as well as by the huge apparatus for defence which they called into being—it is impossible to close without adding a word of admiration for the bravery, pertinacity, and frequent daring, which brought men like Mathy, Böcker, and the rest of the airship commanders through the growing perils of these raids.

Apart from their attacks on England, one must recognise that the services which they rendered, in the course of their normal activities, to the German Fleet and to the defence of Germany as a whole, were incalculable. They were very gallant fellows, devoted to what they imagined to be their duty. "Those who are minded to condemn the Zeppelin commanders for their attacks on this country may be referred to the words inscribed over the grave [of the crew of *L.48*] in a Suffolk Churchyard—'Who art thou that judgest another man's servant? To his own master he standeth or falleth.'"[1]

1 *Official History: War in the Air*, iii, p. 238.

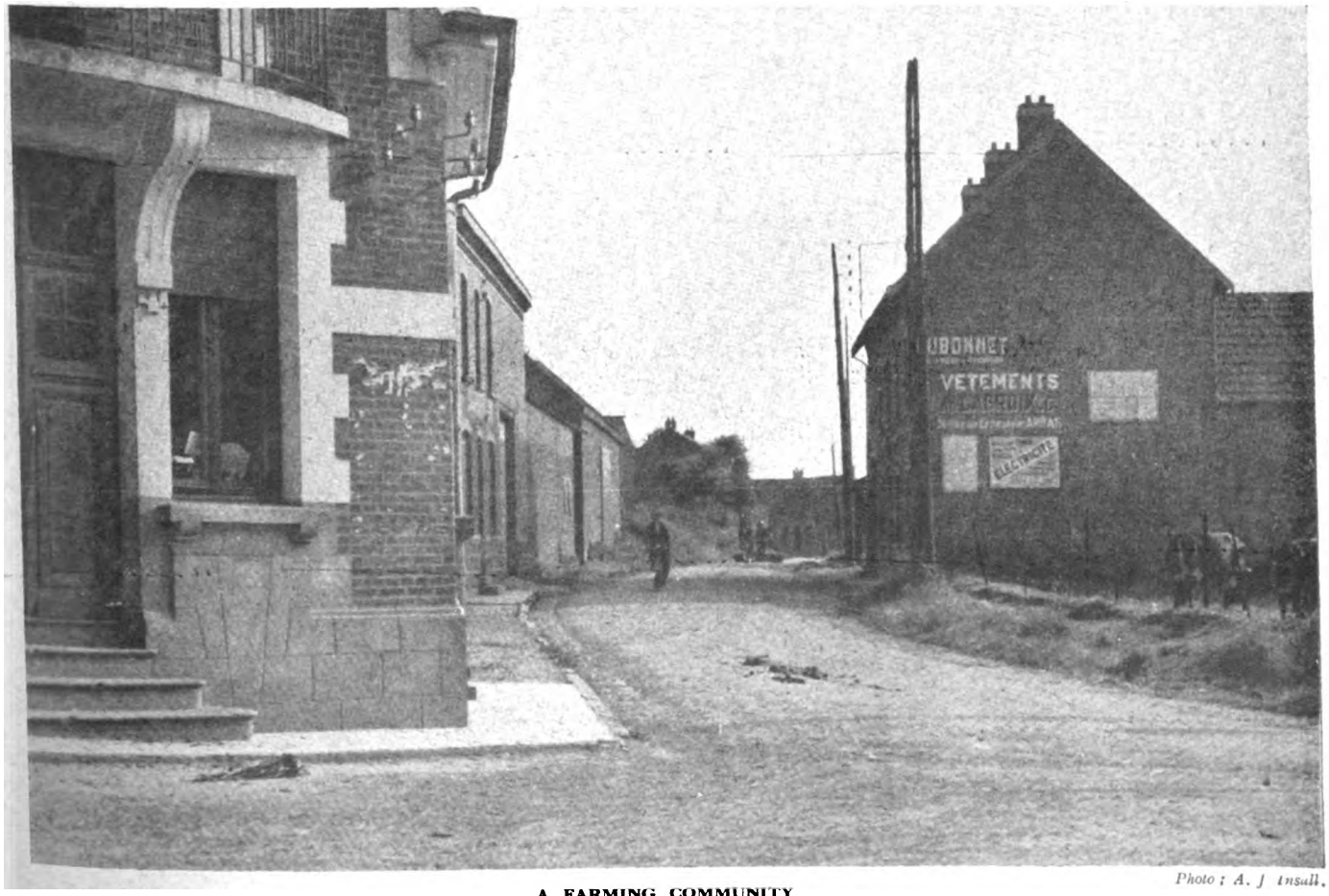

Photo: A. J. Insall.

A FARMING COMMUNITY

The immediate neighbourhood of Roclincourt witnessed fighting on several occasions between 1915, when it was in the front line of the French XVII Corps (Tenth Army), and April, 1917, when it was still on the border of No Man's Land, but occupied by the British. On April 9th, 1917, the 34th and 51st Divisions attacked east of the village, and maintained their advance in the face of heavy machine-gun fire.

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CHAPTER XII

MEMORIES II.—SOME OLD SOLDIERS LOOK BACK

Two types of men served in the Great War. On the one hand, we have to-day among the survivors men whose adventures were many and varied, and who as a result of having kept a diary are able to write fairly lengthy accounts of their experiences. On the other hand, there is many a man living to-day who, although he endured through years of peril, can recollect and set down but a few of his experiences. Here is retailed a further selection of random recollections (a first set appeared in Volume 2) which, although brief, will by their very diversity recall to many life on the battle fronts.

THE sight of the first tanks from Hop Alley in front of Delville Wood on the Somme in September, 1916, is recalled by a holder of the Military Medal:

When the Tanks Appeared

"Our own barrage was lifted about two hundred yards, and suddenly, a little to our left, we saw two great objects lumbering across No Man's Land toward Jerry's lines. We were amazed, as the secret of the tanks had been wonderfully kept. As the first one was going forward, one of our shells, dropping a little short, hit its wheel—situated at the rear—and it stopped. Then we saw three figures emerge, dressed in *dungarees* and looking very out of place in the heat of a great battle.

"We used the tank as a shelter for wounded all day; we also saw that one of the others had managed to reach Flers in front of us, and was doing wonderful work on its own in the village street."

A late Acting Major, R.E., Staff Officer of the British mission attached to the Portuguese Expeditionary Force in France, gladly recalls the valuable work done by our Allies, adding:

"The men were good material, but political intrigue sapped all the *esprit de corps* of their officers, who also were not in the habit of looking after the needs of their men." He points out that Col. Furse, commanding the 2nd King Edward's Horse, asked that a Portuguese Lewis-gunner who had joined his troops should be granted a posthumous award; and that another climbed into the tower of Lacouture church, where the road made a Z, and, waiting until the German first-line transport came along, shot drivers and horses, thus blocking the road. He and the tower were brought down by point-blank field-gun fire.

A Canadian gunner gives a graphic insight into the "pillar-to-post" life of a heavy battery:

"The sectors most hallowed by the 7th Battery, C.G.A., C.C.H.A., C.E.F., began at Anzin St. Aubin, near Arras, with our O.P. at Écurie, which was quite close to our own and the German front lines—nearer, indeed, than I had any idea of while operating a howitzer gun behind a slope to the rear of Écurie. At the Vimy show our objective was Thélus, which we completely flattened with the assistance of one other battery.

A Canadian Gunner's Lot

"From here we moved up to a position approximately in the German second-line trench and dug-out system on the Arras—Lens road. We were fortunate here, being under more or less direct observation. We witnessed a direct hit in the midst of a large working-party of British cavalry a short distance in front of us, at Nine Elms. This unfortunate incident caused us to take another position in front of Nine Elms, in short order, on the Thélus—Roclincourt road.

"We were heavily shelled here, and moved again to a point near Thélus on the same road. As all these points around Thélus were registered, we had a great many thrills, but few casualties. From the various positions we took part in many local but sanguinary scraps, such as those at Avion, Oppy, Fresnoy, etc. Next, we took up a position behind the Fosse at Maix, which proved too hot a spot, as we were shelled at once, had a direct hit on No. 1 gun, and had to re-arrange our weapons in a more scattered fashion, deeper in the town among the remains of houses."

The hazard of chance which means all the difference between life and death is indicated by a man of the 3/1st City of London Field Ambulance, attached to the 508th Field Coy, R.E. (Wessex), 58th Division, on water duty:

"Our cook got rather badly burned on the arms and face through a dixie of fat upsetting on the trench fire. I dressed the burns temporarily, and then took him to the dressing-station at Ervillers, which the Germans were shelling heavily. On our way we passed a dug-out which some Jocks were entering, and the cook suggested following suit; but somehow I had a feeling that something would happen if we entered that dug-out, so I said: 'Let's carry on to the dressing-station.' No sooner had I said it than a German shell exploded at the entrance and sent everything sky-high, which was bad luck for the Jocks and others inside, and a very lucky escape for us."

Cavalry in Action

That rarest of spectacles on the Western Front—cavalry in action—is recalled by a mounted man who took part in the Arras battle of April, 1917:

"The Northants Yeomanry received orders to go to the support of the 3rd Cavalry Division, and at dawn on the 11th left the railway bank near Fampoux, rode back through the ruins of Feuchy, turned south, and joined the cavalry which were massing behind Orange Hill. The infantry were finding it difficult to cover the open country from Orange Hill to Monchy quick enough to make good the capture of the village, so the cavalry were ordered to attack.

"No. 2 Troop, A Squadron, of the Northants Yeomanry, led the regiment's gallop from Orange Hill. Our Yeomanry, who followed about two hundred yards behind its advance guard, made a thrilling sight as they rode through the German artillery barrage and machine-gun fire in extended squadron column."

A private of the 1/4th Gloucesters,

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48th Division, says he was one of the first to enter Péronne when it was captured in March, 1917. The Gloucesters were in support behind Herbécourt, when an order was received for snipers to report at once in fighting order. No N.C.O. being available, our correspondent, as senior soldier, was given an outline of the duties the men were to perform, though at the time he was only eighteen.

" Reports had come through that the 1/5th Gloucesters had entered the enemy front line, and we were to press on through them to the river at La Chapellette. We made a careful search of the dug-outs, and the officer, guiding us by the stars, soon got us to the river-bank, where we attempted to cross a narrow trestle bridge, but, being fired on, gave it up, and went some fifty yards farther on to where a railway bridge which had been destroyed formed a 'V' over the river. We had just reached this when our previous would-be crossing-point went sky-high.

At Villers-Faucon in March, 1917

" We then decided to find cover for our men. The officer and I gave a large railway siding a thorough search. Making our way back to the rest of the party, we were fired on by some Worcesters—who, we afterwards ascertained, were unaware of our presence. The Warwicks crossed the river the next day; the cavalry was then brought into use, and we, following behind, eventually reached Cartigny. After a night here we went on to Villers-Faucon with a view to attacking St. Émilie on a ridge overlooking us. King Edward's Horse took part in this attack; it was the first time we had seen cavalry in action.

" Our first night at Villers-Faucon was indeed windy. We were billeted in one of two small outhouses at the gates of the school. Some 5'9's put 'paid' to the other outhouse, so we found more suitable shelter in a cellar under the school. Jerry had bunged up the entrance with tons of débris, but after clearing it we found a big white-washed cellar, and made this comfortable with chairs and a stove. When we were relieved by the 1/6th Gloucesters, they used it for Battalion H.Q. Two days later, when we were at Tincourt, we learned that the place, which was mined, had gone up, killing all its occupants, including a brigade major and a chaplain."

A former signaller of the 2nd Sherwood Foresters, holder of the M.M., describes being blown up in a " Sambo " shelter, 6 ft. by 4 ft. 6 in., and covered with corrugated iron and a few inches of earth, in " Cluney Cut," a reserve trench behind " Northern Crater " in the Vermelles sector, early in 1917:

" I was just moving off to deliver a message to the front line when the enemy artillery opened out, so I moved back to the shelter which I shared with

Photo: A. J. Insall.

PICQUIGNY

A quaint and beautiful village, not too seriously damaged during the War, standing on the Amiens—Abbeville road 12 km. north-west of Amiens, and on the south bank of the Somme. The 5th and 46th Casualty Clearing Stations were situated here in April, 1918, beneath the walls of a castle at which, in 1475, King Edward IV of England had made peace with Louis XI of France. The bridge on which the kings met is still pointed out.

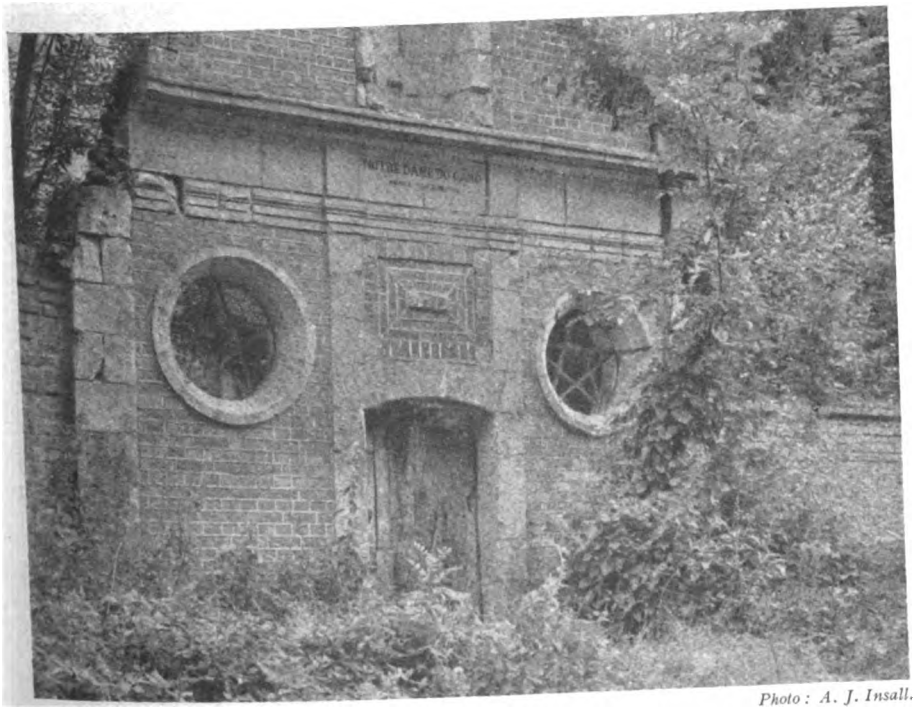

Photo: A. J. Insall.

THE CONVENT OF OUR LADY OF GARD

More sinister, though less ancient, than the ruins of the castle at Picquigny, are the remnants of the convent whose barricaded gate is here shown. Bearing the date 1672 over the entrance, this place was not destroyed until the Great War, and its association with British soldiers is shown by the survival of many of their names, scratched in the stone jambs of the doorway. Picquigny has one British cemetery.

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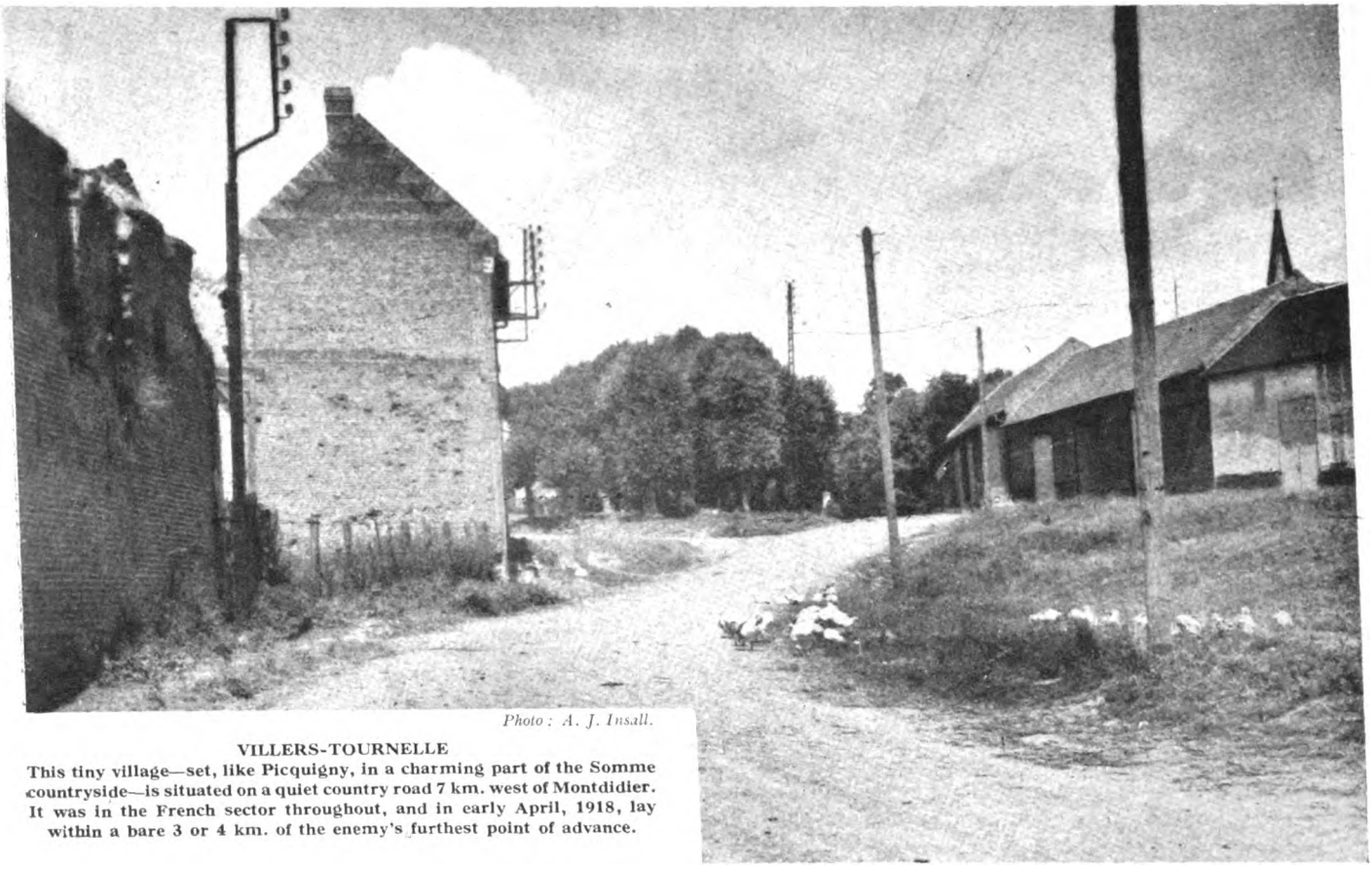

Photo: A. J. Insall.

VILLERS-TOURNELLE

This tiny village—set, like Picquigny, in a charming part of the Somme countryside—is situated on a quiet country road 7 km. west of Montdidier. It was in the French sector throughout, and in early April, 1918, lay within a bare 3 or 4 km. of the enemy's furthest point of advance.

THE BOIS DE LOGEAST

This wood lies between Achiet-le-Grand and Ablainzeville, and was the scene of heavy fighting on both March 25th and August 21st, 1918. On the former occasion the 62nd and 42nd Divisions were the formations concerned, the 42nd retiring through the wood on the night of the 25th/26th.

Photo: A. J. Insall.

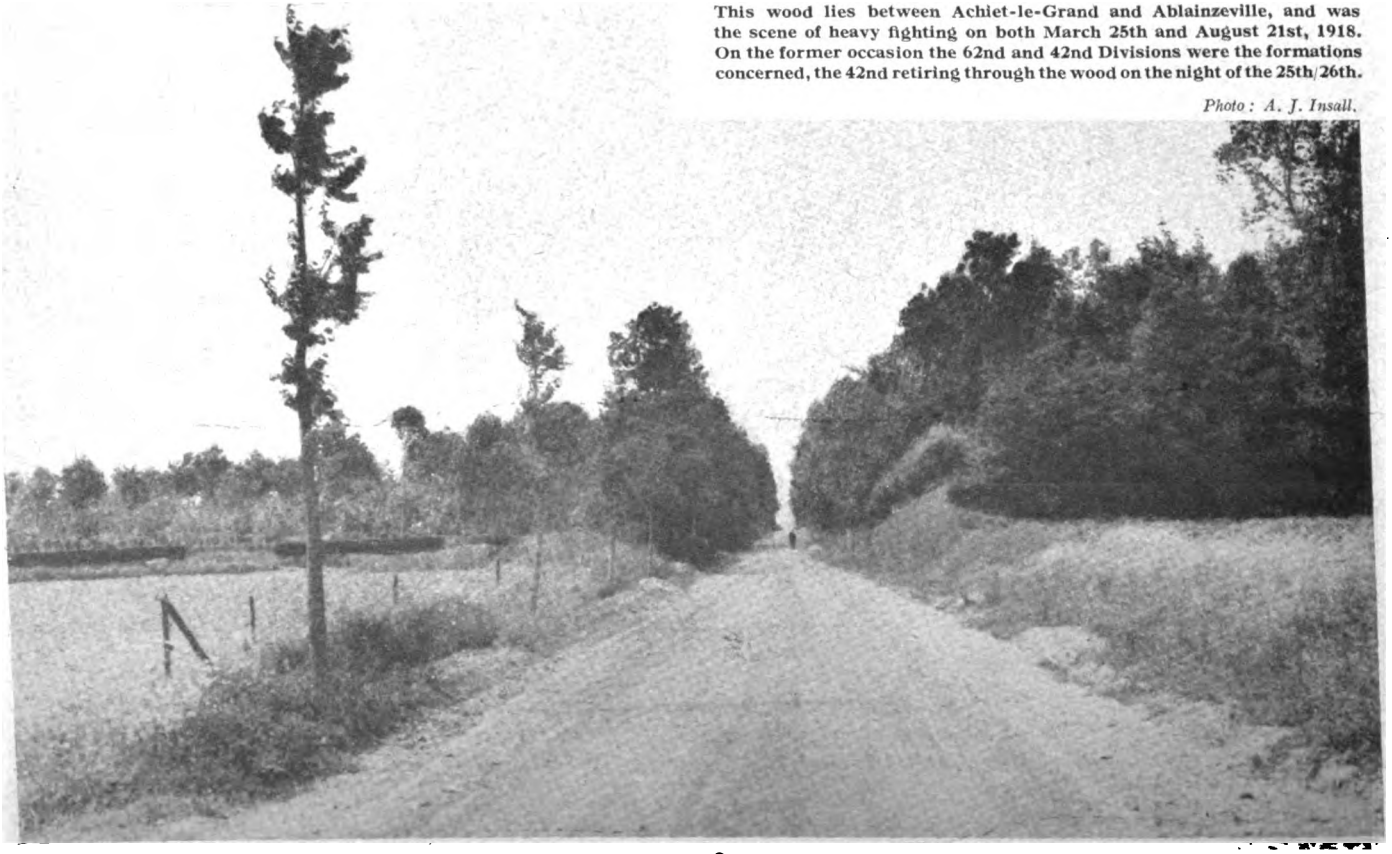

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Photo : A. J. Insall.

APPROACHING LEWARDE

Lewarde lies 7½ km. south-east of Douai, on the road to Valenciennes. The enemy swarmed over this area after the Battle of Mons, in August, 1914, and continued to confer the doubtful benefit of his presence until the final Allied advance. Lewarde itself was re-entered during the third week of October, 1918.

IN LAGNICOURT VILLAGE

Lagnicourt, or Lagnicourt-Marcel, is to be found 3 km. south-west of Quéant. Captured by the British on April 2nd, 1917, it was lost for some hours during a counter-attack against the I Anzac Corps on the 15th. In 1918 it was lost on March 21st, and retaken on September 3rd by the 2nd Guards Brigade.

Photo : A. J. Insall.

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Sergt. James and a Company runner. Instantly there was an explosion, a cloud of dust, and a yell. I managed to scramble out of the narrow entrance and go in search of stretcher-bearers.

" On my return I expected to find the runner badly wounded ; to my amazement, he was unhurt, but Sergt. James was in the bottom of the trench, on his hands and knees, covered with blood from head to foot. How he managed to get out I do not know, for I had to squirm out sideways, and he was heavily built, weighing sixteen stone or more.

" We learned that he had just removed his trench waders, and was in a sitting position when a whizz-bang came through the roof and exploded beside him. After the stretcher-bearers had bandaged him, two of us carried him to the dressing-station, about half a mile down the line ; in some places the water was up to the thigh."

Christmas, 1914, Fraternisation

Further interesting details of the unofficial armistice, Christmas, 1914, are furnished by a platoon-sergeant of the 2nd Wiltshires, 21st Brigade :

" On Christmas Eve I saw Christmas trees on the parapet of Bosche trenches at La Boutillerie, near Fleurbaix. The weather was so bad that the trenches were two feet deep in water and rifle bolts stuck owing to mud. The position was so hopeless, I sat on a wet goatskin, very miserable. Just after dawn a pal said : ' Look ! Two Bosches with a white flag.' They approached to within fifty yards of the trench, and asked for a British officer who could speak German. Lieut. Spenser (killed shortly afterwards) went out to them, and a truce was arranged.

" On December 18th the 2nd Warwicks lost practically the whole battalion in the attack on Fromelles. Spenser arranged that we should bury their dead, about four hundred, which we did with German help. At 3.30 p.m., Christmas Day, we all returned to our trenches. On Boxing Day we continued to bury dead. At dusk our machine-gun sergeant, Smart, said : ' They are driving in posts for wire, listen ! ' We had arranged that neither side should do war work. Smart and I got an ammunition band and filled it with S.A.A. very carefully. The gun was then cleaned, and we let fly.

" Next morning Lance-Cpl. Dyer of East Ham got on top of the parapet to jump into a large hole just behind the trench for a sanitary purpose. I called : ' For God's sake, quick ! '—but before I had spoken the second word, *ping !*

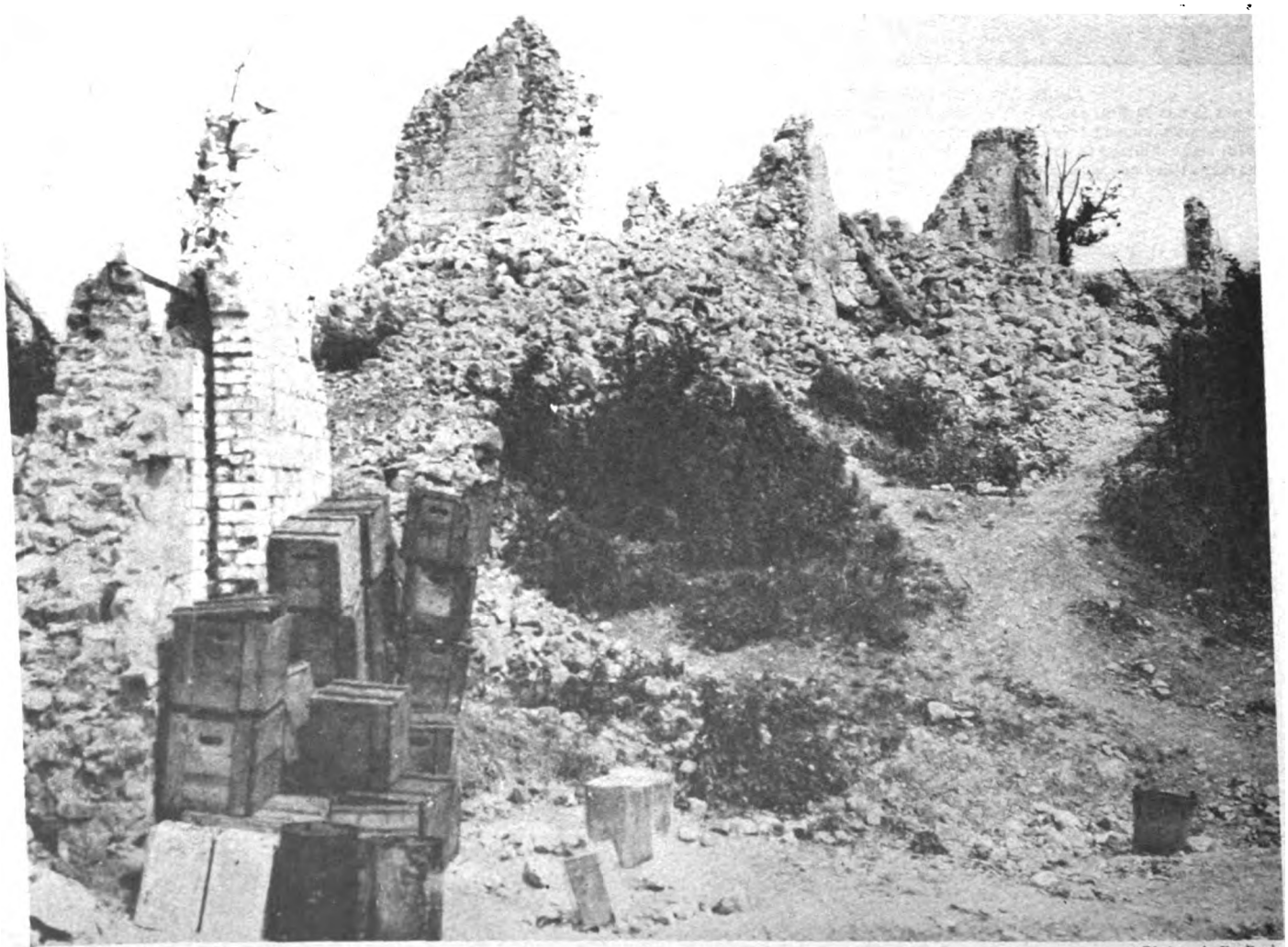

Photo : A. P., Paris.

CONVERTED TO SECULAR USES

This is the church belonging to Roclincourt, the north-of-Arras village whose principal street we illustrated on pages 204-5. As will be perceived by the observant, the building is not in very good repair, and attests to the long period during which the village was in the line. It never actually passed over to the enemy, however, and after the Battle of Arras in April, 1917, was some distance from the front. The Arras fighting of March 28th, 1918, found it well in the rear of the 56th Division sector.

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Photo : A. J. Insall.

RESTORED TO WORSHIP

The chief interest of modern Roclincourt for the ex-Tommy lies in its British cemeteries, which number four. Arras Road Cemetery was begun by the 7th Canadian Battalion (1st British Columbians) after the capture of Vimy Ridge in April, 1917, and contains 504 U.K., 92 Canadian, 15 Australian, and 1 New Zealand fallen. Roclincourt Military Cemetery, begun during the same month by the 51st and 34th Divisions, comprises graves to the total of 776 U.K., 134 Canadian, 6 unidentified, and 4 German. In Roclincourt Valley Cemetery lie 509 U.K. men, 22 South Africans, 2 Canadians, 2 New Zealanders, and 9 unknown soldiers. Finally, in Highland Cemetery are 271 U.K., 33 Canadian, 16 South African, and 1 British West Indian dead.

and he was dead, and that ended our armistice.

"I had an interesting talk with a German officer who had returned to the Fatherland from New York to fight the Russians. He spoke excellent English, and we walked and talked for about two hours. We both agreed that war was most foolish, and he regretted we could not adjourn to a decent hotel for a good feed. He said to me : 'You appear to be a fine young Englishman. I regret that it should be my duty to shoot you and your men when we return to our trenches.' He answered the question of why we were fighting : 'Governments make wars, and the people have to fight ; but the people do not want war.' "

A Pungent Retort

This correspondent, who was commissioned to the 60th Rifles at the end of 1917, says he was going along a communication-trench, with a "pal," C.Q.M.S. Taylor, from the direction of Tower Bridge to Vermelles during the Loos Battle, when an officer poked his head out of a dug-out at about 2 a.m. and shouted : "Who are you ?" Taylor replied : "I am not discussing my b—— relationship with you on a night like this, especially as Capper and Leatham are killed."

The former was O.C. 7th Division, the latter O.C. 2nd Wilts. It was a ghastly night, wet and cold. The officer, a brigadier-general, invited the other two inside his iron-covered hole, was much amused at the retort, and said : "Your remark was not insubordination, but shows the spirit of the British Army—anxiety to get there, and a readiness among all ranks to face up to anything, brigadier-general or Bosche ! "

An ex-2nd Royal Welch Fusilier, 33rd Division, recalls the "treacherous, waterlogged mud-flats of the Passchendaele Salient," which he first knew in the autumn of 1917 at the age of eighteen :

"Can I ever forget that fearful journey over the mud-flats towards Passchendaele Ridge ? Miles around, nothing but stark desolation met the eye. The poor earth, blasted and pitted with countless shell-holes, seemed to cry out in its agony. Those foul, evil-smelling craters, filled with stagnant water, were as much to be feared, going up the line, as the shrapnel shells Jerry sent over—for these duckboard tracks were well 'taped.' To slip into a crater meant death by suffocation. We had to pass one poor fellow who had met such an end ; he served as a kind of land-mark, a grim reminder to those going up the line.

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ordered to move farther round the Ridge, only to find there no cover of any sort. To dig ourselves in before daybreak was imperative, and this we did with entrenching tools. Three days we clung there, rifles clogged with mud, and practically without food. Ration parties sent down to bring up supplies were nearly annihilated."

He also describes the horror of a gas bombardment in the sunken road leading from Bouzincourt toward Senlis :

"Shells came over, not in twos and threes, but in hundreds. Hour after hour of ceaseless bombardment made the whole vicinity reek of mustard, chlorine, and tear gas. Like rats in a trap we crouched in our dug-outs, which honeycombed one side of this road. We choked and gasped, the flesh exposed being burned by these terrible shells, which burst almost noiselessly within a few yards from where we were.

"Even the efficient masks were useless, as the air simply stank with the foul stuff. Towards midnight the shelling ceased, but it was a sorely crippled battalion which found its way back to billets. Over eighty of us were casualties ; even the battalion doctor had been caught while taking cover down a deep dug-out."

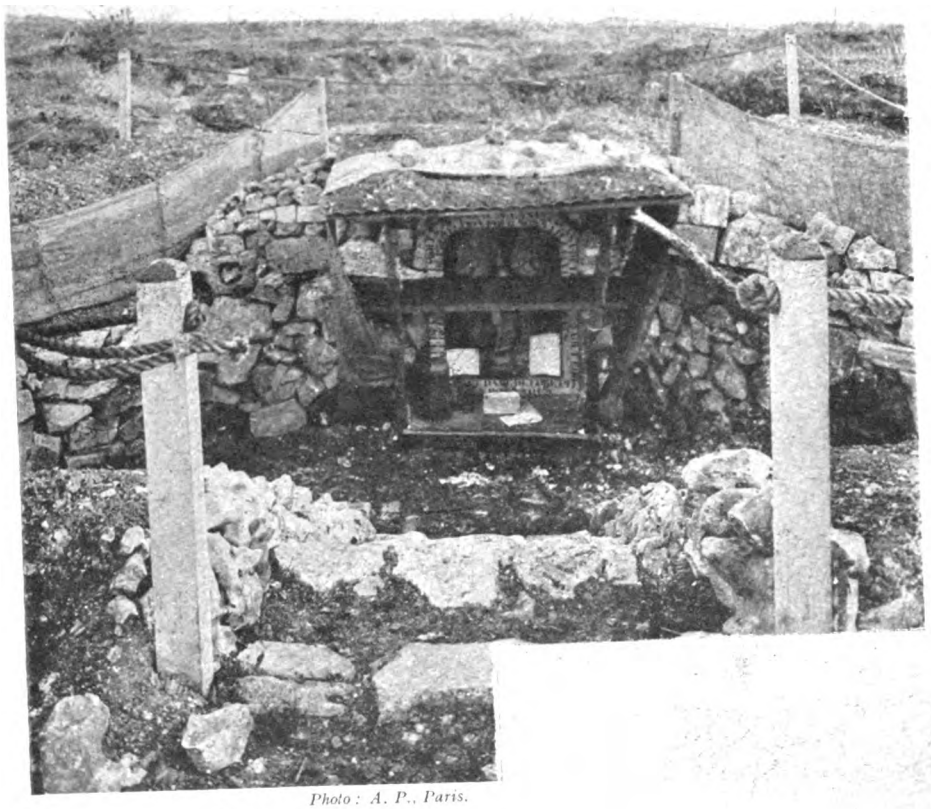

Photo : A. P., Paris.

FOUNDATIONS OF A CHAPEL

The chapel is at Ablain-St. Nazaire, of whose church we reproduced three views on pages 64 and 65 of this Supplementary Volume. The above photograph is dated September 27th, 1917. Notice the statues in the little makeshift but carefully-protected shrine.

A Welshman at Passchendaele

"After traversing the 'K' track, we reached some pill-boxes recently captured from the Germans. Heavy shelling forced us to rest. Darkness had now set in ; there were no more duckboards ; our way lay over a sticky morass ; and a fine, icy cold rain began to fall. We reached our positions near midnight, but how, I do not know.

"Can I ever forget, again, the terrific shelling we had next morning ? Only the mud, which formed a cushion for the bursting shells, saved the battalion from being wiped out. Three bombardments within eight hours simply blasted us out of our positions. That night, under cover of darkness, we were

Photo : A. J. Insall.

NOW A GARAGE

A garage—no less—stands on the hallowed spot where the Chapelle de St. Joseph once reared its sacred walls. In this very utilitarian transformation the only reminder of the past still to be discerned is the curious little shrine over the door. The site of the building (for the benefit of the curious pilgrim) is on the side of a steep hill to the north of the village proper.

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An American Negro Yarn

Another ex-service man contributes this remarkable story: "Some American black soldiers with the Fourth French Army at Wesserling in October, 1918, built a fire to boil a dixie of water. They set four unexploded shells upright, laid fuel between them, set the dixie on top, lighted the fire, and sat down to watch the dixie boil. One darkie, sent for by his C.O. to take a message, was away for a few minutes. On returning, he found no dixie, no fire, no comrades, but a large hole in the earth. Immediately he rushed back and cried to his officer: 'Cap'n, dat coffee he done blow up!'"

Going over the top on April 9th, 1917, after standing all night up to the knees in chalky mud and water, is the outstanding memory of a private of the 21st Northumberland Fusiliers (2nd Tyneside Scottish), 34th Division:

"I lost a boot through the laces being rotted away, and did I curse as I groped for it? I still see Chalk Farm and Bosky Redoubt, where we deloused our shirts with candles. Out in front were the 'K' craters—'King,' 'Katie,' etc. Then the chemical works near Monchy-le-Preux, and my last act in the war—over the top to take Greenland Hill.

"I seemed to be alone in less than a minute after clambering over the parapet. Machine guns swept the boys each side of me away like chaff, then shells came over and mangled and buried the poor bodies. I got only half-way across No Man's Land, and dived into a shell-hole already occupied with what had been men. From there I sniped at Jerry as I saw him run past a broken part of his parapet, until a shell arrived with my number on it. Still, we took our objectives, wiping out two Bavarian battalions. Out of my company of 160 only eleven were left."

This "Jock" gives vivid impressions of a big attack: "We came to a trench, and on the parapet lay a new sandbag, apparently full of something. I was about to touch it with my foot when one chap said, 'Don't touch that! Get away!' We went back a bit, and this

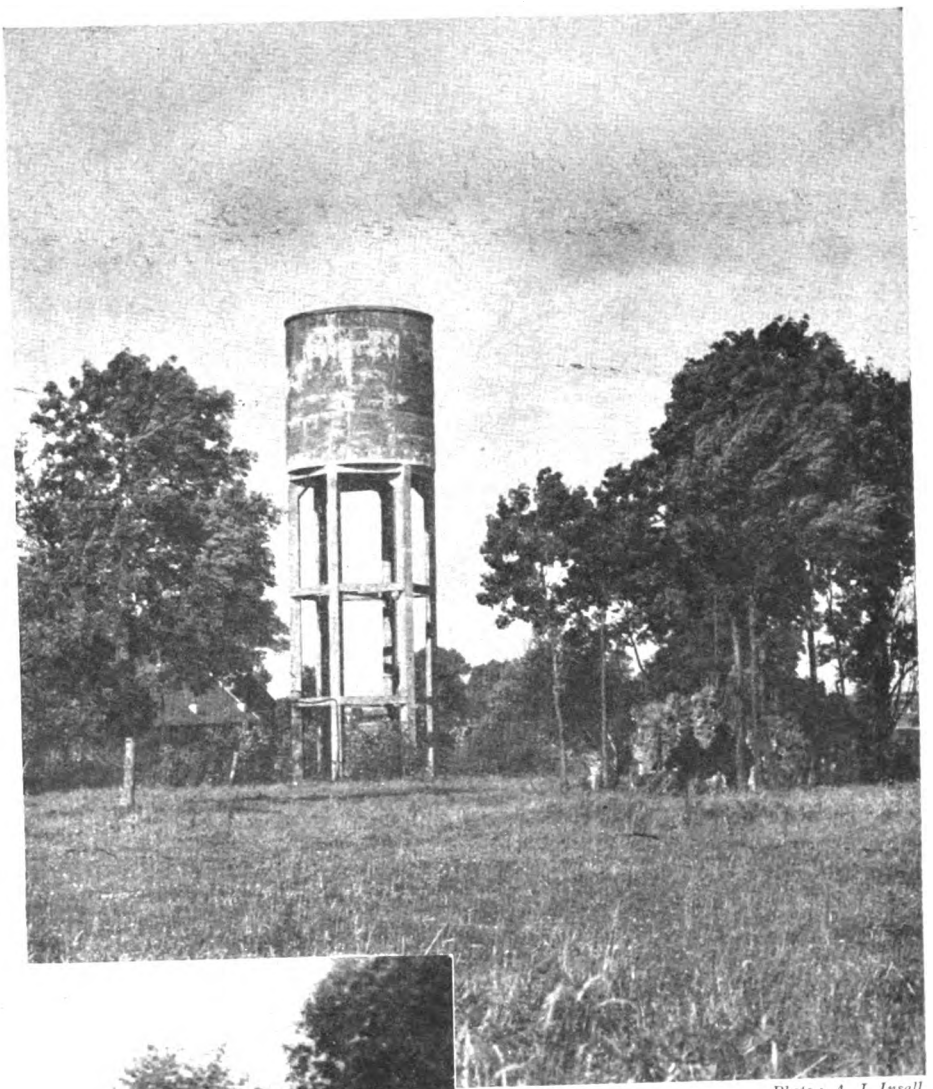

Photo: A. J. Insall.

HOW ARE THE MIGHTY FALLEN

Amid the ruins of what was once a splendid château, the utilitarian post-War era has produced this uncomely water-tower. The scene is at Haplincourt, a village on the Bapaume—Bertincourt road 6 km. east-south-east of the former.

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

MISHAP AT HAPLINCOURT

The shattered château of unhappy Haplincourt as it appeared on July 25th, 1917. This village passed into British hands during the retirement to the Hindenburg Line, and out of them again on March 24th, 1918. On the latter occasion the 5th Brigade of the 2nd Division, retiring with a gap on either side of it, and in a faulty direction, was narrowly saved from annihilation by the 8th Tank Battalion.

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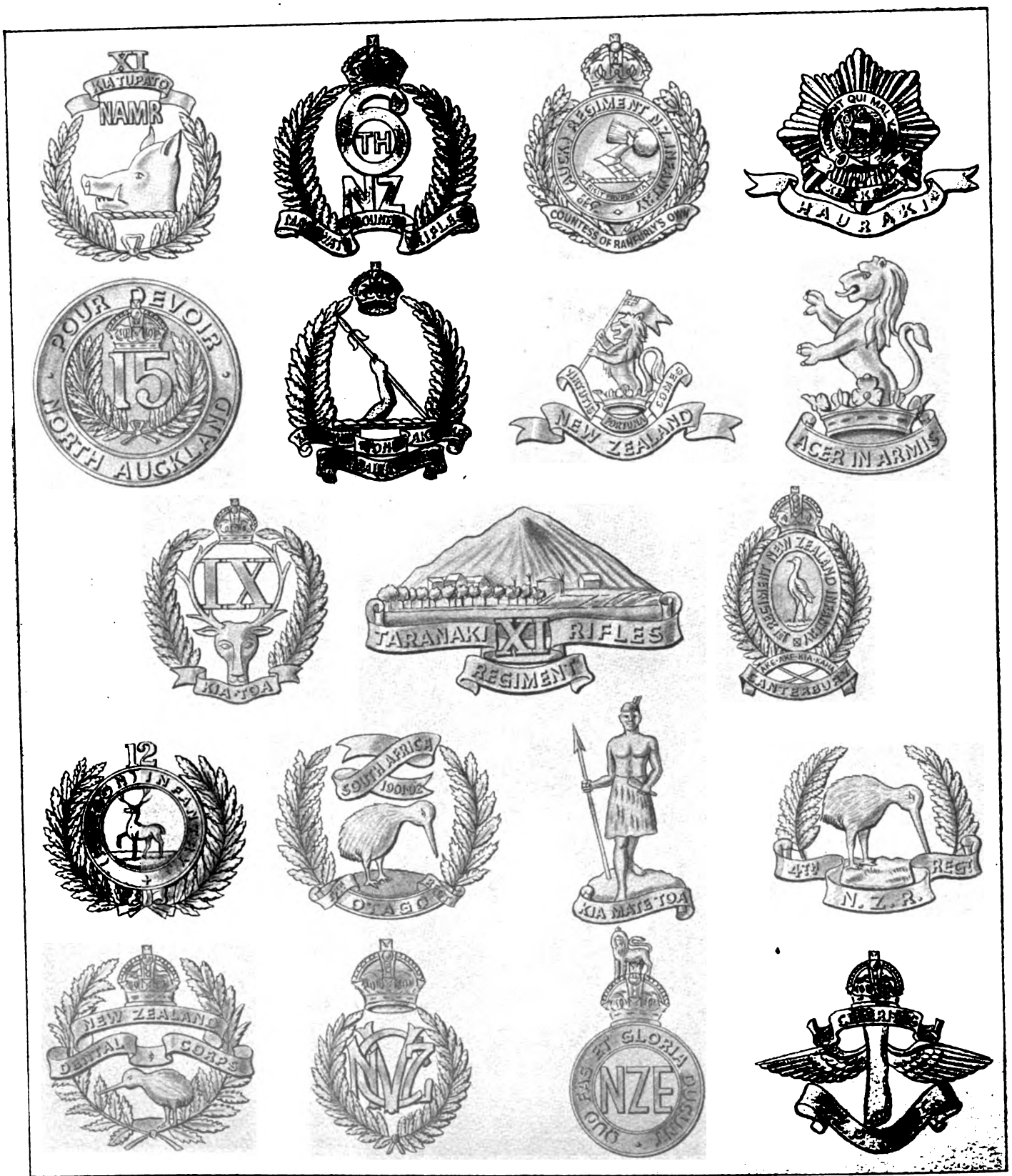

Specially drawn.

OVERSEAS BADGES—SEVENTH SERIES

All the above badges are those of New Zealand formations. From left to right, beginning at the top, they represent: 1—North Auckland Mounted Rifles. 2—Manawatu Mounted Rifles. 3—The Auckland Regt. 4—The Hauraki Regt. 5—The North Auckland Regt. 6—The Waikato Regt. 7—The Wellington Regt. 8—The Wellington West Coast Regt. 9—The Hawke's Bay Regt. 10—The Taranaki Regt. 11—The Canterbury Regt. 12—The Nelson, Marlborough, and West Coast Regt. 13—The Otago Regt. 14—The Southland Regt. 15—The 4th New Zealand Rifle Regt. 16—New Zealand Dental Corps. 17—N.Z. Veterinary Corps. 18—N.Z. Engineers. 19—N.Z. Corps of Signals.

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fellow fired at it. It exploded! I threw up my arm in front of my face, and got a small piece of metal in the forearm and another in the upper arm. Saying 'So long!' to my mates, I did about-turn. I thought this was good luck! . . .

"Many dead lay about me, some without a wound, killed by the blast of exploding shells. I noticed one poor chap blown deep into the side of a trench; not a spot of blood to be seen, but his arms were zig-zag as if broken about every two inches. Yet the skin was unbroken."

Horses Before Humanity

He is frank about others, but does not spare himself. Once, at Rouen, "we had a stampede after returning from watering the horses. Many men were hurt, and a nice colonel shouted: 'Never mind the men! Look after the horses!' So the wounded were left lying until the horses were looked after. He got a D.S.O. for saving so many horses. . . .

"Crown-and-Anchor schools soon sprang up, and I made a few francs drawing out 'boards' on ground sheets with indelible pencil. I also made passes for the town at half a franc a time. Being handy with a pencil, I easily drew a reproduction of the Orderly Room stamp; after wetting this slightly, it closely resembled the real thing, complete with name of section and date. Any kind of scribble passed as an official signature. Men in my section were always well supplied with passes, and never once did they fail to get by. . . .

"There was one coveted job at Rouen: taking horses up the line in the familiar *Hommes* 40—*Chevaux* (*en long*) 8 vans. The worst part of this was passing through the long Sotteville tunnel, after crossing the Seine; the horses took fright; flying hooves and snapping teeth made us get outside the horse-boxes and hang on to the side, blinded and choked by engine smoke. Emerging into daylight again, a fine mix-up of horses and fodder had to be sorted out."

When in rest billets at Arras, the same writer says, he and his comrades marched up to Roclincourt each night, and were detailed to parties of R.E.'s who were making deep dug-outs and mining under the German line in preparation for a big attack. "I have no doubt that those engineers were often puzzled as to where their respective parties disappeared. As we proceeded up the 'C.T.,' the rear men would fall behind, then scramble up out of the

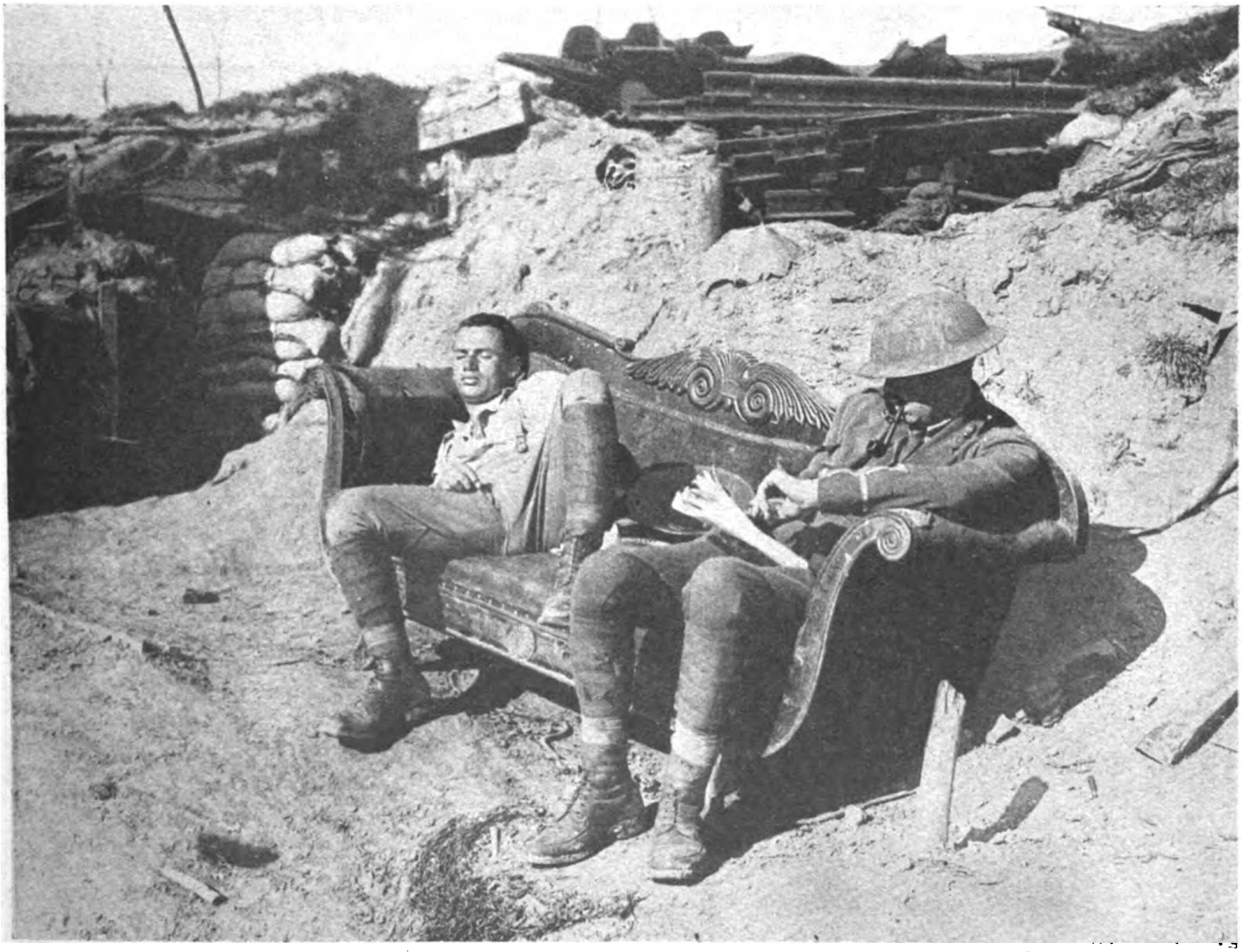

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

ALL QUIET ON THE WESTERN FRONT

All very quiet, in fact, unless the one on the far side is snoring: so quiet that you could hear a bomb drop. The officers enjoying this blissful hour are gunners stationed near Zillebeke, the date being September 24th, 1917. The photograph is included in our pages to illustrate the fact that there were moments of peace—and of sunshine—even during "Third Ypres." We vigorously deny any malicious attempt to show ex-infantry readers what life was like in the artillery.

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trench, make their way back overland to the Roclincourt road, and so arrive back in billets—the old French infantry barracks—where we found them snug in 'kip.'

A Neat Dodge Thwarted

"I decided I was not going to do all the infantry work myself, and quite a number of the boys thought as I did, so we became 'missing men' at nights as well. The dodge was spoiled through a sergeant coming round the billets during the night and finding men asleep not long after he had seen them march off as a working party. N.C.O.'s were detailed after this to visit billets at unknown times and put under arrest any dodgers found at home.

"However, they still dodged, and must have found sanctuary somewhere. I found a latrine just outside the town, put up for artillerymen who had a battery near by, which seemed to be unused during the night. Here I used to snooze until I could safely return to billets. Shells came over now and then, but never too near my retreat."

One night, he adds, he was working in a mine-shaft which was being driven under the German front line; they had to work silently and quickly, because Fritz was counter-mining; if they stood motionless, they could hear him pick-pick-picking. Among them was a very pious comrade, who got a lot of chaffing.

"On this occasion this religious fellow threw off his tunic and challenged his tormentor. The other likewise peeled, and soon a battle royal was on, shouts and blows resounding in our small underground chamber, which could not have been many yards away from Fritz. With many whispered curses we and the R.E. miners separated the combatants, and then we had to listen. Had Fritz heard the racket? We sat in silence for a while; then we heard him pick-picking away, so all was well."

This correspondent also recalls a Frenchwoman and her family, refugees from Fromelles, who lived in Gonnehem, not far from Béthune: "This good-hearted lady used to supply us with hot coffee in the early mornings when we were in billets there. The family, now grown up, have been able to return to their old village—rebuilt—and my brother paid them a visit in January, 1936. Mme Delebecque acted like a mother to me in 1916, and I'll never forget it."

Grisly Humour

A man of the 2nd Bedfordshire Regt. tells of this incident in July, 1916: "After a most harassing time getting into Trônes Wood and digging ourselves in, everyone wondering who would be the next to hear the angels, a lad of the King's Liverpool Regt. came by with his eye hanging on his cheek. 'Why the hell don't you salute Nelson when he comes by?' he asked."

From the original painting in the Imperial War Museum.

A PALACE FIT FOR KINGS

Well, some kings, anyway. Adrian Hill painted this interior dug-out scene at Gavrelle in 1917. Born in Kent in 1895, this very young painter achieved no small success as an Official Artist on the Western Front, and has since become widely known for his water-colour landscapes. He was elected a member of the Royal Institute of Painters in Water-colour in 1928. Gavrelle, the scene of the above sketch, is of course the village of that name on the Arras—Douai road.

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Photo: A. J. Insall.

CAUCOURT

This is a back-area village, situated 18 km. north-west of Arras and 15 km. south-south-west of Béthune. Caucourt was not seriously damaged by air-raids or bombardments, and is still delightfully ancient. Its quaintness, seclusion, and fragrant surroundings must have won the heart of many a Tommy lucky enough to be billeted there.

The writer says he knew three chums who were always together. "We were holding a rather hot part of the line when one of them was killed. The other two said they would see that he was buried, so they got him out on top; but Jerry saw them, and one was wounded, so they came in again. However, the wounded one wouldn't go away until they had been out yet again and buried their chum. There was no medal for that: it was not of military importance."

A reader who crossed the Somme in the final advance of August, 1918, says: "We landed amongst dug-outs, which we had to bomb to save trouble, and there came face to face with some Germans, who did not recover from the surprise as quickly as we did. At the moment I had a bomb with the pin out in one hand, and my rifle in the other. I was too close to throw the bomb without risk to myself, so with a shout I went straight at them as if the whole Army were at my heels.

"Not only did their hands go up: they went down on their knees to beg for mercy. They were sent off down the road whilst we kept a weather eye on the dug-outs. At this time our barrage was absolutely over our heads, and the 12-pounders [*sic*] were firing at extreme range, so that we could see the shells before the shrapnel exploded just in front of us."

An ex-Sergeant of the Royal Scots, writing from Canada, tells of a curious character, "Ginger," who was a fellow-patient in the 1st Eastern General Hospital at Cambridge. He was a digger from "down under," uneducated, raw, and wild; and he hated visitors—especially a kind old lady who came regularly with a big black bag. As soon as Ginger saw her he ducked below the bedclothes, growling like a bear. She gently uncovered his head; he jerked up and gave her a scorching glance.

Visitors to Hospital

"Good afternoon," she said. "Do you require any matches, writing paper, or envelopes?"

"No," Ginger barked. "I wanna sleep."

She sadly turned away, halted at the next bed, and again glanced at Ginger.

"Were you wounded in the Dardanelles?"

Ginger scowled, then grinned.

"No, mum. I was hit in the leg."

"Was it a bullet?"

"Bullet be blowed! It was a shell, and it crawled down my back and bit me."

One day the hospital had a very distinguished visitor in military uniform. Ginger, as usual, was under the clothes, and only bobbed up to view the tail of the procession.

"And who," he asked the writer, "was that little guy with the big bunch of tape after him?"

"It was His Majesty the King."

"Gosh!" Ginger ejaculated. "He's the only guy in this hospital I wanted to talk to. It would have been something to tell the boys about down under."

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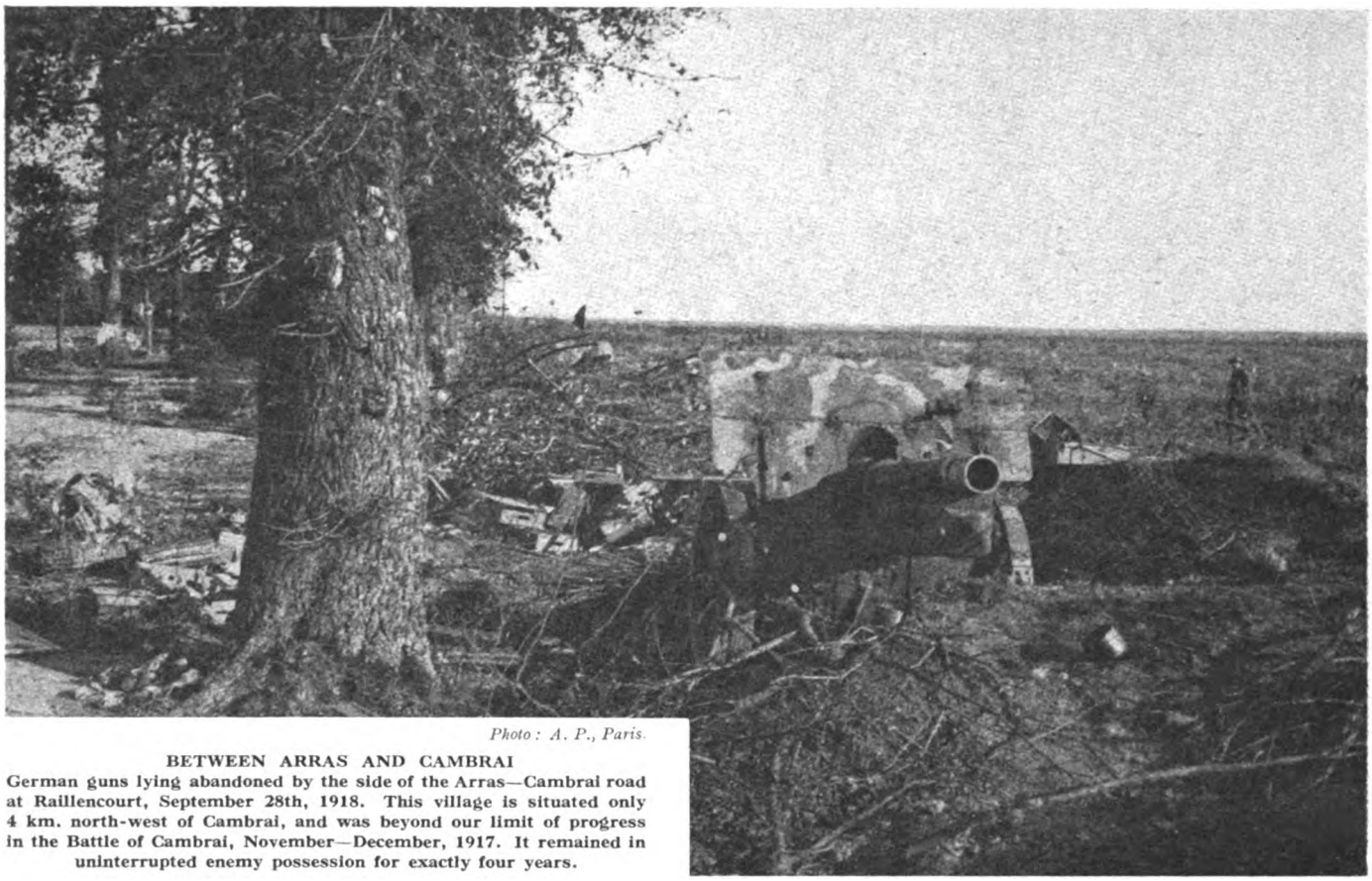
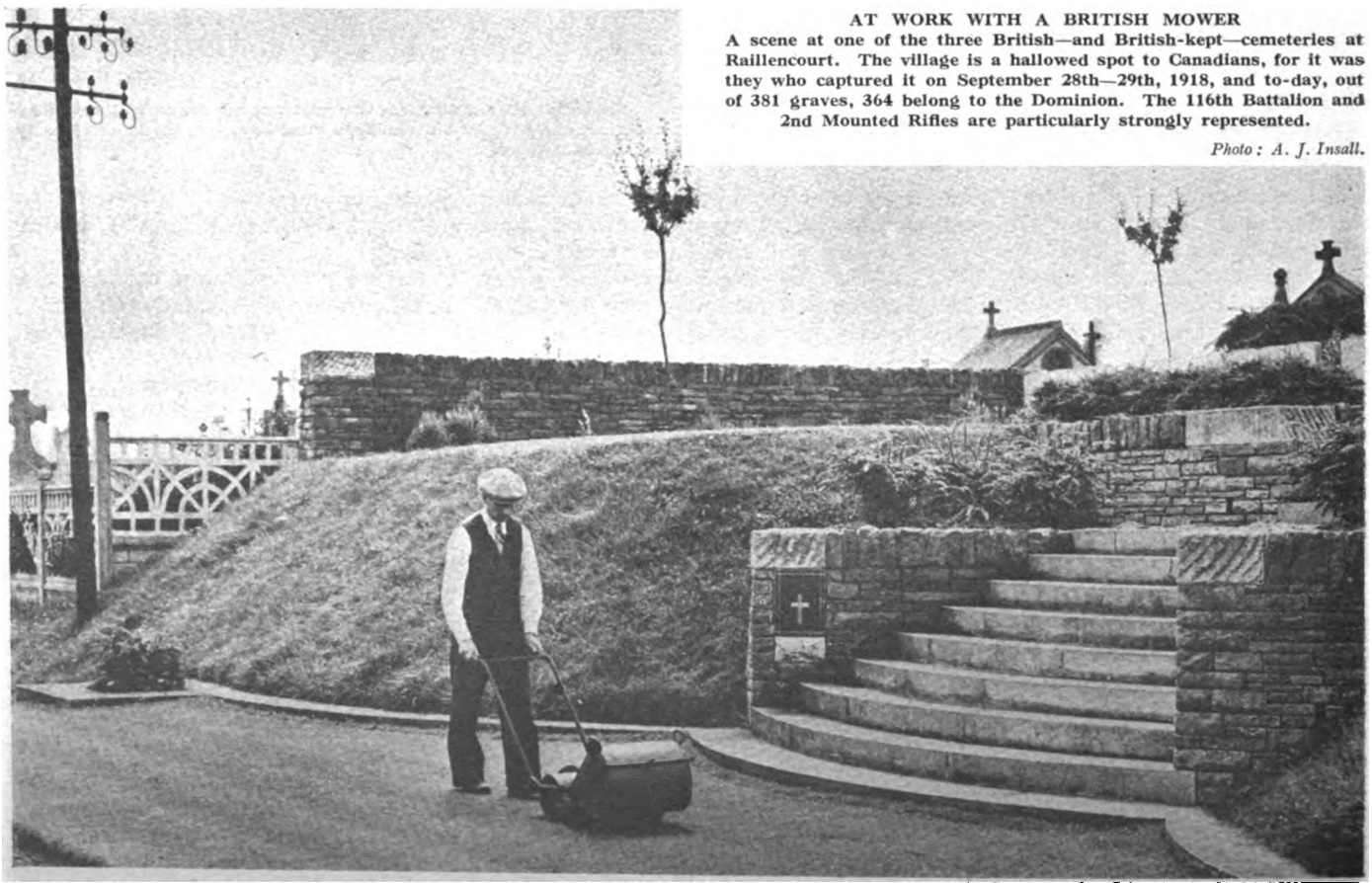


Photo : A. P., Paris.

BETWEEN ARRAS AND CAMBRAI

German guns lying abandoned by the side of the Arras—Cambrai road at Raillencourt, September 28th, 1918. This village is situated only 4 km. north-west of Cambrai, and was beyond our limit of progress in the Battle of Cambrai, November—December, 1917. It remained in uninterrupted enemy possession for exactly four years.



AT WORK WITH A BRITISH MOWER

A scene at one of the three British—and British-kept—cemeteries at Raillencourt. The village is a hallowed spot to Canadians, for it was they who captured it on September 28th—29th, 1918, and to-day, out of 381 graves, 364 belong to the Dominion. The 116th Battalion and 2nd Mounted Rifles are particularly strongly represented.

Photo : A. J. Insall.

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CHAPTER XIII

MORE ABOUT THE GUNS

Gunnery is to many of us a mystery. To the infantryman sitting in his trench it is sometimes an unpleasant mystery. As the big shells pass to and fro on their business of death he sits tight and hopes for the best. To him it all seems very haphazard, and he hopes that the gunners, particularly his own gunners, know their job. Actually, gunnery as practised to-day is a very exact science, and many and varied are the methods employed to ensure that shells hit their target. Here a gunnery expert deals with some of the mysteries of his craft, and explains certain of those matters which, to many perhaps, have hitherto been but dimly comprehended.

WHEN gunners went out to France in 1914, they expected to be able to see and engage hostile batteries either from the battery position or from some observation post close by. These expectations proved vain. The effect of the fire of artillery and machine guns was such that artillerymen on both sides sought covered positions visible only from the air. A new problem had to be solved—that of ranging on well-concealed batteries.

Primitive Methods of 1914

In 1914, aeroplanes were scarce, and all that airmen could do, apart from occasional and elementary ranging, was to locate hostile batteries and pin-point them on the maps available. Granting—and it is granting a good deal—that the pin-pointing was accurate, the gunner was still left with much to do to compensate for lack of personal observation. He had to find his own position and obtain by measurement the range and direction of the target. In these tasks, it was clear that the accuracy of the map would be an important factor.

The French maps available were drawn to a scale of $\frac{1}{80,000}$—far too small for the satisfactory measurement of distances and angles. Fresh maps were therefore prepared and issued, drawn to a scale of $\frac{1}{40,000}$. On them was superimposed a "grid," that is, a system of squares, one side of which pointed north. The largest squares, to which were allotted block letters, had sides 6,000 yards in length.[1] They were divided into 36 numbered squares of sides 1,000 yards long, which themselves were subdivided into four squares, lettered a, b, c, d. Finally, the smallest squares were divided into tenths, the figures originating from the south-west corner.

At first, officers carried these maps in their map-cases, and, when they measured ranges, smoothed out the creases as far as possible on any convenient board. The position of the battery from which the measurements had to originate was also found in somewhat rough fashion, estimation being made of its distance and direction from some natural or artificial feature close by, and marked on the map. The standard of accuracy obtained by such methods was, of course, very low.

French procedure was no further advanced than ours. In the spring of 1915, the present writer took over a position from a French brigade-commander in the Ypres salient. He showed me round his three batteries of antique ordnance with great pride. Their shooting, he claimed, was beyond reproach, their camouflage so perfect that they were never fired on. Actually, the camouflage was bad, and it was difficult for me to decide which was the least conspicuous position of the three to take for my own battery.

Why the Enemy Ignored Him

We then adjourned to the Frenchman's office, where I hoped to obtain a few wrinkles as to shooting. How was it that his batteries shot so well? Was he given air-observation? No, machines were too scarce. Had he got a good O.P.? No, he had no O.P., the country was too flat for ground observation. Did he use "meteor"? He had never heard of it. In fact, his preparations for shooting boiled down to the use of a small-scale, ungridded map, neatly marked with the arcs of fire of his three batteries. On the whole, it was not surprising that the Germans left him alone. Why waste ammunition on a harmless opponent?

Gradually, however, as the line solidified and positions were held for long periods, methods improved. Battery-commanders had their positions resected with care by members of the Survey Companies R.E., who provided maps drawn to a scale of $\frac{1}{20,000}$, as well as artillery boards on which their map could be fixed and the pin-point of their pivot gun and their arcs of fire shown.

About this time, G.H.Q. ordered batteries to register all likely targets on their front—gun positions, cross-roads, strong-points, etc.—that is, to engage them with any observation available, and to tabulate the range and direction, when found, in a book.

Ammunition was very scarce, and was doled out in miserly fashion. This order, if obeyed, would mean a large expenditure, and to no purpose. I therefore protested, pointing out that, with the shooting methods in vogue, which took no heed of "meteor," the range and direction found one day would prove incorrect for the next, and that a much cheaper and more accurate method would be to shoot in on a zero point, register its range and direction after cutting out all variations from the normal,[1] and use the line gun—zero point as a zero line. Then, when any particular target had to be engaged, the switch and range could be measured from the map and corrected according to the "error of the moment."

A few days later the answer came—"You will do what you're told." No bother about arguing the point. Yours not to reason why. Yours but to do. However, subordination has definite limits when the cause is good. So we kept to our own methods until, a few months, perhaps a year, later, they became universal.

One Officer and One Clerk

A few months after this, the R.E. came to our aid and created "Survey." This branch of the Army made its début in the War with a strength of one officer and one clerk at G.H.Q., and one other officer and two more clerks on the line of communications. At the Armistice, it numbered nearly 400 officers and 6,000

[1] This was not the first system adopted, but it came early into use and remained substantially unchanged.

[1] Conditions were regarded as normal when there was no wind, the barometer was 30 in., and the thermometer 60° F.

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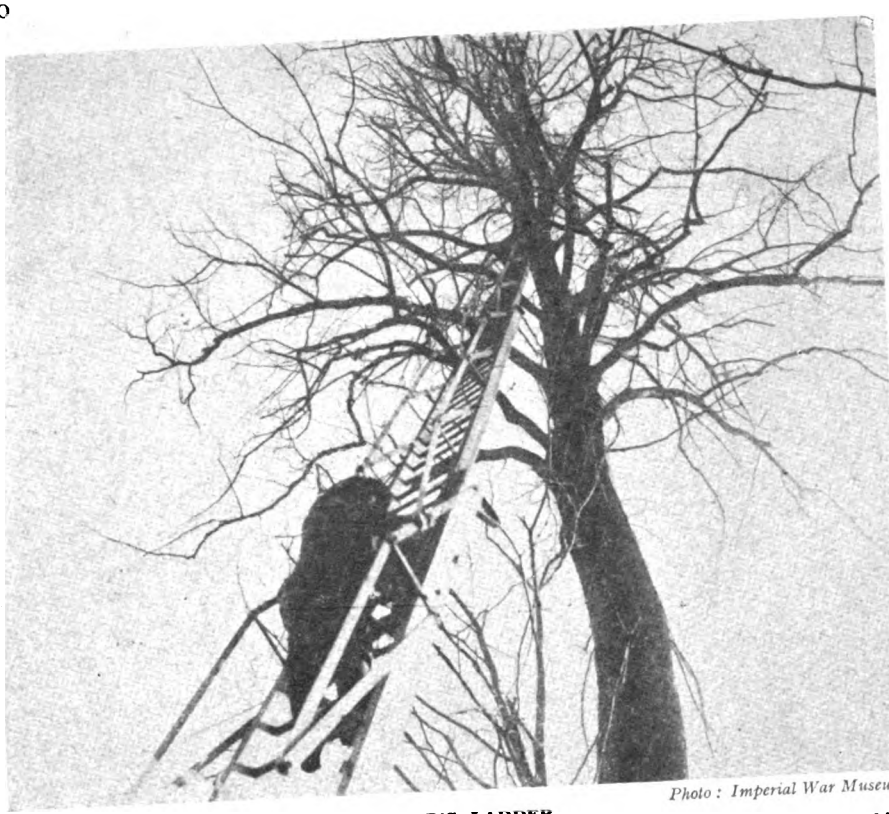

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

JACOB'S LADDER

Jacob being, in this case, an artillery observer. In point of fact, the ladder is a fire-escape, which presumably means that, if the enemy chance to spot this observer, he can escape down it from the fire of their guns, machine guns, Lewis guns, howitzers, trench mortars, and rifles. The photograph was taken on March 13th, 1918, at Cambrin, a place already illustrated more than once in our previous volumes.

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

AUSTRALIAN GUNNERS "AT HOME"

Intimate photograph of the interior of an "elephant iron" and reinforced-concrete dug-out belonging to officers of the 105th Howitzer Battery, 4th Brigade, Australian Field Artillery, on Hill 60. The date is August 27th, 1917, during the "lull" between the Battles of Langemarck and the Menin Road Ridge. The "diggers" seem to have received a good mail from 'way down under.

men, organised in Field Survey Battalions—one to each Army.

It introduced a higher standard in mapping. The battery positions and aiming-points were now resected from triangulation points, and were fixed with greater accuracy than before. It also provided an improved artillery board, in which errors due to the stretching and crinkling of the paper were eliminated. Then, with the introduction of calculations to ascertain the "error of the moment," and of the method, just described, of shooting in on a zero line, map-shooting reached a high standard.

Owing, however, to the difficulty of accurately measuring angles from a map, it was still necessary to register guns—that is, to range them on the zero point or some other suitable target prior to a great attack; and, as this firing had a character of its own, it was interpreted by the enemy to be the prelude to a major operation, thus precluding surprise.

In 1917, "Survey" solved this problem for us. It fixed the position of the pivot gun and its true bearing when laid in the zero line with a very high degree of accuracy. Registration was then no longer necessary, and it became possible to launch great attacks, as at Cambrai, and on the 8th August, 1918, without warning the enemy beforehand, by artillery action. In doing this, "Survey" rendered a signal service to the country; for it made possible, for the first time on the Western Front, the application of the factor of surprise, without which no victory can be won except at devastating cost. With that achievement, map-shooting reached its highest level.

The power of inflicting a surprise lay in the ability of the Survey Companies to carry out all the work in the preparation of attack prior to the arrival of the additional troops and guns needed for major operations. Thus the super-heavy and the larger heavy guns which had taken part in Rawlinson's attack on the 8th August, 1918, on being transferred to Byng's front for the attack there on the 21st of that month, found that arrangements had already been made to enable them to open effective fire. This procedure repeated with guns transferred to Horne and to Plumer enabled a whole succession of surprise strokes to be delivered, and was a principal factor in causing the whole hostile line to crumble.

Difficult to Award the Palm

It is hard to say to whom the introduction of these methods should be

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credited. The German artillery under Bruchmüller—who, owing to his consistent success in their employment, earned the name of Durchbruchmüller—used them in the attack on Riga in September, 1917. We used them first in November, 1917, at Cambrai; but our survey experts had been recommending them long before that battle.

It is interesting to note that it was by accident rather than by design that "Survey" came into its own. Cambrai was intended as a tank battle, and was the first tank attack to be carried out as a properly orchestrated action of all arms. In order to ensure surprise, the General Staff laid down three conditions: (1) That there should be no registration. (2) That there should be no bombardment of trenches and wire. (3) That artillery should fire on the hostile guns.

It was impossible to fulfil these requirements by the methods then in use. "Survey" offered a solution; and it was accepted, not because of any general belief in its feasibility, but because there was no other solution possessing a basis of reason.

Although Bruchmüller had adopted survey methods successfully at Riga, his army (that is, von Hutier's) was the only one to employ them on the 21st March, 1918. The success which he won that day converted the doubters, and, accordingly, bombardment without registration was the rule in all the great German offensives of that year.

Curiously enough, it was by accident, too, that we discovered the method which we used. Prior to the Battle of the Somme, a super-heavy railway gun was required to take the Albert—Bapaume road in enfilade. It was easy enough to build a siding roughly in the right direction, but some device much more accurate than that was needed to ensure the correct laying of the gun on an object 13 miles away.

"The solution to the problem was found by providing an accurately surveyed point convenient to the siding, from which it was possible to lay a 'director' accurately on any required bearing—in this case the line of the . . . road. The gun could then be laid parallel to this bearing, using the ordinary artillery drill for this purpose.

"This was the origin of the 'Bearing Picket' that afterwards became so familiar to all gunners." [1]

Ranging Siege Artillery

In the meantime, "Survey" had been engaged in another of its tasks—the

[1] Innes, *Flash Spotters and Sound Rangers*, p. 24.

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

EAST OF ALBERT

Signallers of the R.G.A. using a daylight lamp in a shell-hole in front of Fricourt Wood during September, 1916. The remains of the wood, which was very small and lay just east of Fricourt village, may be seen in the background. Wood and village had formed a salient in the German line until the commencement of the Somme battle. They were then held on July 1st, but fell to the XV Corps on the 2nd.

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

PLAYING AT FIREWORKS

Artillery signal rockets in their rack in a trench near Arleux-en-Gohelle during 1918. This Arleux (to be distinguished from the bigger one south of Douai) lies 5 km. east of Vimy, on the road from Arras to Hénin-Liétard and Lille; and on the date of the photograph—which is not November 5th, but January 9th—the sector shown was held by the 12th East Yorks.

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location of targets for the artillery. The processes involved were known as "Sound Ranging" and "Flash Spotting."

Prior to the War, the ranging of siege artillery was carried out largely by cross-observation by accurate instruments established at the ends of a measured base. The instruments were clamped with their zero line on the target, and admitted of angular readings being taken of the fall of the shell right or left of that line. The intersection of the bearings gave the position of burst, and, after being plotted, was used by the battery-commander in making his corrections.

This system was tried in France, but was discarded as being too cumbersome.

The same principle was, however, applied to "Flash Spotting," in which process the position, not of the shell-burst, but of the flash of a hostile gun, was established by the intersections of bearings from two or more observation posts.

These posts were good view-points within our own lines, and were accurately surveyed. Observations were always taken by night, when flashes, even those deep down behind an intervening ridge, were usually visible. By this method, the position of each gun whose flash was intersected could be established within 30 yards, provided it was not more than 6,000 yards distant from our line, and that its flash was more than just a glow. At long ranges, the error was liable to be greater, but never so large as to discount the real value of the system.

"The real problem of 'flash spotting' consists, not in actually observing the flash, but in selecting successively one particular flash out of many which appear, and ensuring that all observers, who must necessarily be placed a considerable distance apart, take their observations to that one. This problem is much more difficult and for some time defied solution. It was solved early in 1916 in the following way.

"Instead of allowing each observer to select his own flash, observation stations, known as flash-spotting posts, are worked in 'groups' of from three to six. All the flash-spotting posts in each group are connected by telephone to a central headquarters or plotting-centre, from which the observations are directed and controlled, and where the results are worked out.

An Excellent Method

"The control is effected by means of a special pattern of telephone exchange and a specially arranged plotting-board, which enables the officer directing the

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

UNDER GERMAN OCCUPATION

Thrilled by our previous discoveries in the realm of comparative photography from the air, we have felt impelled to make further [illegible] and in consequence have brought to light this "Then" and "Before-Then" pair of pictures from the Arras neighbourhood. The views show the chemical works at Rœux, a village on the north bank of the Scarpe, 3 km. east of Fampoux. The date of the above illustration is April 8th, 1917—the eve of our attack on the enemy's positions west of here.

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Photo: Imperial War Museum.

THE BRITISH REMEDY

The usual tale of artillery havoc. It should be noted, by the way, that the pictures are set at different angles. To align them accurately, the bombarded view would have to be turned through slightly more than 90 degrees in an anti-clockwise direction, until the small white crosses near the top of each photograph lay parallel. Rœux chemical works were captured on May 11th, 1917—the village, entered and abandoned on the 3rd, eventually falling on the 14th.

work first to select any particular flash out of several visible, then to direct or concentrate all his observers towards it, to know when all have 'picked it up,' and, finally, quickly to work out the results of their observations. Without going into the details of the equipment and procedure, it may be said that the method of control now in use, when worked by well-trained detachments, enables a hostile battery to be located with precision and certainty after five or six rounds have been seen."[1]

There are limitations, of course, to the employment of flash spotting. It is impossible to use it in foggy weather, or in areas where there is an absence of suitable observation posts. Occasionally a big star or a rising moon was reported as a flash. Once a number of observers reported a flash, but, strangely enough, they all gave it the same bearing. It proved to be a star, and naturally, it being at an infinite distance, all bearings to it were parallel.

Height was a great advantage for observation, and, where hills did not exist, use was made of church steeples and towers. Sometimes the only spot from which a good view could be obtained was a point in or near the front line. Then observations were taken from a trench with a periscope, but the angle of view was naturally very small. For effective work, it was essential, somehow or other, to cover every part of the hostile front from at least three posts. As a rule, posts were two to three miles apart, and to be found as far back as eight miles behind the front.

Recruiting for a new Service was no easy matter. Units are loath to part with good observers, whether officers or men. However, useful recruits gradually trickled in. It was not always those with the highest recommendations who proved the best. "One Category 'C' man who had been sent up from the base as a cook, turned out a first-class observer; so a man who had turned out rather a dud as an observer was made into a cook to take his place. He, in turn, sent up top-hole meals."[1]

All would then have been well had it not been for the matter of pay. The observer (late cook) was drawing a mere bob a day, whereas the cook (late observer) was getting sapper-pay plus corps-pay, and the former naturally had a grievance.

The Best Observers Wore Glasses

"Curiously enough, good eyesight was not an essential. In fact, one

[1] M. N. MacLeod, "Survey Work in Modern War," *R. A. Journal*, xlviii, p. 195.

[1] MacLeod, *op. cit.*, p. 205.

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Photo: A. P., Paris.

DEMISE OF A FURNACE

This photograph comes from the heavy-industry region north of Lens. The metal works, whose broken furnaces are shown, lie between the villages of Wingles and Pont-à-Vendin, respectively 8 km. north-north-east and 6 km. north-east of Lens. Both places were in German keeping for many, many moons. Our picture is dated November 1st, 1918.

experienced N.C.O. claims that the best observers were men who were accustomed to wearing glasses. He claims that men who normally used glasses found it less irksome to use binoculars or telescopes for long periods, whereas the man with good eyesight was inclined to trust too much to his own faculties." [1]

Most of the senior officers had been architects, surveyors, etc., in civil life, although there was a good sprinkling of men from other professions. Artists were particularly welcome, though not because the dry bones of "Survey" required to be vitalised and coloured by imaginative touches. "Survey" is a soulless, rigid, scrupulously exact and scientific subject which does not lend itself to any such treatment. It was because, in the long hours of waiting and watching for targets, the artists decorated the walls of the dug-outs and observation posts with many a lively and jovial sketch.

Among other professions represented was the Church of Scotland clergy. Some people supposed that the flash-spotting minister had been considered as technically qualified because of his experience as a sky-pilot. Others thought that his qualifications had been misunderstood owing to his broad Scottish accent.

During the great German advances in 1918, large numbers of "Survey" posts were destroyed by bombardment. Moreover, the deep penetrations effected by the enemy temporarily broke up the whole of the organisation of the Service. Survey-men were therefore thrown out of work, and often found themselves filling a gap, making a counter-attack, or carrying out some other similar duty to which they were quite unaccustomed. One company, which formed part of Carey's Force, hastily assembled to defend Amiens, was personally congratulated by Sir Henry Rawlinson for the fine part it had played in bringing the hostile advance to a halt.

Sound Ranging

We may now turn to sound ranging. When a stone is thrown into a pond, it causes a ripple or wave which, centred on the point of splash, advances in all directions in the form of an ever-increasing circle, and so gradually dies down. Similarly the discharge of a gun causes a vibration or ripple in the atmosphere, which travels outwards from the gun in broadening circles and gradually diminishes in strength. In still air this ripple, which is known as the "sound wave," moves at a uniform velocity of about 1,100 feet a second.

It occurred to many officers who were having great difficulty in locating hostile guns, that it might be possible to fix their position by spotting the flash and timing the travel of the report of discharge. But that would have been possible only at night, as flashes are but seldom seen by day. Others suggested a number of sound-receiving stations at which the time of arrival of the report of a particular gun might be registered and plotted.

The latter idea was developed by the French, and brought into practice by them as early as November, 1914. We were very slow in adopting the system, and even in carrying out serious experiments. But on the recommendation of two R.E. officers who had witnessed the work of a French sound-ranging section, it was adopted by us and all the other Allied armies. Once we did take it up, we worked at it very thoroughly, and eventually brought the science to a high pitch of perfection.

The general principle on which sound ranging is found is simple. The report of the gun reaches in succession a number of accurately surveyed sound-receiving stations. Let us suppose that the sound reaches three such stations, M1 first, M2 a second later, and M3 two seconds later. These points will all be on circles centred on the gun. Let us now imagine one such circle passing

[1] MacLeod, *op. cit.*, p. 207.

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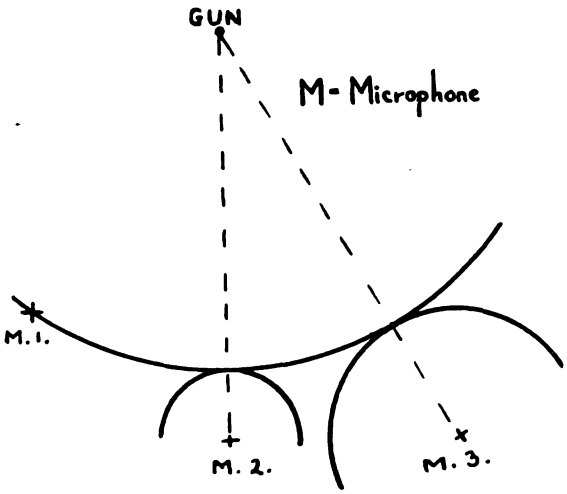

THE PRINCIPLE OF SOUND RANGING
This diagram has been inserted to simplify part of the accompanying text, where a full explanation of it will be found. Point M. 2 is 1,100 feet, and M. 3 2,200 feet, farther from the gun than M. 1.

through M1. Then, with centre M2 and radius 1,100 feet, draw one circle, and with centre M3 and radius 2,200 feet draw another circle. A circle passing through M1 and touching the other two circles will have the gun at its centre. Thus, if the arrival of the sound at three or more stations whose positions have been accurately surveyed is recorded, the origin of the sound can be plotted.[1]

When the sound arrives at the microphone, an electrical impulse is sent along the cable connecting the microphone with the recording station. At the latter is a galvanometer with six strings (*i.e.* fine wires), each of which is connected to a microphone at one of the six microphone stations controlled by the recording station. The impulse gives the wire a kick which is easily detected.

[1] Innes, *op. cit.*, p. 130.

What the Film Showed

"It was fascinating to watch the strings kick one after the other when a gun was firing, and then a few seconds later to hear the gun itself at H.Q. The shadows of the strings were thrown by a lamp upon a slit behind which a cinematograph film was in motion while recording was under way. When the film was developed, the shadows appeared as white lines running along the film, and, if the 'string' had got a kick, it appeared as a break in this line. At the same time, the light was interrupted a hundred times a second by a toothed wheel, so that 'time markings' were automatically ruled on the film as it ran."[1]

For each recording station, we had six microphones spread out along a base 9,000 yards long, and up to 4,000 yards behind the line. In front were two O.P.s containing forward observers, placed there to catch the sound first and give warning to all stations that it would

[1] *Ibid.*, p. 131.

Photo: A. J. Insall.

PROSPERITY RESTORED
The copper works (for such they are) have shared in the trade boom which has overtaken the north-French industrial region, and Wingles and Pont-à-Vendin now muster 11,000 inhabitants, mostly workers, between them. The circumstances in which the War first laid its mantle on the two villages are interesting, for they concern the very beginnings of the weary era of trench-warfare. After fierce Franco-German fighting between October 1st and 6th, 1914, both sides went to ground, between Thiepval and Souchez, on the line to be held for so many months. North of Souchez, however, the Germans still hoped to turn the French flank with von der Marwitz's three cavalry divisions. The cavalry failed, and the *XIV Corps* of infantry had to be rushed from Metz to extricate it. This Corps passed through Wingles and Pont-à-Vendin on October 8th.

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reach them shortly. On hearing the report of a gun, they pressed a key attached to a cable, and, by that action, set all the recording apparatus in motion before the sound reached the microphones.

The observers were important people, for much depended on their judgment. They had to distinguish between the reports of guns and the bursts of shells, explosions, and other noises; and they had to decide by ear whether or not the gun firing was in the area they were detailed to cover.

The record having been cinematographed, the film was cut off, developed, and handed over to the computer. The latter was also a key man. He had to read the time-intervals, and from them plot the position of the gun.

After having discovered and launched a satisfactory method of sound ranging, two great problems remained still to be solved: (*a*) how to distinguish between the wave made by the gun and that made by the shell; and (*b*) how to pick out the record of a particular gun when a number of guns were firing.

As regards the first, the microphones not only accepted every kind of noise, but—out of "cussedness," no doubt—paid least attention to the gun report. When gun report and shell report arrived more or less simultaneously, as was the case when high-velocity guns were firing, the noise of the latter used to drown that of the former.

Merits of a Midden

"Various tales hang round the solution of this difficulty. We early realised what we had to do. The shell-wave is very noisy, but high-pitched. The gun-wave is a low 'boom,' not easy to hear, but which has a much bigger pressure behind it and rattles windows, etc. This pressure was brought home to us in an interesting way. The first Sound Ranging Section had a billet at La Clytte, where the farm-house had the usual primitive sanitary retreat, cosily situated as an annex leading out of the kitchen. When one sat down, one closed the only aperture between the hermetically sealed farm-house and the outer world.

"A six-inch gun fired over from an emplacement about a quarter of a mile behind. The rending shell-wave only affected the ear, but the pressure of the scarcely audible gun-wave caused one to rise slightly but perceptibly. Obviously there was a good deal of energy in the pressure-wave, and if we could only use it our difficulty was solved. The next step was made by Tucker, of Tucker microphone fame. Just beside his camp-bed were two small holes (mice ?), and he noticed that the pressure caused a freezing jet of air to play on his face whenever the report arrived.

"He had been making experiments

Photo: A. P., Paris.

INUNDATIONS AT LENS

Earlier in this volume we have made allusion to the flooding by the Belgians of the lower Lys valley in October, 1914, and to that of the Oise countryside at La Fère by the Germans in March, 1917. Here we show the result of further enemy efforts in an aquatic direction—low ground at Lens inundated by the waters of the Souchez during the last German retreat. Included in the picture, which was taken on November 14th, 1918, are the half-submerged remains of Fosses 5 and 7.

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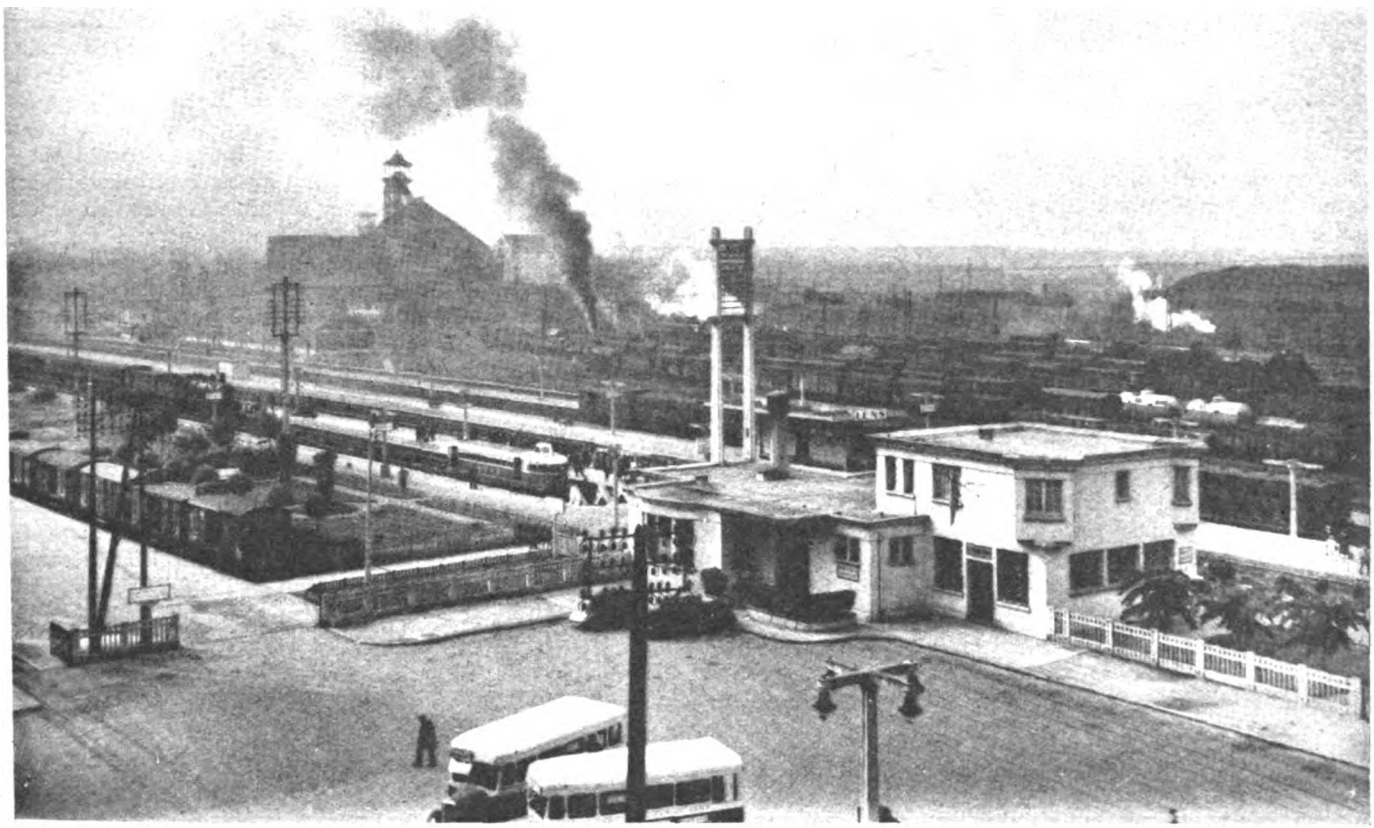

Photo: A. J. Insall.

PIT-HEADS AND RAILWAY STATION

Fosses 5 and 7—here seen beyond the smart new station which is Lens's pride and glory—lie, like the canalised stream which once flooded them, on the south side of the town, to the east of the Arras road. In reality the War was almost a blessing in disguise (a very heavy disguise) to these mining outfits, for the owners had perforce to start up again from zero after the Armistice: a situation which necessitated new buildings, new plant, new methods of transport—in fact, modernisation far more thorough than could ever have been undertaken in time of peace.

on the cooling of hot thin wire by an air-jet, and he had the inspiration to make a microphone which embodied this principle. A thin wire was stretched over a small hole in a container . . . and heated electrically. The gun-wave cooled it as explained above, and so lessened its electrical resistance, and the galvanometer recorded the effect. . . .

"I will never forget the thrill of seeing the first record, in which the shell-wave hardly made the galvanometer string quiver, while the gun-wave gave an enormous kick. The real success of our sound ranging dated from that day, because not only shell-waves but other unwanted sounds of high pitch, such as rifle-fire, traffic, and bad language in the neighbourhood of the microphone, were equally well eliminated.

"A curious difficulty with the first microphone was that small insects so enjoyed the warmth of the hot wire that they used to creep into the holes and break the wires.

"We made an issue of small grids to the sections to stop this, and 'Protectors Earwig Mark 1' duly appeared in the Army List of Stores."[1]

Using Six Microphones

The second main difficulty—that of locating a particular gun when our own and the enemy artillery might be firing—was eliminated to a great extent by the use of six microphones instead of the three shown to be ordinarily necessary. "If several records of the same gun are taken, clearly the five 'time-intervals' recorded on each will be identical, whereas it will be an impossible coincidence for the intervals caused by the other sounds to be the same on all."[2]

[1] Innes, *op. cit.*, p. 135.
[2] MacLeod, *op. cit.*, p. 195.

The necessity for picking out a particular gun from a large number adds, however, considerably to the length of the process. Ordinarily, the plotting of a single record takes perhaps five minutes. Where there is much interference, it might take half-an-hour. On the other hand, it is perfectly feasible to locate four or five guns from a single series of records; and in this respect, sound ranging has a great advantage over flash spotting.

Sound ranging is much affected both by temperature and by wind. An increase in temperature hastens the travel of sound, but presents no difficulty, because its effect can be calculated accurately. The effect of wind, on the other hand, is not easy to gauge. An adverse wind not only retards sound considerably, but gives it an upward motion, with the result

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that the report is either faint or inaudible.

A favouring wind, which was unfortunately rare on the Western Front, furnishes the ideal condition, giving the sound a forward and a downward thrust. Thus westerly winds might put the sound rangers out of action, just as fog might deprive the flash spotters of their value; and neither adverse factor was calculable in the case of an operation taking place far ahead.

After a time, special "Survey" sections took to "registration" for finding the correction to apply for wind and temperature. They caused an explosion at a point whose position was known, within our lines, and timed the arrival of the report at a ring of microphones. Then the difference between the time taken by the sound to travel the measured distance, and the time it should have taken under normal conditions, gave the correction to apply for the range involved.

The calibre of the gun which is firing can be discovered by calculating the time of flight for the known range and comparing it with our range tables or those of the enemy. A fuse or a shell-fragment picked up near the target would afford any confirmation required.

In 1917 sound-ranging sections undertook a certain amount of ranging for our guns, plotting the bursts of the shell in relation to the target. Clearly, the best value from this method could be obtained if the gun were engaged while it was firing.

Discomfiture of an 8-inch "How"

"On one occasion, opposite Béthune, a German 8-inch howitzer had been brought close up to the line in a dense fog. Obviously it was up to mischief, and obviously the gun crew must have felt quite safe, but they got the fright of their lives. After firing two rounds, the sound-rangers spotted them and the gunners got on to the gun right away and made things so hot for them that they had to clear out."[1]

Again, on a night in October, 1918, a German gun began firing into Dunkirk at a range of 20,000 yards. The flash spotters tried to help the artillery to engage it, but were prevented by a thick fog. They asked the sound rangers to try their hand. The target was tackled by a pair of heavy guns firing salvos. The first pair of rounds was reported 1,000 yards off the target, the second pair nearer, and the fifth pair O.K. The gun ceased firing then, and never fired again.[1]

It is interesting to note that, as early as 1915, a microphone station was established near Dunkirk to give warning to the inhabitants that a distant German gun, given to bombarding the town, had just fired. With the heavy guns used later in the War, such warning would have been of no avail, for the velocity of the shell was usually greater than that of sound, so that the shell arrived first and the gun-report later.

Here is an instance of sound rangers supplying valuable information outside the scope of their normal tasks. A computer plotting a record, which contained nothing but the report of a gun and a shell-burst, found that the shell had burst well within the German lines, indicating that the enemy was firing on his own positions. Later on in the day the brigadier holding that part of the line rang up to enquire if the sound rangers had obtained any unusual results from their locations. Their report confirmed other indications of a German retreat, and decided the brigadier to attack on the following day.[2]

1 Innes, *op. cit.*, p. 154.

1 *Bulletin Belge des Sciences Militaires*, 1937.
2 Innes, *op. cit.*, p. 166.

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

BARRAGE FIRE FROM THE AIR

A chapter on the nature and purpose of barrage fire in its various forms is a logical sequence to the foregoing explanation of ranging methods, and such an account will duly appear farther on in this volume. Meanwhile, here is an effective aerial photograph of barrage fire in the Wytschaete area on June 5th, 1917.

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CHAPTER XIV

MEMORIES III.—THE MINOR PLEASURES OF WAR

War is not a funny business. For very many people it is stark tragedy. But for the men who survive there remain memories of that lighter side of war with which we were all familiar, and but for which few would find it easy to endure. The pleasures that were ours were simple and often childish. Perhaps in civil life we would turn from some of them with scorn. But in war, with its precious friendships and the gay gallantry that so many men brought to the business, the funny things that were done and said meant a very great deal. It has been stated that the British Army won the War on humour. With that declaration few will be found to disagree.

"WHO of all those," asked C. E. Montague, "who were in camp at that time, and still are alive, will not remember until he dies the second boyhood that he had in the late frosts and then in the swiftly filling and bursting spring and early summer of 1915? The awakening bird-notes of Reveillé at dawn . . . the long, intent morning parades . . . the peace of the tranquil hours on guard at some sequestered post . . . jocund days of marching and digging trenches in the sun . . . the silly little songs on the road that seemed, then, to have tunes most human, pretty and jolly . . ."

Life Seemed a Good Joke

We were all boys in the Army, all absurdly young, even those who, like C. E. Montague, were enjoying a second boyhood. In every training-camp, every tent and hut, high spirits prevailed—highest, perhaps, in the interval between the closing of the canteen and Lights Out. It was then that the recruit forgot that he had had no supper, that drill sergeants were discourteous, packs heavy, and musketry a bore. Life seemed a good joke.

I cannot remember that at any time we took ourselves seriously as soldiers. At the back of our minds we knew the War was serious, a grim reality with which we should soon be in contact and with which we should cope to the best of our ability in a workmanlike way. Meanwhile we were sustained, even through muddle and tedium, by that stolid British cheerfulness which sets things in their true proportions, and were too interested in our novel life and in each other to think very deeply about the future or criticise the conduct of the campaign.

Looking back to that period, I find it extraordinarily difficult to recall my earliest friends. One made so many friends in the Army. (One lost so many, too. I suppose I am not alone in finding it easier to remember those who went West than those who came through.)

If I close my eyes, I can summon up a picture of men in a hut arranging blankets on their low plank beds. In a corner of the hut is a cubicle inhabited by a corporal, a very young corporal who has not yet got used to wielding authority. On parade he has a good word of command, but in the hut he is inclined to efface himself. After all, some of the men here are old enough to be his father, and they look at him and smile in a way which embarrasses him.

It is five minutes to Lights Out. At the far end of the hut a fat man (a florist in civil life, who plays the violin, and wears a wig) is standing clad only in a short, very tight vest, singing:

> Take a pair of sparkling eyes,
> And a pair of dirty socks . . .

He seems to like soldiering, though he will never look a soldier. He will never look otherwise than as though he were dressed up for a carnival or a fancy-dress ball. It is he who has arranged the hut orchestra, which consists for the moment, in addition to his fiddle, of a cornet (its player was in the Salvation Army), a concertina played by a street hawker, and a mouth-organ not very skilfully managed by a lad who came from a farm and is singularly quiet and docile, except in his sleep, when he alternates snoring with grinding his teeth.

The Corporal's Bane

The fat florist is rather a trial to the corporal. He is already notorious in the battalion for having whipped off his wig on parade when told to get his hair cut. And only yesterday during hut inspection he was the cause of unseemly giggling. As soon as the orderly officer had passed him he twisted his features and did something with his false teeth which disturbed the gravity of the line of men facing him. The corporal got a "bird" for that incident.

At the table in the middle of the hut two young men, who have not yet begun to undress, are arguing, with that earnestness induced by four mugs of canteen beer, about—I forget what. I was one of the young men. The corporal comes towards us and tells us to "kip down toot sweet, and the tooter the sweeter."

The picture fades. The old familiar faces are gone. But I can feel rough blankets on my cheeks . . . Blankets? They weren't blankets: they were lengths of cloth—smart spring suitings, some of them. I had nearly forgotten that. I had nearly forgotten, too, how the bed-planks creaked at night, and how men talked in their sleep. In the silence of the midnight a voice would say "You bastard!" or—this the voice of a married man, perhaps—"Darling!"

Our hut was a club of queer trades. There was an ironmonger, a butcher (who sang comic songs), an insurance clerk, a civil engineer, a fashion artist, a bookmaker (he wangled his way out of the Army before we went to France; it didn't suit him. I think he had enlisted inadvertently), several boys who seemed to have only just left school, and an aloof, grey-haired man who was said to be partner in a London publishing house, and who left us soon to take a commission in the artillery.

I learned a lot in that hut. I learned how little I knew. The songs we sang, the stories we listened to! Those highly imaginative accounts of square-pushing, those swearing-matches! What larks we had, what good feeds from parcels sent from home, what fierce discussions, what excellent mimicry of those in authority! My "china" was good as our

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company officer, while I wasn't bad as the R.S.M.

Our R.S.M. was not a lovable man; but I never regretted the perfectly good salute I wasted on him while I was a very raw recruit. He fascinated me. I could not keep my eyes off him. He was everything that I was not and never imaginably could be, however long I stayed in the Army, however dizzy a height of promotion I attained.

When the War Got Serious

"Look to your front," he once roared. "Don't look at me. You make me nervous. If you think I'm so 'andsome you can 'ave my picture to 'ang up in your 'ut. But while you're on parade you stand still, even if a lion comes and bites a bit out of your ——. 'Old your 'ead up. Wash that grin orf your face. Bear on that butt. Draw your stummick in."

He was a great man. They sent him to France eventually, when the War got serious.

To be mocked and reviled by drill-sergeants is not, at first, a pleasant experience. I soon began to take a perverse delight in exciting their derision. As a result I have as fine a collection (not in writing) of military verbal decorations as any man who served in the ranks.

The patter of Army instructors is, I suppose, traditional. No doubt to this day recruits are admonished not to come on parade "'arf naked" when they have one button undone; are told they look like a yard of pump water, or as though they were about to give birth to a litter of old jam tins.

Our bayonet-wallah was the best turn. I remember his saying to me, "You're too ladylike. You 'old your rifle as if it was a sunshade. There you are, smiling away, saying to yourself, 'Isn't it a lovely morning?' It won't do. I won't 'ave it. More guts is what I want. Oh, God! Do you think you're punting? Now then, on GUD! Oooooh! What did I tell you yesterday? The right thumb to be just above the navel. It's a rude question I know, but haven't you got a navel? .... Blimey, the man's blushing!"

I never came across the legendary sergeant who issued the instruction, "When I says 'Fix!' yer don't fix: but when I say 'Bay'nets!' yer whips 'em out and yer whops 'em on!" Nor can I claim to have heard, "When I says 'Shun' all I wants to see is a cloud of dust and a row of living statues." But I have been told not to look like "a nore at a christening," and have also been assured that if my "gawdfathers and gawdmothers" in my baptism had known what was coming to me they would have drowned me in the font.

Such insults do not rankle. I treasure them in my memory like lines of poetry. The best, alas! may never appear in print.

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

"THE GAIETIES" AT LILLE

Readers who are wont to study the illustrations in *Twenty Years After* before reading the text should not be misled into supposing the accompanying chapter to be an account of sports and concert-parties. As every ex-soldier knows, the real minor pleasures were intangible, almost indefinable—and certainly too light in texture for the dull eye of the camera. Many to-day might scoff at the things that amused soldiers then. Nevertheless, the War was won on our sense of humour, as the Germans themselves have admitted.

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

REHEARSING CINDERELLA

We blush to have to record that we do not know whether the "damsel" in the middle is the beauteous Cinderella herself, or merely one of the ugly sisters; but at any rate we are certain of the players, who belonged to the Kite and Balloon Section of the R.F.C., and produced their pantomime at Bapaume on January 2nd, 1918.

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Photo: Imperial War Museum.

FOOTBALL NEAR BOUZINCOURT

What were the real "minor pleasures"? And where did minor merge into major? These are questions which every man must answer according to his tastes and temperament. But probably most will agree on one point—that the soldier's pleasures were largely those which the civilian either took for granted, or would not have called pleasures at all. Primitive meals, sleep snatched in queer places, the yapping of lance-corporals during a route march—who requires further prompting?

Yapping Like Puppies

Route marches, when you had got used to your boots and knew how to fill your pack with an air pillow and a towel, were good fun. Breathes there a man with soul so dead who never to himself hath said, "I'd like to go for a route march again!"? Ah, they just don't know, those others who never carried a pack or shouldered a rifle! It is pleasant even to remember the little lance-corporals yapping like puppies, "Lep! lep! Cover off. 'Old your 'eads up. Swing your arms."

When the order came, "March at ease!" how we sang!

Why did I leave the Sunday School?
Why did I join the Army?
Why did I get in this rag-time mob?
I must have been ruddy-well barmy.

This is not the place to print the songs the Army taught me. Gaily, almost innocently obscene, they were exactly fitted for the occasion. Any other kind of song, any patriotic song, for example, would have been too absurd. Nothing, surely, is more unimaginable than English soldiers singing a patriotic marching song. No, we preferred things like this:

I wish I had a thousand bricks
To build my chimney higher,
To build my chimney higher,
And keep away the old tom cats
From trying to extinguish the fire.

(The last line is paraphrased, of course.)

Sta-har of the evening,
Beautiful evening sta-ha-ha,
Sta-har of the evening,
Shining on the ——— house door.

We sang hymns, too, but not in a very reverent spirit. Some genius had thought of interpolating a line which gave fresh effect to the dreariest dirge from the little red book.

Onward Christian soldiers,
Without a shirt,
Marching as to war,
Without a shirt . . .

And there were frank parodies like:

Whiter than the wall,
Whiter than the wall,
Wash me in the water
Where you washed your baby daughter
And I shall be whiter
Than the whitewash on the wall.

I think that on the whole I liked best *Sing a Song of Sixpence* to the tune of *Come, All Ye Faithful* with its last grand verse:

When down came a ruddy great blackbird,
Down came a ruddy great blackbird,
Down came a ruddy great blackbird,
And — pecked — off — her nose!

A Connoisseur of Carrots

When at last the order came, "Fall out on the left of the road!" what exquisite moments! We fell out once near a field of young carrots. I have eaten raw carrots since, but none so delicious as those.

It was good to be young and in the Army and in England. It was not so good when we went overseas. That was a sobering experience, but our cheerfulness never deserted us for long. It kept breaking in.

"Depend upon it, sir," said Dr. Johnson, "when a man knows he is to be hanged in a fortnight, it concentrates his mind wonderfully."

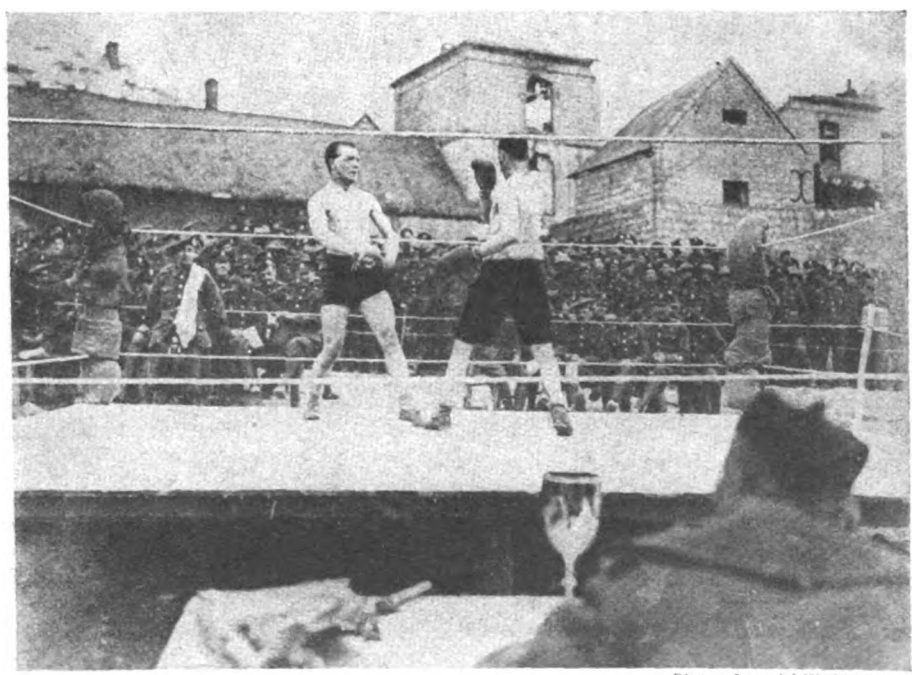

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

THE REAL WAR

A scene during a boxing tournament held by the London Scottish at Mont St. Eloi, April 3rd, 1918. This was less than a week after the battalion had been fighting tooth-and-nail—that is, without gloves on—in the Battle of Arras. The Scotsmen were part of the 168th Brigade of the 56th (London) Division.

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I have never been sentenced to be hanged, having given up killing my fellow creatures, but there have been occasions when a less formal exit from this world seemed probable, not in a leisurely fortnight, but in any succeeding minute. I did not then notice in myself or my friends an undue concentration of mind, and am tempted to travesty Dr. Johnson and say: Depend upon it, when a man knows that sooner rather than later he is "for it," it relaxes his mind wonderfully—that is, if congenial companions are there with an equal chance.

One's mind, unless my memory is tricking me, refused on such occasions to concentrate. It wandered. It even found something to laugh at.

What the soldier laughed at would make an interesting subject for psychological investigation, if the investigator took care always to ascertain on which side of his face the soldier was laughing. He laughed, for example, at war correspondents. He laughed at generals. He laughed at the enemy. He laughed at himself—particularly he laughed at himself. It was Peace that concentrated his mind and left him with nothing to laugh at in the old way. Peace brought fidgeting responsibilities. The carefree days were gone.

While the War lasted there was plenty to laugh at. One was apt to feel subdued in a front-line trench. It was often a dangerous place, and, at best, life there was full of petty vexations; but, viewed from a distance of twenty years, signs of enjoyment are discernible. I can see a group of men whale-oiling their feet and finding the process amusing. I can see myself whistling happily as I clean my ammunition.

Meals and Cooking

I can hear my friend singing as he "drums up" in a corner. Soon the water will be boiling in the mess-tin; he will put a spoonful of tea in it, wait for a moment while the leaves uncurl in a bubbling, yellow froth, then skim them off and throw them over the top. (Over the top, where the lumps of fat from Maconochie go.) It will be for me to produce a tin of condensed milk from my haversack, remove the plugs of paper from the holes, and blow a thin spiral into the tea. Next I shall fry the bacon. It will be good.

The simple pleasures of cooking and eating stand out in one's memory. Repasts eaten in a comparatively quiet trench, especially if rations had been supplemented by parcels from home—have we ever enjoyed any meals as much?

I was fortunate in having in England friends and relations who remembered my existence in a practical way, and I was fortunate in my platoon. It was not without reason that our company commander called it the "picnic platoon." "You fellows are always

Photo: Photopress.

"WITH EXCELLENT CUISINE"

The *Official History* tells us that the first gas attack was launched by the Germans in Flanders on April 22nd, 1915. Every old soldier, however, knows perfectly well that—with all due deference to the Official Historian—the real début of this deadly weapon occurred when British trench-cooking first sent its pungent fumes across the wastes of No Man's Land. The gallant photographer who took this picture was apparently so badly overcome that he was able to put on record neither the date, nor the place, nor the formation concerned.

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WEST OF BAPAUME
Then and Now

Photo: Imperial War Museum

THE REMNANTS OF IRLES

The village of Irles lies on the northern slopes of the upper Ancre valley, on the secondary road which leads from Bapaume and Grevillers to Miraumont. Lanes running north and south connect it respectively with Achiet-le-Petit and Pys. At the end of February, 1917, the Germans had been driven back on a general line running from Le Transloy to Loupart, but were still in possession of Irles, which stood out as a pronounced salient, linked with the main positions by well-wired trenches.

Photo: A. J. Insall

A CHARMING SPECTACLE

Early in March, 1917, it was decided to capture Irles as a necessary preliminary to an attack in force on the Le Transloy—Loupart Line itself. The assault on the village was delivered by the 2nd and 18th Divisions at 5.25 a.m. on March 10th, and was completely successful, 289 prisoners, 16 machine guns, and 4 trench mortars being taken with the ruins.

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Photo: Imperial War Museum

SHATTERED IRLES: ANOTHER VIEW

After slightly more than a year in British occupation, Irles was entered for the second time by the enemy on March 25th, 1918. During the course of that day's retreat, the 51st Division (IV Corps) fell back about noon to the Irles—Bihucourt ridge, where later they were joined by various fragments of the 19th, 25th, and 41st Divisions. All these formations, completely exhausted, were further withdrawn before March 26th.

Photo: A. J. Insall

IN A SHADY LANE

The final capture of Irles took place on August 25th, 1918, the 5th Division being responsible. The war-time photograph on the previous page was taken on that date; the one on this page shows the ruined village 13 months earlier. Modern Irles is a charming hamlet, nestling amid rich trees and containing 200 hard-working inhabitants. Despite its long connection with British troops, however, there is no War cemetery there.

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Photo: Imperial War Museum

AN IMPROVIZED ROAD, ABLAINZEVELLE

Ablainzevelle lies a good distance from Irles—in fact, 6 km. to the north-north-east of it, with Achiet-le-Petit about midway between them. It also lies 10 km. north-west of Bapaume, and is directly connected by road with Achiet-le-Grand, Bucquoy, Ayette, and Courcelles-le-Comte. The above photograph of one of the entrances to the village was taken in March, 1917, just after the beginning of the first term of British occupation.

Photo: A. J. Insall

THE ENTRANCE TO THE POST-WAR VILLAGE

The 42nd Division, newly transferred from the VI to the IV Corps, retired on Ablainzevelle on the night of March 25/26th, 1918. On the 26th, as a result of a gap between the IV and V Corps, there developed an indentation in our line known as the Hébuterne Re-entrant, one effect of which was the loss of Ablainzevelle. From this village two fierce but unavailing enemy attacks were made on the 27th against the 62nd Division.

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Photo: A. P., Paris

RUSTIC BRIDGE, WARLENCOURT-EAUCOURT

With this village we return to the upper reaches of the Ancre, on which Warlencourt-Eaucourt stands 4 km. south-east of Irles, and 6 km. south-west of Bapaume. The river is here so small that the modest bridge seen in the photograph serves to span its width; and the spot is more important as being situated on the Bapaume—Albert road. The British first entered the village on February 25th, 1917. Our photograph dates from the following June.

Photo: A. J. Insall

RUSTY IRON, WARLENCOURT-EAUCOURT

Our year's tenancy being up, we moved out of the village in the early hours of quarter-day, March, 1918—the earliness being doubtless due to the fact that the Germans were about to distrain in lieu of rent. The 19th and 51st Divisions of the IV Corps were the troops concerned. In contradistinction to Irles and Ablainzevelle, Warlencourt possesses one British cemetery, situated north of the famous Butte. This burial-ground contains as many as 3,437 graves.

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Photo: Imperial War Museum.

DAMPING HIS ARDOUR

The tail-end of a pillow-fight at a sports gathering of the Guards Division, June 30th, 1918. Among the spectators on this occasion was H.R.H. the Duke of Connaught. The scene of the gathering is Bavincourt, a village just off the Arras—Doullens road, about half-way between the two towns.

either cookin' or eatin'," he complained. (I thought the dropped 'g' was an affectation that had gone out with King Edward VII, but here it was being beautifully done. He was affectionately known, this officer, as "Old Huntin'-and-Shootin'.")

One man, whose father owned a chain of confectionery shops, used to send out huge boxes of sweets. Another received from his home at Yarmouth consignments of bloaters—sufficient, when being fried all along the line, to make Jerry apprehensive of a gas attack.

What I seem to remember most clearly are the large, flat bread-puddings, thickly populated with raisins, which the mother of a fellow-Lewis gunner had the agreeable habit of sending him every week. A chunk of that pudding and a mug of cocoa in the middle of the night relieved many a weary sentry. I have not had bread-pudding or cocoa since. I am afraid to; just as I am afraid to renew my acquaintance with *foie gras truffé*. Something tells me I should be disenchanted.

Letters—Read and Written

Next to parcels, letters from home must come on the list of trench pleasures. Perhaps writing letters was, for some, pleasanter than reading them. Between us and people in England a great gulf was fixed—a great gulf in the understanding. How could they know, poor dears, that their phrases sounded ludicrous, if not ironical? I had an amiable aunt who sent me a prayer book, and wrote, "Kill some Germans for me, there's a dear boy."

"Dear Aunt Nan," I replied, "I am glad to be able to comply so soon with your request. We had a nice little battle this afternoon, and I was lucky enough to bag four Germans—Prussian Guardsmen, too. Usually, as you know, the Huns throw up their hands and cry '*Kamerad*' when they see us, but these were made of sterner stuff. They put up quite a good fight. I shot one, the second I brained with the butt of my rifle, and the third I bayoneted. The fourth was more difficult to deal with. He closed with me, and I was obliged to strangle him. It has been a lovely day. Thank you for the book, which is very interesting."

We were in a quiet part of the line, so quiet that our chaplain visited the trenches. He was a good fellow. He put us on our honour, and did not read the letters he took to censor. So mine got through. When I came home on leave I found that I was a hero in my aunt's village.

She had shown my letter to everybody, and my firm repudiation of it was credited to me as modesty. I discovered that it was the vicar who had dissuaded her from writing to the War

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Photo: A. P., Paris.

CASSEL AGAIN

We are getting on well with our illustrations of this town, and on the present occasion are proud to present the Grand' Place, complete with Mairie (the turreted building on the right). How many an ex-soldier remembers, adorning this same Mairie, the half-illegible names of the little Flemish-speaking villages which meant so much to him and his pals when they were sent there for spells of so-called rest? These names are inscribed in cupboards, one to each, round one of the fine old panelled rooms, and date from the days when Cassel was a feudal seigneury.

Office drawing their attention to an opportunity for disposing of a V.C.

Among the real pleasures of trench life was sleep. It was a luxury to look forward to. Nowadays it is a mere habit. As we sat or lay on the fire-step covered with our groundsheets, or curled up in an evil-smelling dug-out or funk-hole, sleep visited us swiftly but made too brief a stay. Wrenched back to realities, we tottered on to the fire-step to take our turn again, to stare into the darkness, strain our ears for unwonted sounds, and wait impatiently for the next relief.

A Boon Grudged by All

In the daytime, if business were slack, there would be opportunities for a "kip," but it was never without risk of interruption. Sleep was a precious boon which the authorities seemed to begrudge. Even your friends could not be trusted to leave you in peace. They would rouse you from your slumbers only to say, "I thought perhaps you'd like to turn round now, chum."

Sleep! The places we slept in, the occasions on which we slept! Standing upright, kneeling, squatting on our haunches, lying deep in mud, during rain, snow, bombardment; in trenches, dug-outs, shell holes, ditches; in barns, sheds, breweries, churches; in sewers and tunnels, under bridges, up trees; in cellars, shops, fields, orchards; on straw, hay, beanstalks, dung, flints, live bombs, dead men.... And it was always sweet, while it lasted, that blessed gift of sleep.

Out of the line there were diversions of many kinds—some organised, such as athletic sports and concert-parties. But I liked best our private amusements. Sometimes I would steal away from everybody and forget all about the War, but not often; I found solitude brought gloom rather than serenity. I preferred to be with a party of three or four, sitting in an estaminet playing brag, or in the sun taking a card at *House*.

House and *Crown and Anchor*—it's a long time since I lost money at those games. "Roll up, me lucky lads. Who says a little on the old mudhook?" "Kelly's eye, clicketty-click, legs eleven." When we have forgotten those words we shall have forgotten everything. As long as we remember them we shall remember happy days, though we may never have got a "full house," or found that our money on "the old sergeant-major" brought any tangible profit. Better, far, to have lost money then to an "old sweat" than to lose it nowadays to a share-market rigger or a football-pool promoter.

Dining-out in France was seldom a success for the man in the ranks, but there was a restaurant in Merville where a steak-and-chips and a bottle of *vin rouge* seemed not without merit. Once, on my way back to the billet, I fell into a dyke. "Where were ye, Nymphs,

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when the remorseless deep closed o'er the head of your loved Lycidas ? "

An Axiom Revised

Usually when we dined out it was on eggs and chips and coffee. For us *un œuf* was as good as a feast. There was never anything else on the menu at the places we patronised, but we did not seem to tire of this fare. Light and warmth and a chair to sit on conspired to make a sauce that would have rendered chopped hay palatable to us.

At any rate, I remember with gratitude many a stuffy little cottage where we foregathered under the light of an oil-lamp, sitting as near as we could to the monumental stove, while huge shadows clambered over the walls and ceiling.

As a refuge these cottages were preferable to the Y.M.C.A. They were homelier. True, motherliness was not a quality very much in evidence now with madame ; so many of her " children " had proved ungrateful. But one could admire her managerial ability and endurance, and as a caterer she was a marvel with the limited means at her disposal. I hope she made as much money out of us as we believed she did.

Shopping must be included among the minor pleasures of the infantryman in France. It was not often that shops came his way, and not often, when they did, that he had money to spend in them or was in need of the articles displayed. Apart from bread, milk, sausages, and fruit, the shops had little to attract him. The canteens supplied nearly all his satisfiable wants. But shopping remained a mild adventure.

I found then, as I have found since, that lack of diffidence combined with lack of vocabulary is more effective than a knowledge of the language and anxiety to use it correctly. " *Combeeang ?* " and " *San fairy ann !* " can still get a man through France. Gestures still bring a prompter response than perfect phrases.

Given time and space, it would be interesting to compile a list of the French words we learned to employ—*Allay, allymong, blessay, boko, caffay, coneyac, dommage.* Experimenters in the language, who thought that " *Quel dommage !* " was the equivalent of " What's the damage ? (=" How much ? ") were soon undeceived, as they were when they used " *Bien je jamais !* " for " Well I never ! " The man who thought " *hors de combat* " had some-

SCARCELY CHANGED

Photo : A. J. Insall.

At first glance the Grand' Place does not seem to have changed at all, but on closer inspection it will be found that the trams have disappeared, and their rails been filled in, while the handsome Mairie has been crowned with a new turret terminating in a bigger and better onion. In ancient days —and Cassel is very ancient—there was little else but this market-square covering the top of the hill, with the church at one end and the squat castle at the other ; and because the town has remained old-world, there is really very little else now.

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thing to do with red lamps was no doubt our old friend Ben Trovato.

Juvenile Innocence

If we did not learn much French in France we taught the natives with whom we had transactions quite a lot of English, enriching their conversation with the choicest bits of our vernacular. I am still slightly shocked when I remember a tiny girl who in the most engaging manner in the world said "—— ——!" to me and told me to go and —— myself.

What one remembers most clearly and with the deepest pleasure are the friends one made in the Army. It is difficult not to become tiresomely sentimental when one thinks about them. From the days when one stood listening to—

" 'ead erect, chin in, chest out, 'eels together, feet at an angle of forty-five degrees, elbers slightly bent, 'ands lightly clenched, palms inward, thumbs touching the seams of the trousis. Weight equilly distribooted on the two legs. Stummick not stuck out, like this, as if you was in the family way, and not drorn in, like this, as if you 'ad diarrhœa "

—to the days when one listened to roll call and felt slightly ashamed at being alive to answer to one's name, it was friendship that made life endurable, that made happy moments possible, that enabled the War to be concluded in what appeared to be our favour.

My happiest memories cannot be dissociated from the men who helped to make them. Alas! that peace, geographical and economic considerations, diversity of aims and modes of living, have made the continuance of some of those friendships difficult if not impossible!

Most of those who came through together have inevitably drifted apart. They would not recognise each other if they met. Sometimes in a crowded street one sees a face that is oddly familiar. It is gone before one can place it as "old Jimmy Jones. We spent a day together in a shell-hole."

Old Friendships that Cling

He must be a very embittered man who has not kept in touch with at least one or two of his old friends. A rarity, too. Even those who do not belong to any official organisation of ex-Service men have occasional contacts, if not with men of their own regiment, at anyrate with men of their own generation who took a soldier's part in the War.

My experience is that we do not talk much about it nowadays. When we do it is to recall or describe some incident which makes us laugh uproariously while our civilian friends or womenfolk look on, puzzled and ever so slightly disapproving.

Photo: A. J. Insall.

A PEEP OF "POP"

This glimpse of the famous Flanders town was taken looking away from the Grand' Place, with Skindles Hotel behind the camera. One is apt to imagine that before the Great War Poperinghe and the British knew not one another; but in point of fact allusions to the town may be found in the writings of at least two of our great luminaries of long ago. One of Chaucer's heroes was born "In Flaundres, all beyonde the sea, At Popering, in the place"; and Shakespeare, in *Romeo and Juliet*, mentions the "Poperin pear"—a variety of the fruit which was first brought to England from this neighbourhood.

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CHAPTER XV

WITH THE R.A.M.C. BEHIND THE LINES

In an earlier chapter some account has been given of the work of the Royal Army Medical Corps in the Forward Areas. Here that account is continued with a description of the machinery contrived to deal with the thousands of broken men whose injuries demanded hospital treatment. It has been said that the Great War bestowed untold benefits upon surgery and aviation. There can be little doubt that the emergencies arising out of that period of strain exercised a profound effect upon the evolution of both these sciences. Whether the rapid advance made in the conquest of the air is an unmixed blessing remains to be seen. What is certain is that the opportunities afforded to the surgeons greatly added to our knowledge of the art of healing.

The work of battalion stretcher-bearers, regimental aid posts, and R.A.M.C. advanced dressing-stations, has already been described. During an offensive the field ambulances formed a chain of intermediate posts between the aid post and casualty clearing-station, also reserve posts in rear areas for treating divisional or corps sick and wounded who did not require evacuating to hospitals.

Enlargement of C.C.S.'s

The casualty clearing-station was the important link between field ambulance and lines of communication, all sick and wounded being collected in it before passing on to hospitals at the base and thence, were they serious cases, to England. Its functions were threefold: to treat the serious cases until fit for further transport; to evacuate at once to the bases those fit to travel; to sort out and retain for early return to duty those likely to recover within a few days.

C.C.S.'s were designed as mobile units capable of removal by eight or nine 3-ton lorries; but they became such established fixtures, with expanded accommodation and equipment, that 100 to 200 lorries or a complete goods train might be required to move them during an advance or retreat. After the Somme battle of 1916 the Director-General of Medical Services accordingly ordered that all C.C.S.'s were to draw up a schedule of equipment to enable a light section to advance or retire, with capacity for treating 200 seriously wounded immediately it reached the new position, the material to be carried on nine 3-ton lorries; two aeroplane trailers attached to one of the lorries were to carry a portable operating-room for each army.

A new scale in September 1917 provided for full hospital equipment and tentage for 200 seriously wounded, tentage and equipment for 800 less seriously wounded awaiting evacuation to the base, and shelter for a number of trivial cases which the field ambulances could not dispose of and which were waiting to go to corps or divisional rest stations.

The personnel comprised eight officers, including a quartermaster, and 77 other ranks; three chaplains were added, who assisted the medical personnel during periods of pressure; and also, early in 1915, five nursing sisters, then seven, and later more. Thus the C.C.S. became the nurses' "front line"; not until the wounded reached it did they benefit by feminine ministration.

During a big battle C.C.S. personnel were reinforced by officers and men from field ambulances, C.C.S.'s in other areas not involved, and hospitals on lines of communication. Field ambulances sent one tenting subdivison, sometimes two. A C.C.S. officer was appointed surgical specialist early in 1915, and a surgical team—sometimes two—was organised. Similar surgical teams, organised in general hospitals at the base, reinforced C.C.S.'s when required. These comprised a surgeon, anæsthetist, operating-room sister, and orderly.

During 1917

During the battles of 1917, six surgical teams, including two belonging to the C.C.S. itself, and two tenting subdivisions of field ambulances, reinforced each of the C.C.S.'s dealing with most of the casualties, thus bringing the total number of M.O.'s on duty to 22 or more, and the nursing sisters to 24 or more. Teams from other C.C.S.'s brought their operating equipment with them, reserve equipment provided by the Red Cross and St. John committee being available for other reinforcements.

Thus, every effort humanly possible was made to concentrate the utmost surgical skill on casualties as they poured through. Every wounded man was given the best medical attention, and the fullest chance to recover, and endured the least possible pain and discomfort. His country could not do more for him in the front areas.

During a battle, unloading the motor ambulances and loading the ambulance trains was back-breaking work for the R.A.M.C. rank and file, and detachments of 50 or more men unfit for fighting units—from labour companies, convalescent depôts, etc.—were detailed to help in emergency. With casualties continuously pouring in, others which had been treated had to be evacuated without a moment's delay, or the whole organisation would have clogged and broken down.

On the Western Front there was generally one C.C.S. per division, under the D.M.S. of the army. C.C.S.'s had to be sited near railways and good roads, reasonably secure from enemy artillery fire, never near supply railheads or dumps. In many cases buildings in towns were used instead of tents or huts, but these had their disadvantages: traffic congestion in the narrow streets, liability to artillery fire, lack of such clear Red Cross marking as when C.C.S.'s were isolated groups of marquees and huts.

In 1914 and 1915 there were C.C.S.'s in Poperinghe, Bailleul, and Béthune; but in the later period of the War, sites were established away from towns, near ambulance-train sidings—the first at Rémy Siding, three or four miles from Poperinghe. The C.C.S.'s of the First and Second Armies in Bailleul, Merville, and

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Photo: *Imperial War Museum.*

SCOTSMEN NEAR METEREN

Men of the 9th (Scottish) Division at a regimental aid post near Meteren on August 18th, 1918. This village, which represented the extreme limit of the enemy's gains hereabouts in the Lys offensive, had been recaptured by the division on July 19th, after a fortnight's bombardment.

Lillers, however, remained until the German offensive of 1918 compelled them to move out.

How C.C.S.'s were Arranged

The safety-limit for C.C.S.'s was usually 12,000 to 14,000 yards from the front line; while those in rear areas would be twice as far back. For an offensive, two would be in the forward area and one in the rear; for a defensive movement, *vice versa*. Thus, an army preparing for an offensive would have ten forward and five in the rear; one preparing for a defensive action, exactly the reverse.

Experience of big battles, the *Official History*[1] states, showed that it was best to group two or three C.C.S.'s together, so that each in turn could cope with 150 to 200 wounded at a time. This permitted scope for surgical work and for evacuating wounded before a fresh batch arrived.

Operating rooms and wards for the more serious cases were usually in Nissen-type huts. Marquees laced together formed reception and dressing-rooms, separate sections being provided for lying and walking wounded. The standard lay-out, following an order of November, 1917, was 80 hospital marquees, 20 of them equipped for 200 patients on general hospital scale, and 60 for 800 on C.C.S. scale.

A small marquee comprised 8 beds or 12 stretchers, a large 14 beds or 20 stretchers, a Nissen hut 24 beds or 28 stretchers, a French Adrian hut 40 beds or 60 stretchers. Towards the end of the War the French Bessoneau tent, accommodating 40, replaced the British hospital marquee.

There was also accommodation for R.A.M.C. officers and other ranks, nursing sisters, and the emergency detachment, 50 or so strong, from a labour company or convalescent depôt; also sterilising room, dentist's hut, X-ray hut, etc.

10,000 Wounded Accommodated

By a corps method of distribution, certain C.C.S.'s received the sick and wounded of specified corps; and there was also a distribution according to the nature of wounds and sickness, by which—for example—the head wounds of an army from all divisions might be sent to a particular C.C.S. As a general rule, 10 C.C.S.'s were sufficient to cope with battle casualties in most of the Western Front offensives, the others dealing with sick and special cases. Accommodation was expanded to cover 1,000 wounded at a time in each—10,000 in all.

C.C.S.'s supplied field ambulances from a reserve of stretchers and blankets during an action; and these were taken up the line by motor ambulances returning after unloading wounded. A final reserve was held on ambulance trains and at G.H.Q. for eventualities.

Dr. Harvey Cushing, an American surgeon who served with the British on the Western Front from the early spring

Photo: *Imperial War Museum.*

IN A PILL-BOX AT GHELUVELT

A pill-box turned into a dressing-station of the 29th Division near the above-named village, the date being October 1st, 1918. Gheluvelt had been occupied two days earlier, having previously groaned under the iron heel of the ruthless invader since the stirring fighting of October—November, 1914.

1 *Official History of the War: Medical Services, General History*, by Maj.-General Sir W. G. Macpherson, K.C.M.G., C.B., LL.D.

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of 1915, wrote vividly of his experiences in a book called *From a Surgeon's Journal 1915-1918* (Constable). First he served in the American Ambulance at Neuilly, then, after surveying R.A.M.C. work in Flanders, became Director of Base Hospital No. 5 in May, 1917, was detached for special duty during the battles for the Messines and Passchendaele ridges, and in June, 1918, was transferred to the Medical Headquarters of the A.E.F., participating in the three big engagements at Château-Thierry, St. Mihiel, and in the Argonne.

Writing of a visit to a corps dressing-station at Irish Farm, beyond St. Jean and Junction Road in the Ypres area, on October 26th, 1917, he says: "They are to receive from the 18th Corps, where are the 63rd—the Naval Division—on the right, and the 58th on the left, to which division the C.O. belongs. In his outfit are four M.O.'s, fifty-six bearers, and thirty temporarily attached people. At a similar place during the last—i.e. Monday's—battle they passed on 1,745 wounded and 246 walking-sick in twelve hours, between 9 a.m. and 9 p.m.

Through American Eyes

"Irish Farm lies near Boundary Road, about where Buff's Road joins it, and from all appearances it is thoroughly searched by shells. Just across the road were some huge howitzers sulking under their camouflage, and beyond, in a fringe of stumps marking a former wood, was a long row of naval guns whose snouts we could see and whose flashes and roars were too close for comfort. Certainly not all of the guns were blinded, and though it was raining and misty the air was simply buzzing with planes like swallows, singly and in formations—there must have been fifty or sixty within the near radius of a mile.

"... the wounded straggle in—one of them with a bloody bandaged leg being helped along on the narrow duckboards by two Bosche prisoners, a sight which would be good for 'the Hate' on both sides. A toy of a narrow-gauge Decauville with its little gasoline engine pulls into the camp with a load of liers from some forward area—a sopping Tommy rides by on a mule with its upper lip, nostrils, and part of one ear blown off, but still worthy of salvage—farther on a recently disembowelled horse lies at the side of the road, reddening the pools and the muddy water of the ditch for a hundred feet beyond—a large slug of an observation balloon begins to rear its carcass up from a wrecked copse just behind the camp."

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

AT AN ADVANCED DRESSING-STATION

German prisoners being tended by Canadians during the month of September, 1916. The share taken by these Overseas troops in our push of September 15th onward in the Fiers—Courcelette—Martinpuich area was particularly noteworthy, and involved men from all parts of the Dominion.

Passing on to the 18th Corps dressing-station at Duhallow, south of Boesinghe, he found that the C.O. had "erected his tents on a sea of mud and shell holes which had to be filled with whatever could be found. Indeed, more like the ancient lake dwellers in parts, for the Yperlée has expanded into a veritable lake, over which duckboards in many areas stand close together on piles."

At Solferino Farm he found the main dressing-station for the 14th Corps and

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

WOUNDED AT FRÉVENT

A scene at the 43rd Casualty Clearing-station at this spot on April 8th, 1918, immediately prior to the enemy's Lys offensive. Frévent, a large village, lay well away from the battle zone 34 km. west of Arras, and during the War was important as both a road and a rail junction. The Canche flows through it, near the beginning of that river's journey to Étaples.

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Photo: A. P., Paris.

REGRETTABLE SCENE AT LOURCHES

This busy mining village stands just above the junction of the Scheldt and Selle rivers, 3 km. south-west of Denain. The photograph shows the Fosse Schneider, one of the most productive mines in the region both prior to and since the War. Lourches seems to have been first entered by German troops of the *IV Corps* on August 25th, 1914, and was in continuous enemy occupation from soon afterwards until the third week in October, 1918.

" the scattered structures of sandbags and railroad ties in an adjacent muddy copse, where they eat and sleep. It was 11.30, and the first real walkers from the battle were coming in, straggling along a rickety duckboard path labelled ' Track to Pilkem,' which led from nowhere in the direction of No Man's Land. It was 5.45 when they went over—this means nearly six hours—and these are the slightly wounded during the first few minutes of the attack."

Mendinghem—or " Endinghem "

Dr. Cushing gives a day-to-day account of life at the 46th C.C.S. at " Mendinghem," in the Ypres area, to which he was attached at the end of July, 1917, for the big attack on Pilkem ridge. The spot so christened with typical Army humour—someone suggested " Endinghem " would be more appropriate—included a Flemish road-side farm with flower-beds, vegetable garden, and even a grass tennis court, around all of which the R.A.M.C. personnel lived in canvas Armstrong huts and tents, and Nissen huts in a pear orchard.

No. 12 C.C.S. adjoined ; No. 64 was just across a track. At " Dosinghem," in the direction of Crombeke, were Nos. 62 and 63. Altogether, there would be fifteen C.C.S.'s for the Fifth Army. No. 46 had 200 actual beds, which could be expanded to 1,200 or 1,300 ; it could take in 1,000 mustard-gas cases.

" Poor devils ! " he says. " I've seen too many of them since—new ones—their eyes bandaged, led along by a man with a string, while they try to keep to the duckboards. Some of the after-effects are as extraordinary as they are horrible.... They had about twenty fatalities out of the first 1,000 cases, chiefly from bronchial troubles. Fortunately vision does not appear to be often lost."

He describes the personnel as " a good and loyal one : Colonel Ellis the C.O. ; Capts. Roper, Adjt., who also takes the X-rays ; Wright, the surgeon specialist, and Shelton, his anæsthetist ; Richardson, a surgeon, and Coleridge, his anæsthetist ; Welpley, a surgeon, 6 ft. 3 in. and therefore called ' Tiny ' ; Telfer, the evacuation officer, an extraordinary man-of-all-work both day and night. These eight make the original territorial group, with Warren, Quartermaster ; the three Padres, Coffey, R.C., Robinson the Maconochie, Perkitt, C. of E., and Wetherill in charge of the Church Army Hut.

" Poor Telfer is all bunged up with a secondhand dose of this mustard-oil gas or whatever it is. Many more of these men were brought in last night ; and as the orderlies were panicky, owing to the raid, he did a lot of handling of patients himself and to-night has a bad cough, swollen and lachrymating eyes—like the men themselves. One or two others who have handled and undressed Tommies have got it too in a mild form." (The " raid " had been by an enemy aeroplane which dropped bombs very near.)

Spending the Winter in Prison

Additional teams, brought from the Somme, increased the strength to thirty. " They had spent the winter in Ypres, living in the old prison cells, these being the only safe places for regimental M.O.'s." A young captain from No. 32 C.C.S. at Brandhoek, half-way between Poperinghe and Ypres, looked in : ". . . shells go over their heads both ways. If the coming push does not result in an advance in the first

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few hours, they will be heavily bombarded."

Dr. Cushing's diary for July 27th recorded: "Operating late last night—till 1 a.m. A 48-hour-old case getting pressure symptoms. . . . Wolstenholme at 64 is the real live-wire about here. . . . He does not wait for 'brass hats' to tell him what to do with the mustard-oil cases—he's already making a thorough study and sending them down with record slips. Apparently a good many have been evacuated with supposedly blind or receding symptoms, and have died *en route* for the Base with dilated hearts. . . . Awful to see these big Scots Guardsmen dying from fulminating pneumonia about two weeks after first being infected. The original chlorine business two years ago, though a surprise and different from this, was certainly no worse."

On August 2nd, after the opening of what came to be known as the Third Battle of Ypres: "Pouring cats and dogs all day—also pouring cold and shivering wounded, covered with mud and blood. Some gun-shot wounds of the head, when the mud is scraped off, prove to be trifles—others of unsuspected gravity. The pre-operation room is still crowded—one can't possibly keep up with them; and the unsystematic way things are run drives one frantic. The news, too, is very bad. The greatest battle of history is floundering up to its middle in a morass, and the guns have sunk even deeper than that. *Gott mit uns* was certainly true for the enemy this time.

"Operating from 8.30 a.m. one day till 2 a.m. the next; standing in a pair of rubber boots, and periodically full of tea as a stimulant, is not healthy. It's an awful business, probably the worst possible training in surgery for a young man, and ruinous for the carefully acquired technique of an oldster. Something over 2,000 wounded have passed, so far, through this one C.C.S. There are fifteen similar stations behind the battle front. . . ."

A Grim Account

"Operating again all day, and finished up an hour ago with an extraction of a large piece of shell from a man's badly infected ventricle with the magnet—then dinner, and now to bed. It still rains. A lot of wounded must have drowned in the mud. One of to-day's cases was a fine young Scot having frequent Jacksonian attacks from a glancing sniper's ball through his tin hat, a piece of which was driven into the brain. He had lain, he said, in the protection of a shell hole with one or two others—the water up to his waist—for twelve hours before they were found."

August 3rd: "Continuous downpour for the fourth consecutive day. . . . In the early afternoon a large batch of wounded were unexpectedly brought in—mostly heads—men who have been lying out for four days in craters in the rain, without food. It is amazing what the human animal can endure. . . ."

So it goes on, through attack after attack; and such was life and work in a C.C.S. during a big battle. Dr. Cushing's testimony has been quoted at length because, as an attached American, he was able to take the dispassionate view, and had a genius for catching the mood of the passing moment. One can almost *smell* the operating-room, hear the groans of suffering men, in his narrative. Without these factors no impression of a C.C.S. would be complete.

There was, of course, a sunnier side to some C.C.S. work: the "spit-and-polish" gleam of stations farther back, with improvised flower-beds, borders of white-washed stones, shining mar-

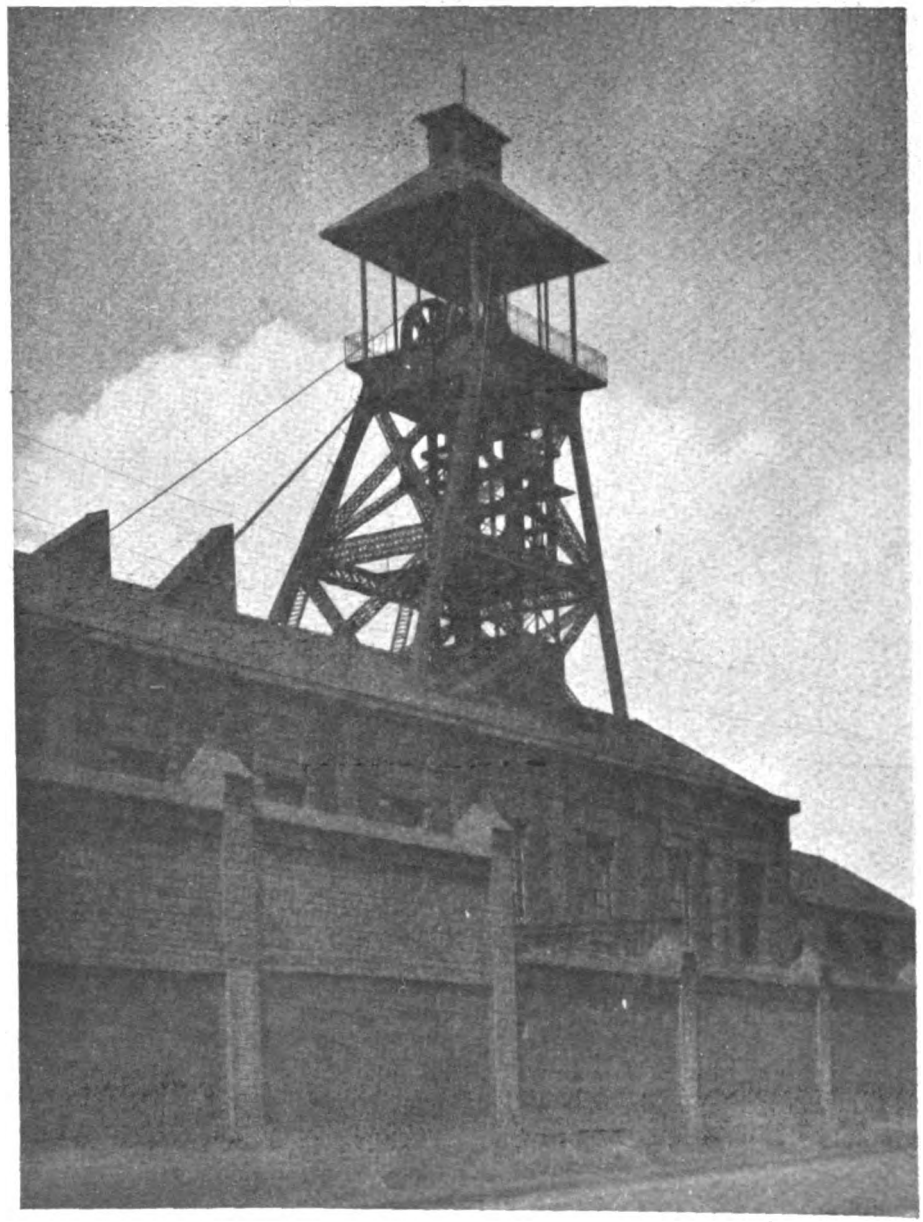

Photo: A. J. Insall.

AGAINST THE EVENING SKY

A contemporary view of the Schneider head-gear. Much to the annoyance of the French workers, and still more to that of the French workless, a very large number of Poles are nowadays employed in these northern mines. Not infrequently one of these Poles becomes what one can only call "up the pole," and runs amok with a knife and a gun, slitting throats and peppering stomachs. This does not improve international relations.

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quees and tents, neat sign-boards, and brusque, often pretty nursing sisters—the last a visual link with happier, more romantic days in beloved Blighty.

R.A.M.C. men whose job chanced to take them to such a C.C.S. after months in the front line were not above trying to "wangle" a transfer there, or at least a temporary change of duty; whereby hangs the tale of a friend of the writer's who decided that a rest in idyllic surroundings, far from the line he had just left on convoy duty, would do him no harm.

An Unofficial Rest-cure

He asked to see the C.C.S. dentist over some minor tooth trouble, and disclosed—quite casually—that he was a sign-writer. Actually he was an artist, and had never painted a sign in his life. He also announced the fact of his supposed sign-writing to the regimental sergeant-major, who was inordinately proud of the C.C.S. eye-wash and thought his camp the finest in France.

"Fine camp, major," he remarked, "but there's just one thing which has been done badly; the signs are appalling. You don't expect the brigadier-general to admire them, do you? I'm a sign-writer. . . ."

"A sign-writer?" said the R.S.M. gleefully. "I'll go straight to the colonel and have a word with him about it."

The colonel, who also considered his camp the finest in France, was greatly impressed.

"Keep him here till he's sign-written the whole place," he told the R.S.M. "Mark him 'Scabies.' Give him beer for breakfast and beer for supper, but hold him till every sign looks as if it had been painted by an Old Master!"

"Yes, sir."

So the Field Ambulance stretcher-bearer had three weeks of heaven, covering signboards with paint and taking his time over it. Then one day, beginning to feel a little fed up, as well as overfed, and pining—unaccountably—for his old comrades in the line, he told the R.S.M. he wanted to go back.

"Back?" exclaimed the R.S.M., dumbfounded. "Not if I know it. You're staying here. We need a sign-writer."

"Sorry, major. I'm no sign-writer. I'm a Territorial volunteer, not afraid of shells."

"You're marked 'Scabies.'"

"Never felt fitter in my life, major!"

"Oh, all right"—impatiently—"if you don't know when you're lucky. Back you go!"

And back he went to the mud and duckboards and shells, proud of having wangled a three weeks' rest-cure.

Ambulance Trains

Ambulance trains were the chief means of evacuating sick and wounded from C.C.S.'s. Early in the campaign twelve were organised, on the basis of one per division in the field. At the beginning of 1915, the Official Historian records, the D.M.S., lines of communication, recommended a basis of one per 20,000 men, 25 per 500,000. In February, 1915, the War Office asked for 24, and in September an additional 12. At no time subsequently, however, was the proportion of one train per division maintained.

Eventually 41 trains were sent to France: some to operate between that country and Italy, 6 in reserve for work between the bases on lines of communication. Certain of the trains

From the original in the Imperial War Museum.

"THE HARVEST OF BATTLE"

One of C. R. W. Nevinson's grim and graphic paintings, showing a stream of wounded of both sides returning from the line. The detail in this picture is exceedingly clear, and repays a careful scrutiny. In its general aspect the scene is curiously reminiscent of the photograph from the play *Miracle at Verdun*, with which we opened the first chapter in this volume. Other examples of Nevinson's work were reproduced on pages 222 (Volume One) and 1095 (Volume Two).

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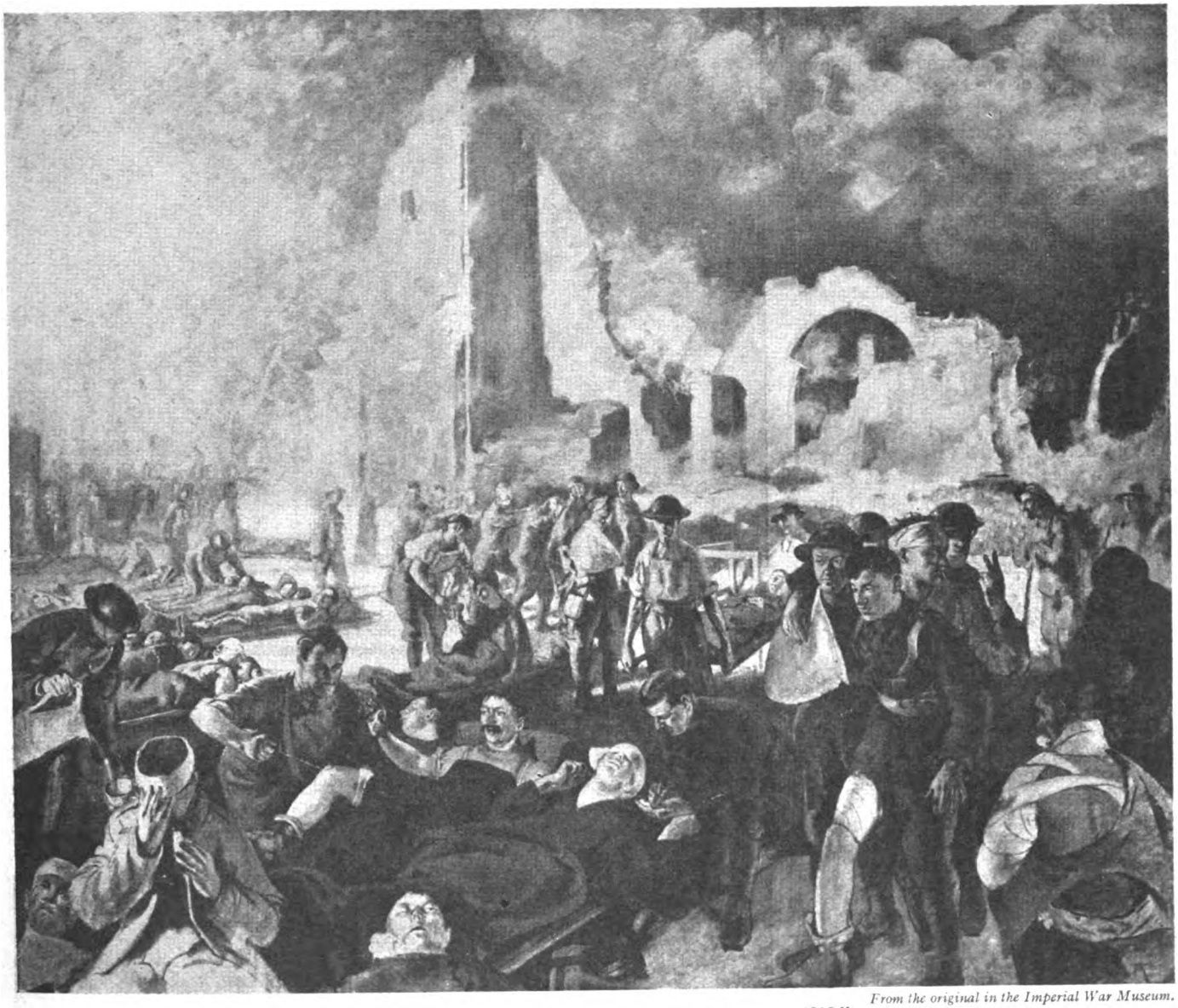

From the original in the Imperial War Museum.

"AN ADVANCED DRESSING-STATION IN FRANCE, 1918"

The painter of this picture is Professor Henry Tonks, chiefly known in art circles for his having been one of the men who introduced to England the work of the French impressionists. Fifty-two years of age when hostilities broke out, he was not among the younger War artists; but if his work lacks some of the burning indignation which characterised Paul Nash and others, his exceptional skill at figure-painting made him highly successful in the rendering of such scenes as the above.

were provided by voluntary subscription; No. 14 was Lord Michelham's, No. 15 Princess Christian's, Nos. 16 and 17 the United Kingdom Flour Millers'.

Ambulance trains had to fit into a complicated schedule which provided for the running of supply and other services. Their needs were furnished from a central store depôt at Abbeville. During big offensives, when the stream of wounded exceeded their capacity, they were supplemented by improvised ambulance trains for sick and sitting wounded.

In 1914 empty supply trains were used for the purpose, but after the battle of Neuve Chapelle the D.M.S. of the First Army devised a method of converting them in emergency: nine dumps of stores—three at Chocques, three at Lillers, and three at Merville—being maintained to equip 20 covered vans.

These, in due course, were superseded by properly organised and numbered temporary ambulance trains, comprising passenger coaches. Complaints of cold and other discomfort from troops evacuated during the Loos battle resulted in the issue of standing orders for M.O.'s to supervise these trains after September, 1915.

To supplement the trains, ambulance flotillas were run on the canals and rivers where practicable. Mr. Douglas Hall organised a British Water Ambulance Fund, for providing and equipping barges on the Seine, early in the War. He formed the first flotilla of six at Rouen—four for hospital purposes, one for stores, and one for personnel, the hospital barges being grouped in pairs with fifty beds apiece.

After Neuve Chapelle, in March, 1915, G.H.Q. ordered the construction of flotillas of six barges, to accommodate 30 beds and an M.O., two nursing sisters, nine R.A.M.C. orderlies, and three R.E.'s, Inland Water Transport, for navigating, each barge being fitted with kitchen and dispensary.

Four such flotillas were formed in addition to No. 1 already mentioned, and employed on the Lys, La Bassée, and the Somme canals, and in the Dun-

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kerque area, for the more serious cases which could not bear jolting—particularly head and chest wounds and gunshot fracture of the thigh. At first the barges were towed singly by a tug; later they were towed in pairs, one M.O. attending to both barges.

St. Omer was the headquarters of these four flotillas, which were administrated by a D.A.D.M.S., and conveyed wounded on the northern canal system to hospitals in St. Omer or Calais, and on the Somme to Amiens or Abbeville. As a general rule the journey was made in daylight, the barges mooring at night.

Aquatic Paradise

The flotilla service was a blessing to the wounded. They came out of the hell and fury of battle to the sylvan peace and quiet of poplar-fringed canals and rivers traversing Corot landscapes. Transit by water was soothing in the extreme: veritable heaven after trench life, going "over the top," stopping a "Blighty," perhaps lying out in shell-holes for hours—even days—and then being jolted on stretchers and in ambulance cars.

Many men to-day remember the experience as one of the most serene of their lives, despite the pain of wounds. One described it thus to the writer: "It was almost as if one had died and literally wakened in heaven. The peace, the silence, were unbelievable. One had glimpses of lovely country, and the scent of it drifted in. The nights, moored up, were so still—though sometimes one heard the distant gun-fire. But it didn't matter any more—it seemed so far away."

R.A.M.C. personnel who "clicked" duty on these flotillas were greatly envied by their fellows. They had to work reasonably hard, but there was no frantic rush, as in other branches of the Service in forward areas. In off-moments they could smoke their pipes of peace while twilight lay over the water, sunset gilded the bordering trees, and lights twinkled in villages and farms, and bless their luck in being water-gipsies amid a countryside remote from the immediate horrors of war.

Medical stores for the Western Front were installed in Base Depôts at Boulogne, Étaples, Abbeville, Rouen, and Havre—the last-named depôt being transferred to Calais at the end of 1915. As a general rule there were three advance depôts per army to supply C.C.S.'s, field ambulances, etc., the battalion M.O. receiving his stores from divisional field ambulances. An advance depôt was also established at St. Omer for G.H.Q. troops and hospitals in the area. Each branch-store was in charge of a quarter-master with the rank of lieut.-colonel, attached to the D.M.S., lines of communication.

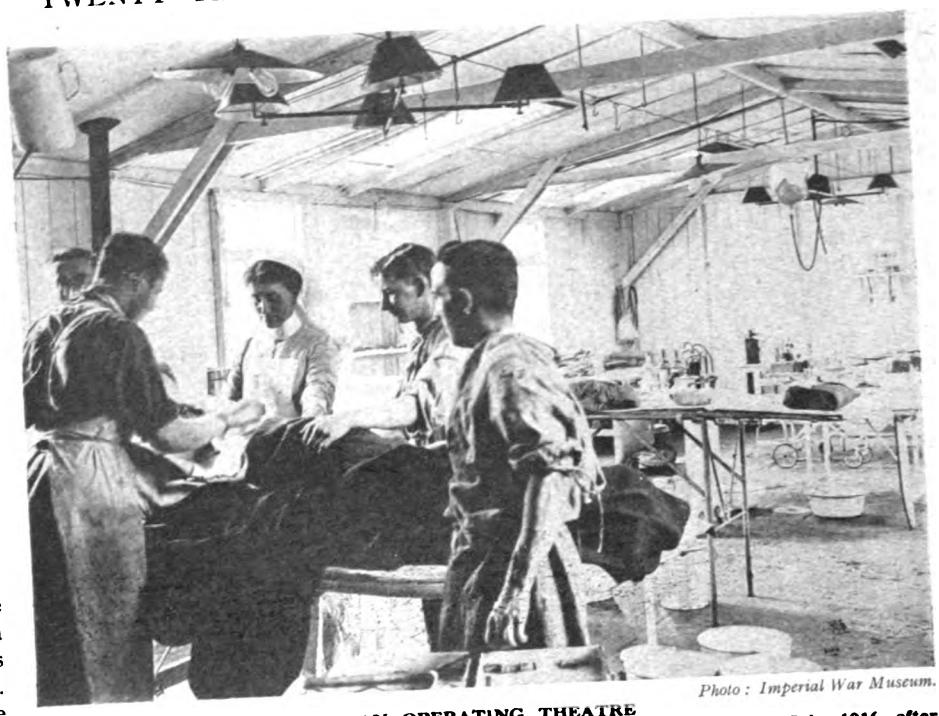

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

AN OPERATING THEATRE

The operating theatre of No. 10 Casualty Clearing-station as it appeared during July, 1916, after the wounded from the Somme offensive had begun to arrive. The somewhat primitive scene is in marked contrast to the one shown immediately opposite.

Mobile Laboratories

Other medical services in army areas supplemented those already mentioned. Mobile laboratories for hygiene and bacteriology were sent to France in 1914; in 1915 one of the former and two of the latter were scheduled for

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

A PALATIAL WARD

The tiled ward at No. 22 Casualty Clearing-station, Cambrai. The duties of a C.C.S. were threefold to retain all serious cases unfit to travel, or requiring an operation before being evacuated; to retain all slight cases likely to be fit for duty again in a short period; and to evacuate all others.

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Photo : Imperial War Museum.

ANOTHER THEATRE

At the time of the First Battle of the Somme there were two advanced operating theatres in the area of the offensive, both some six miles behind the front ; while a third dealt with urgent abdominal operations. These stations were at Warloy, Authie, and Heilly.

each Army, which was also allotted a mobile X-ray laboratory, mounted on a motor-lorry chassis, to serve C.C.S.'s as required. Eventually one outfit was attached to each C.C.S.

Dental work in army areas was at first covered by a dentist attached to each C.C.S., men requiring dentures being sent to the base. Then the dentist toured divisional areas on certain days with equipment in an ambulance car, to save sending men to C.C.S.'s for minor treatment.

In May, 1916, a motor dental laboratory was provided by the British Red Cross Society from the Civil Service Motor Ambulance Fund, and attached to the Third Army. Private donors eventually provided a similar laboratory for each of the five armies, so that mechanical dentistry—so necessary to the health of the men in the field living on hard fare—could be done in the army areas. In March, 1918, the system was extended to include dental centres.

The Official Historian observes that dentistry with the Dominion and American troops was much more advanced and on a more extensive scale. A Canadian division had a dental surgeon with each field ambulance, with each artillery and infantry brigade, and with divisional H.Q. ; also two with the H.Q. of a mounted brigade. The American troops had a dentist and equipment with each infantry battalion.

Sanitary Sections, which performed extremely valuable if unromantic work in safeguarding the health of the troops, were first mobilised at bases only, with squads at railheads ; no provision was made for sanitary supervision of armies in the field, except by squads from their own units. At the end of October, 1914, a scheme was formed for divisional sanitary sections comprising one officer and 25 other ranks, with portable disinfectors, sprays, and other equipment carried in a lorry.

Their duties were to clean up newly-occupied ground, burn rubbish, fill in latrines, dispose of manure, disinfect clothing, blankets, etc., and generally supervise the sanitation of towns and billets. These divisional sections began to function early in 1915.

Dysentery on the Somme

In the Somme struggles of 1916 the sanitary work became disorganised, because sections could not settle down to work in their area before being shifted on. Dysentery broke out among the troops, and the D.D.G.M.S. proposed that sections should be allotted to definite areas irrespective of divisions, under the control of a D.A.D.M.S. In April, 1917, the scheme was approved. Cavalry divisions, however, retained their sections, owing to the special sanitation required for horse-lines.

On the Near East fronts—especially in Macedonia — sanitary sections organised anti-malarial work—draining marshes, oiling pools, canalising streams, and burning adjacent shrubs. After the first year's work behind the Doiran

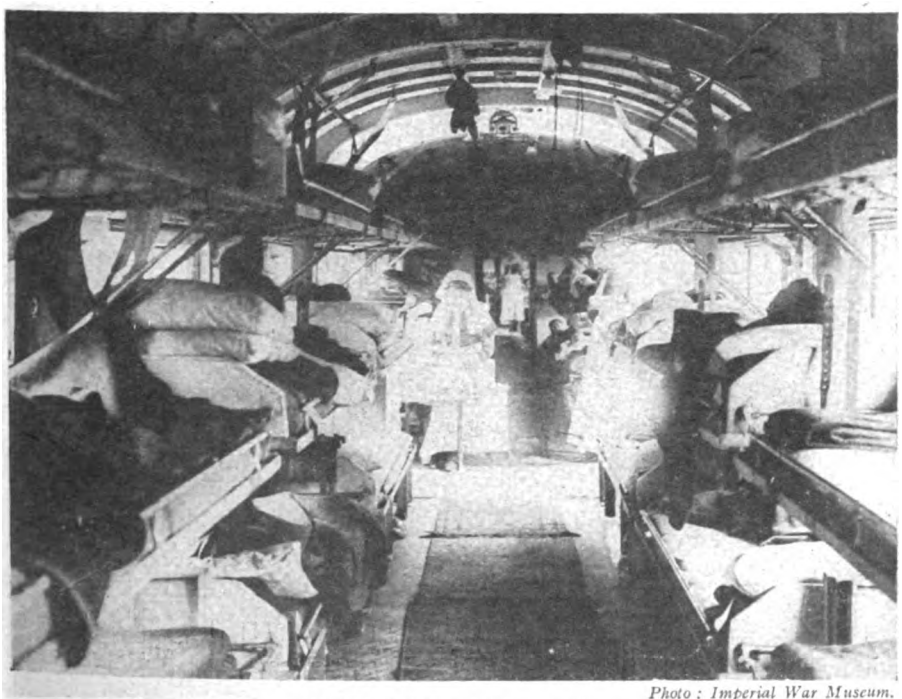

Photo : Imperial War Museum.

IN AN AMBULANCE TRAIN

This picture follows logically on the three preceding, for it was direct to ambulance trains that C.C.S.'s generally cleared. Motor ambulances and convoys were chiefly employed for carrying the severely wounded *to* the stations. Note the ample lighting and spacious arrangement of the train.

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sectors, primary cases were radically reduced, and it was proved that, with proper control of all breeding-water on principles laid down by Sir Ronald Ross and other experts, malaria could be practically eliminated. The 39th Sanitary Section, stationed at Gugunci, achieved remarkable results under a C.O. who tackled the problem in earnest.

Sanitary Sections in some areas also supervised baths behind the front. Men came in filthy from the trenches, handed in their dirty underclothing for de-lousing in steam disinfectors, bathed in tubs or under showers, and left with clean linen, feeling new men. The benefit was psychological as well as physical.

The writer remembers when some baths in a front area were blown up. A disappointed Tommy, contemplating the ruin, remarked: "I'd much rather they'd blown up the ruddy canteen beer; you can't wash in that!" The only person who seemed pleased was the sanitary corporal in charge, who had found the occasional shelling very disturbing. Glad of the rest, he promptly hoofed it back to his section, where he had a much more comfortable dug-out, and reported: "Baths gone up in the air, Staff—transferred to the R.A.F. Infantry still scratchin'."

Grim though Medical work was, it had its lighter moments. Major Cecil Alport, R.A.M.C., T.F., in *The Lighter Side of the War*,[1] relates a story of a highly placed R.A.M.C. officer who was being shown round a ward in which were a number of convalescents.

"What is the matter with you?" he asked a man standing to attention by his bed.

[1] Hutchinson.

The man said he had Malignant Tertian Malaria.

"Rubbish, rubbish, my man," said the officer. "You haven't got Malignant Tertian. I can see that by looking at you; there is nothing the matter with you." He looked round. "Now that man over there has Malignant Tertian, just look at his sallow complexion. What is the matter with you?" he asked, pointing to him.

"Nothing at all, sir," was the reply. "I'm the ward orderly."

One day, on sick parade in German South-West Africa, appeared a miserable fellow crippled with lumbago, scarcely able to stand up. The Major was touched, and marked him "Base." Later, the Second-in-Command dashed up.

"Good Lord, Doctor," he exclaimed, "do you know what you have done? You have marked the 'Old Firm'

Photo: A. P., Paris.

THE ASCENT TO MT. VIDAIGNE

Another view of this well-known hill in the chain called the Monts des Flandres. The photograph, which was taken by a Frenchman on May 30th, 1918, shows one of the several lanes, flanked here and there by scattered houses and farmsteads, which led over the rise. While the solitary French soldier seen in the middle distance was surveying the Flanders battlefield from this eminence, far to the south another battlefield was being surveyed from the Chemin des Dames by His Imperial Majesty Kaiser Wilhelm II.

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Photo : A. J. Insall.

HOUSES UPON THE HILL

There is no village on Mt. Vidaigne, but since the War many people have chosen to build on this gracious upland, whose lush slopes are now more pleasantly clothed than ever. Less than a kilometre to the south-west, where two modest lanes meet upon Mt. Noir, there is a memorial to the 4th Division ; but otherwise there is neither cemetery nor monument to remind future generations of the British connection with this region. The War has almost gone from Mt. Vidaigne. . . .

unfit ! The blighter has cleaned out every man in the regiment and now he is off to Swakopmund with his Crown and Anchor board to rob the new units which have arrived to garrison that place."

" Have you seen him ? " asked the Major.

" Seen him, yes ! I saw him cake-walking down the road a moment ago."

At one time Major Alport's job, as M.O., was to examine recruits. One, an Irishman, told him of a fracas in a racing stable three weeks earlier in which a man had died. Death had been certified as due to natural causes.

" Do you remember Bill Murphy ? " he said. " Well, you know old Bill is dead and the police think I killed him. They are going to dig him up again and hang me."

The Major sympathised and asked : " Did you kill him ? "

" No, I never did," was the reply ; " we had a scrap in a stable and he slipped and fell on the back of his head."

" Well, what do you want me to do ? "

" Sure, that's quite easy, Doctor. All you have to do is to be at the grave, and when they open up the coffin just pop that thing you listen with on to Bill's chest and say he died of heart failure."

The Major recalls how he recruited a man who seemed to have all the necessary medical qualifications, then took him to see the C.O., who behaved rudely and declared the man unsuitable.

" But why ? " asked the Major when the recruit had been shown out.

" My dear fellow," the C.O. replied, " very soon we may be sent overseas, perhaps never to return ; before we go we will, of course, have a photograph taken of the Unit, and if you are prepared to inflict that ugly mug on your missus for the rest of her natural life, I am damn certain I am not going to treat mine like that."

Among the conscripts the Major had to examine in Africa was an enormously fat Jew, weighing about nineteen stone. " I vill gif you von hundred pounds if you will let me off," he cried.

The Major reproved him for attempting to bribe the British Army, but rejected him as unfit. Later one of his orderlies approached, saluted, and held out two pounds ten in gold :

" Your share, sir."

" What on earth do you mean ? "

" That fat Jew, sir, I touched him for a fiver before he could get away, sir ! "

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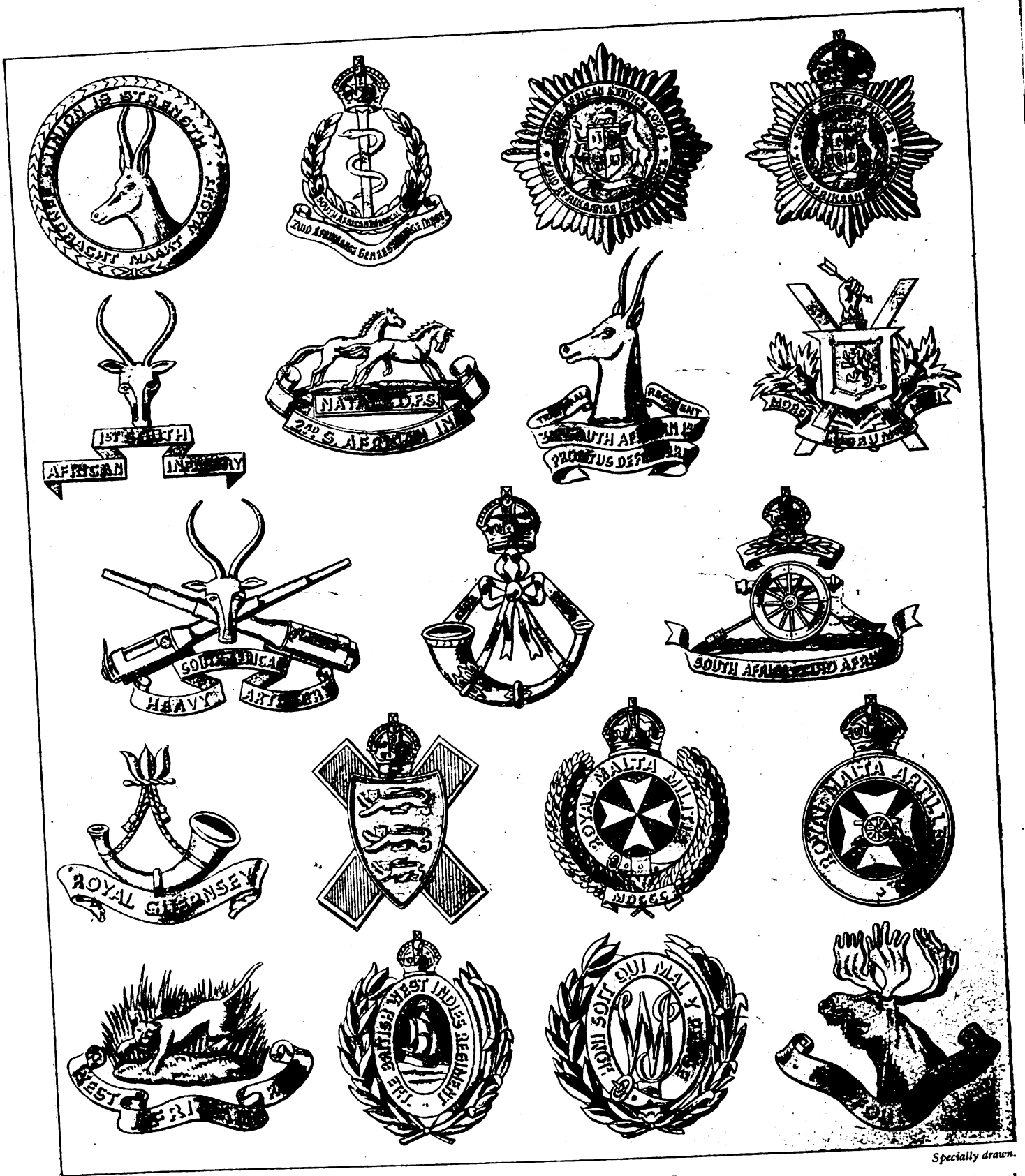

Specially drawn.

OVERSEAS BADGES—EIGHTH SERIES

The above plate depicts badges from various parts of the Empire. From left to right, beginning at the top, the titles are: 1—South African General Service. 2—S.A. Medical Corps. 3—S.A. Service Corps. 4—S.A. Police. 5—1st S.A. Infantry (Cape of Good Hope). 6—2nd S.A. Infantry (Natal and Orange Free State). 7—3rd S.A. Infantry (Transvaal and Rhodesia). 8—4th S.A. Infantry (South African Scottish). 9—S.A. Heavy Artillery. 10—S.A. Mounted Rifles. 11—S.A. Artillery. 12—Royal Guernsey Light Infantry. 13—Royal Jersey Light Infantry. 14—Royal Malta Militia. 15—Royal Malta Artillery. 16—West Africa Regt. 17—British West Indies Regt. 18—West India Regt. 19—Newfoundland General Service.

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Medical units on lines of communication and at bases comprised : hospitals, convalescent depôts, sanitary sections and squads, base depôt medical stores, voluntary ambulance cars, and hospital ships administrated by the D.M.S. for Embarkation Duties in England.

At the bases practically all ambulance cars were run by the British Red Cross and St. John's Ambulance Brigade, many being driven and maintained by women of the Voluntary Aid Detachments, and all being controlled by a Commissioner responsible to the D.G.M.S. The B.R.C.S. also ran stores at the base and in army areas for providing medical comforts to hospitals and units in the line.

Hospitals were categorised as general, stationary, detention, voluntary, and hospitals for coloured labour : those for isolation and special diseases being formed by general or stationary hospitals, or sections of them.

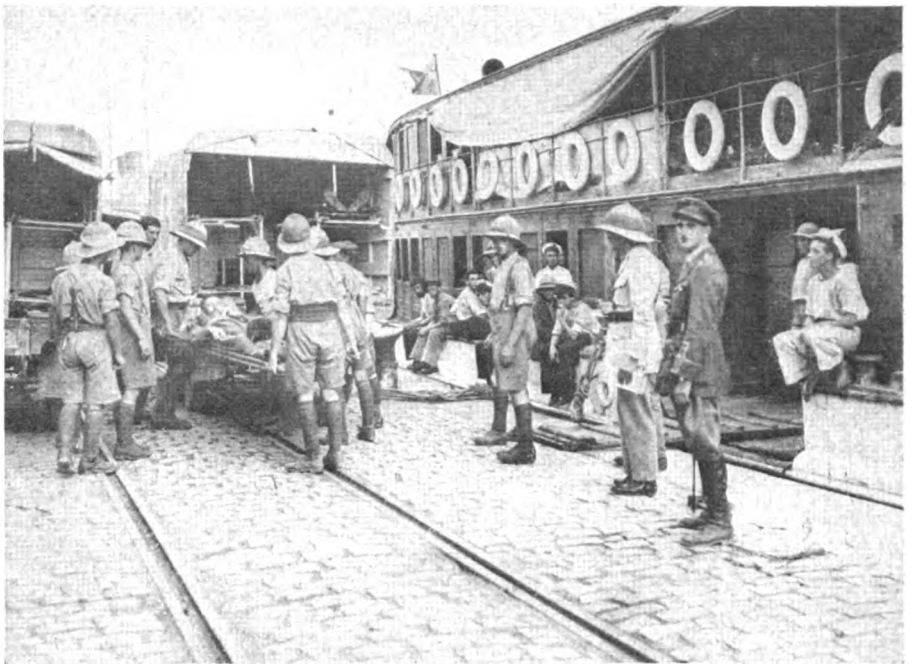

Photo : Imperial War Museum.

DURING THE BATTLE OF DOIRAN

Transporting wounded of the Macedonian force on to a hospital ship at Salonica, August, 1916. This campaign was one of the few in which casualties from disease exceeded those due to hostile action. Prior to the 20th century every war had resulted in a majority of deaths from sickness.

Reorganisation in 1916

The Somme offensive led to the organisation of crisis expansion to its furthest limit from the beginning of August, 1916, to November, when the supplementary equipment was stored for future contingencies. During the winter, evacuation to the United Kingdom was restricted, partly owing to U-boat activity in the Channel, partly in order to save man-power in France.

Before the Arras offensive in the spring of 1917, vacant beds had been reduced to between 8,000 and 9,000 though 40,000 were needed. Crisis expansion and increased evacuation by sea filled the gap.

At one time a scheme was considered for hospital centres south of the Seine, served by large hospital ships calling at St. Nazaire or Brest to avoid U-boats operating outside Havre. A site above Trouville on the Normandy coast was selected for three new general hospitals of 2,500 beds each, but these did not open until the spring of 1918. No. 81 General was sent to Marseilles towards the end of 1917 for British troops operating in Italy.

In May, 1918, the hospitals at Étaples were heavily bombed, while St. Omer became virtually untenable. Plans were at once prepared for transfer to a large centre at Évreux, on the Rouen-Paris route, but were not carried out. There was, however, a " general post " of a disturbing kind during 1917 and 1918.

Transferring a whole hospital was no easy matter, and this " general post," apart from incidental air raids, gave the personnel a worrying time. Imagine a London hospital being told to pack up at once and transfer all its equipment several miles, reassembling on a new site ready for patients with the least possible delay !

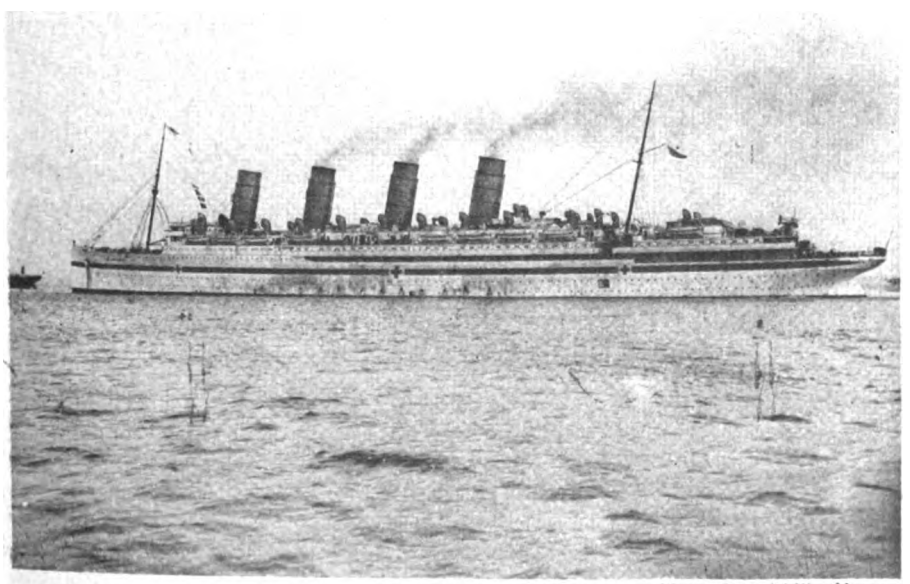

Photo : Imperial War Museum.

A HEROINE OF THE SEAS

The famous liner *Mauretania* photographed during her term of service as a hospital ship plying between England and the Dardanelles. Built early in the century, and only recently consigned to the scrap-heap, the *Mauretania* was for twenty years (1909–1929) the fastest liner afloat—an amazing record. Her burthen was upward of 30,000 tons.

Special Fracture Apparatus

Up to the end of 1915, special cases such as fractured femur (thigh-bone) were evacuated to the United Kingdom

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after only a few days' treatment; it was then decided to retain them for four to six weeks, and hospitals were selected at each base for treatment by specialists. The practice was extended, and at the beginning of 1918 beds with special fracture apparatus and special surgeons were set apart for the work in certain hospitals.

The Official Historian records that during the battles of the Somme, between July and November, 1916, there were 3,173 cases of fractured femur, of which 624 were evacuated from Boulogne to the United Kingdom after an average stay in hospital of seven days. At the time it was difficult to treat such cases in France; and as they could not be shifted promptly, there was considerable risk from air raids. The Special Hospitals enabled injuries of this class to be properly treated; and not until after the German offensive of 1918 were restrictions against evacuation to England removed.

A Stationary Hospital at Havre with 2,000 beds, and others elsewhere, specialised on V.D. cases; No. 25 General at Hardelot, in the Boulogne area, became a special hospital for skin diseases; from the end of 1916 various base hospitals concentrated on infectious diseases, 3,300 beds being allotted to them in August, 1918—1,000 to No. 46 General at Étaples alone.

By August, too, 230 beds in special wards at the bases were available for mental cases, pending speedy evacuation to England; eye, face and jaw injuries were treated in special wards at No. 13 Stationary (No. 83 General) at Boulogne, face injuries at Étaples.

The whole hospital organisation was so planned that sick or wounded needing specialist treatment could readily be singled out from the routine flow of casualties and sent to centres qualified and equipped to deal with them expeditiously. In no previous war was the medical service nearly so thorough and varied. On the Western Front alone by 1918 there were no less than 94 hospitals.

A Graphic Record

All the Voluntary Hospitals were British Red Cross, except for one St. John's Ambulance Brigade.

St. John's Ambulance Hospital at Étaples opened in huts in September, 1915, with 520 beds, suffered great damage and serious casualties from air

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

AN O.P. IN TRÔNES WOOD

A German artillery observation post in the midst of this coppice on the 10th August, 1916. Trônes Wood lies just east of Bernafay Wood, between Montauban and Guillemont, with Longueval and Delville Wood at a little distance to the north. The area was behind the German line until July, 1916, when there was bitter fighting hereabouts. The 30th Division established itself in the southern part of the wood on the 8th, and on the 14th the 18th Division completed the clearance of the enemy, relieving a body of 170 Royal West Kents and Queen's who had spent the night in the northern corner completely surrounded.

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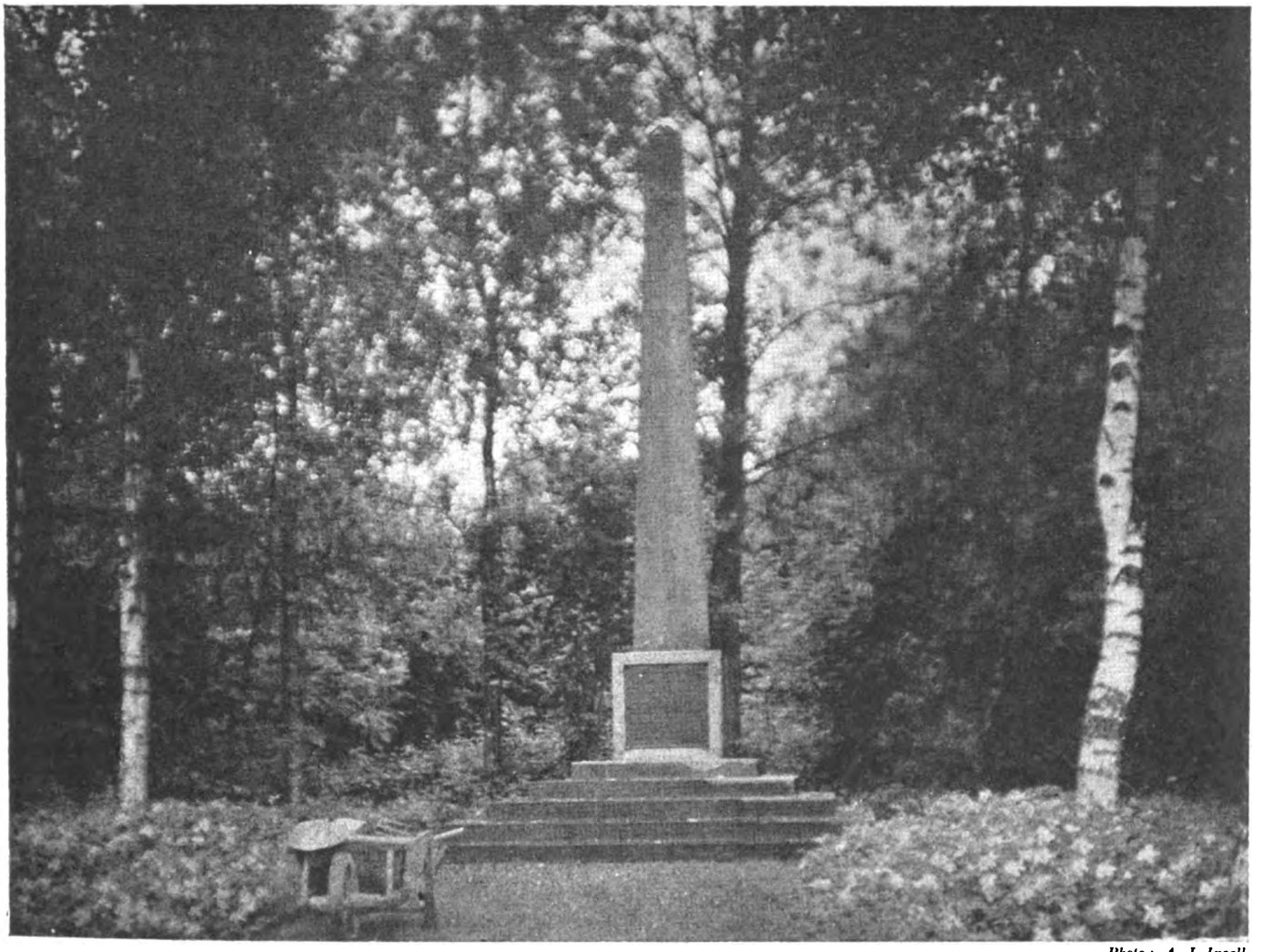

Photo: A. J. Insall.

TO THE 18TH DIVISION

More than two years later than the events narrated in the preceding caption, Trônes Wood once more lay in our path, and by a curious coincidence it was again the 18th Division which captured it, doing so with great valour on August 27th, 1918, after an all-day struggle against the German *2nd Guard Division*, fresh from reserve. Small wonder that the 18th chose this site for its memorial! . . . On March 24th, 1918, the wood had been on the northern flank of the 9th Division's line of retreat, approximately where the VII Corps joined the V.

raids on May 19th and 31st, 1918, and was transferred to Trouville in October. Dr. Harvey Cushing, who was at Boulogne at the time, records under the date May 20th:

"A long-sustained raid here last night; and bad as it was, Étaples got it worse. In that area they tried repeatedly to get the single bridge over the Canche, which would have shut us off from the south. Meanwhile, the neighbouring hospitals, particularly No. 1 Canadian, suffered greatly, and it is rumoured that the raiders swept the place with machine guns after dropping their bombs. Kipling says that mankind can be divided into two classes—human beings and Germans." The last bitter remark was obviously prompted by the fact that the raid appeared to develop into a ruthless hospital "strafe."

On May 31st, also at Boulogne, he made this entry in his diary: "A raider—perhaps more than one—came over last night—dropped a bomb just in front of here on the edge of the sea, another (a dud) in the aerodrome just across from the hospital, and several others in the town. They also reappeared in Étaples and got one arch of the bridge over the Canche River, holding up traffic thereby for seven hours. This time the town was badly hit and many civilians suffered, but the hospitals escaped."

The Red Cross a Target

Later: "Meanwhile another hospital bombed. At 1 a.m. on the night of the 30th, No. 3 Canadian Stationary at Doullens, halfway between Arras and Amiens, got a direct hit—absolutely in the centre of a red cross painted on the roof. A four-storey building, the bomb went through to the ground floor, where one team was still at work operating on an officer; and three other teams were at supper. Lieut. Sage, an American M.O., was giving ether and there was practically nothing to be found of the team. The building caught fire and there was great loss of life—three sisters killed and two M.O.'s. The place stood on the citadel a mile from the railroad."

In the afternoon of June 1st he went to Étaples, following news that St. John's and other hospitals there had again been seriously hit the previous night: "As we approached the hospital area we passed a burial party escorting the bodies of four sisters to add to the ever-widening forest of crosses. It was appalling—our first sight of St. John's, where we had so comfortably gathered two days before. The row of huts on

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Photo: Imperial War Museum.

UNDER THE STARS AND STRIPES

A photograph of the village of Prémont immediately after its capture by the 30th American Division on October 8th, 1918. This division, one of the United States' best, was attached to the British Fourth Army at the time; and its attack on Prémont was part of the great assault launched by us on a 21-mile front from Cambrai to St. Quentin, assisted by a Franco-American "push" in Champagne.

the Camiers end were collapsed and splintered like so many card houses, with beds and blankets and ward furniture and letters home and torn books scattered broadcast.

"The X-ray plant, the laboratory, the chemist's shop all demolished, and a smell of drugs in the air. The wrecking parties still at work, though bodies could hardly have been overlooked; still, they had had no time for a roll call. Col. Trimble worn out and in bed; he deserves a V.C., having called for volunteers to help extinguish a fire in one of the wards while bombs were falling on every side. The hospital entirely evacuated to Camiers; the few M.O.'s and orderlies that we saw obviously had shattered nerves. The northern side of the compound had suffered most; but the hospital as a hospital was ruined and topsy-turvy—a nightmare of a place!

"The raiders came as before about 10.30, in squadrons from the north. There was no moon, but at the outset they dropped a blinding magnesium flare which lit up the country like day for miles around and then the bombs—showers of them. And this kept up for two mortal hours. They could hardly have failed to know where they were. No damage of military significance was done, or could have been done, except the confusion of the area.

Papal Intervention

"This may be their intent. If it is, and they come again to-night, the demoralisation will certainly be complete. The time before, everyone thought they were after the railroad and excused them; the second time the bridge across the Canche a mile or so farther on; but this time what? It is certainly staggering in view of the British agreement—on the Pope's request for a one-day truce—not to bomb German towns on Corpus Christi when the streets would be full of religious processions.

"We went on to the Duchess of Westminster's hospital at Le Touquet, where they naturally had the wind up, though the place seems remote enough from danger. The wounded officers naturally don't much like this bombing business while in bed on their backs. I had to calm down one of our 'casual' reserve corps M.O.'s, a young doctor from Pittsburg who will in due course be taken home legless to his wife and children."

Dr. Cushing's vivid diary gives a fair impression of what some hospital personnel and patients had to endure in air raids. Doctors, nurses, and orderlies could not make for the nearest funk-hole, for their first duty was to their patients;

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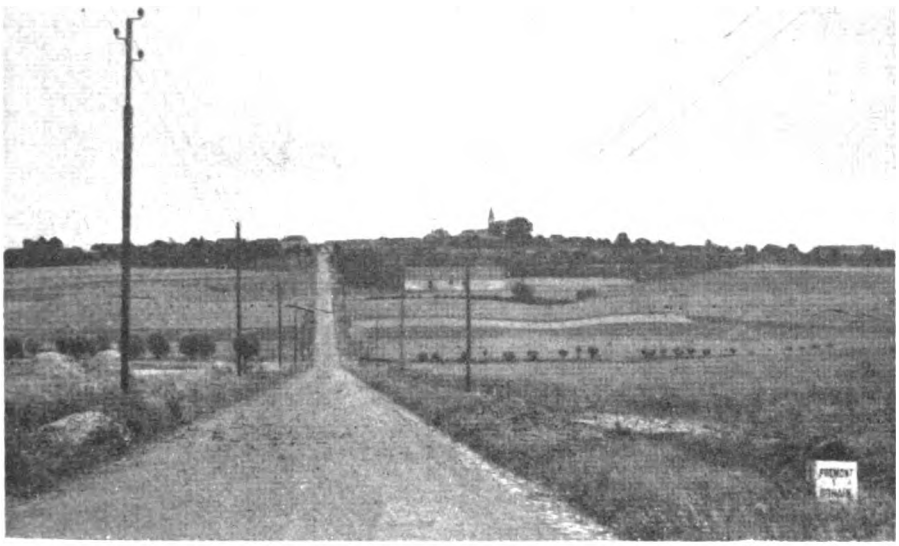

Photo: A. J. Insall.

PRÉMONT FROM WITHOUT

To be exact, from the Cambrai—Bohain road, looking south-east. Prémont is situated 5 km. north-west of Bohain, and 21 km. from both Cambrai and St. Quentin. A small waterway, the Canal des Torrents, defended it in some measure on the north and west, while a wood known as the Bois Mirand lies just east of it.

frequently they worked frantically, and at grave risk, to get them to some safer place, though it was not always possible and never easy.

Hospital personnel under bombing were like infantry under fire: they could not, without shame, desert their post. The patients were, in most cases, so helpless. They thought they had said "good-bye to all that" when they left the line, and were in no fit condition to endure further torment from H.E. It was this that made air raids on hospitals so pitifully tragic.

There was another side to the picture, of course: steady routine work in pleasant surroundings, visits from officers of other units, and visits to them in turn; friendly lunch, tea, and dinner parties, when work permitted, with nursing sisters as charming guests or hostesses.

Officers were always "dropping in" at hospital messes, *en route* to or from the line or another area; the mess was a kind of informal guest-house or caravanserai for all who happened to have friends there. Your front-line visitor brought you news from the trenches or corps or divisional H.Q.; and you retailed to him the latest gossip of the base.

Christmas Ragging

Sometimes there were entertainments by visiting artistes or concert-parties; always festive celebrations at Christmas, with the wards and messes decorated and everyone sure the War would end before the next, so that they could spend it at home. And there was good-natured ragging of this kind, logged by Dr. Cushing:

"Wright" (Sir Almroth, the famous pathologist, who was in charge of the laboratory, Boulogne Casino) "says he hates Christmas. He appeared in his laboratory to-day to find 'God Bless Our Colonel' in cotton and glue over his desk and the room festooned with papers daubed with fuchsia, gentian-violet, eosin, and methylene blue, which made him hate it worse than ever."

Since the hospital staffs were brought into close contact with the women's services, they could not help deriving innocuous fun from them at times. Dr. Cushing notes in January, 1918: "The Queen of the W.A.A.C.'s was at the nurses' tea—at least I took her for the Queen—name unknown—ought to be Mrs. Jarley—controls the Waacs works—chance for someone to evolve a joke. There are some new ones coming out—the 'Wrens'—Women's Royal Naval Service or something of the kind, whereas the brown ones are 'Women's Auxiliary Army Corps,' I believe.

"I should not forget the Fannys—the F.A.N.Y.—First Aid Nursing Yeomanry. They were the first on the field. Organised, I believe, before the War as a sort of Territorial group of 'horsy'

Photo: A. J. Insall.

PRÉMONT FROM WITHIN

There have been changes even in this relatively unbattered place, but many of the houses—notably on the right of the road, beyond the bend—are still the same as in 1918 and 1914, when the weary troops of the original B.E.F. retreated through this area after the Battle of Le Cateau. There is one British cemetery, containing 521 United Kingdom, 15 Empire, and 36 German fallen.

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women—sporting females accustomed to ride and shoot and drive high-powered motors. . . .

"Soon as many women as men, almost enough to go one apiece for the Australians, who are in rest hereabouts, and doubtless the sea makes them homesick. At least they sit out in front of here and gaze at it a good deal in pairs. Though not apparent on the surface, there must be some honey which can still be squeezed out of the Waacs."

There was a perpetual shortage of skilled personnel for the many hospitals and front-line and regimental services which suffered casualties. The Official Historian records that in the latter part of 1915 we were in need of 150 M.O.'s for lines of communication. In December the lowest limit was reached: a deficiency of about 200, with a monthly wastage of 50.

Question of Untrained Help

It was debated whether women or older and untrained men could supplement the trained, and whether the number of hospitals, C.C.S.'s, etc., could be reduced; but it was decided that any saving in M.O.'s from field ambulances, motor ambulance convoys, and ambulance trains, would suffice only to meet the ever-increasing requirements of C.C.S.'s, although actually the C.C.S. establishment was never increased.

Two complete units from Harvard and Chicago, organised by the United States Army Medical Corps, took over Nos. 22 and 23 General Hospitals at Dannes-Camiers, near Étaples, in 1917, and thus helped to relieve the hospital shortage. They had served with the British Medical Service from July, 1915, and consisted of M.O.'s and sisters.

When the B.E.F. went to France in 1914, there was only one convalescent depôt for 1,000 patients, staffed by two M.O.'s, a quartermaster, and three other ranks. Others were subsequently organised to relieve congestion at the hospitals, and to minimise evacuation to the United Kingdom and loss of manpower. At the end of 1914 No. 4 Stationary Hospital took over a jute factory at St. Omer for the purpose, the depôt moving to Arques in April, 1915. By July, 1915, there were depôts at Boulogne, Wimereux, Rouen, Havre, Étaples, Dannes-Camiers, Le Tréport, and (for Indians) Boulogne and Marseilles.

In 1917 a new type accommodating from 2,000 to 5,000 patients, with provision for physical and military training, was organised. It consisted of headquarters and two or more divisions of 1,000 men each, a division being divided into four corps of 250 each for training.

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

MANGLED MANANCOURT

Church (behind trees on right) and cottages in this ravished village on July 27th, 1917. Manancourt, whose château we illustrated on page 750 of Volume Two, stands on the River Tortille 12 km. south-east of Bapaume and 10 km. north-north-east of Péronne. It fell to us in March, 1917, to the Germans in March, 1918, and to us again in September, 1918. The main road passing through the village is that connecting Péronne with Bertincourt.

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Photo: A. J. Insall.

WITH SUNDRY GAPS

There are still a few grassy spaces between the cottages of rebuilt Manancourt, but at least the village is less melancholy than the untouched site of the château, which readers may remember from the more modern of our pictures on page 750. The 26th Brigade of the 9th Division was forced to uncover Manancourt during the afternoon of March 23rd, 1918, when it retired in conformity with the troops on its left. The enemy then poured into the ruins.

By 1918 there were fourteen depôts for British "other ranks," one for Australians, and one for Indians, with total accommodation, including crisis expansion, for over 60,000; also depôts for prisoners of war at Havre and for Indians at Rouen; and convalescent homes for officers, nursing sisters, auxiliary corps, etc., including one for 200 officers, run by Lord Michelham at Dieppe in the summer and Cimiez in the winter (later at Cap Martin, Mentone).

These depôts staffed by R.A.M.C. personnel, effected a great saving in man-power. During 1917 about half of the admissions to hospital were evacuated to the United Kingdom, one-quarter distributed to convalescent depôts, and the other quarter returned to duty in the line or at the base. Three-fourths of those admitted to depôts were returned to duty. When 21 battalions arrived in France from Salonica in July, 1918, a depôt for 7,000 patients—mainly malaria sufferers—was organised at Serqueux, in the Abancourt area.

The R.A.M.C. and its voluntary auxiliaries performed prodigious work on every front; and the science of surgery benefited permanently from its experience in the field, advancing, under the spur of urgent necessity, the art of healing and saving life. Some of its achievements in mending smashed bodies—and faces especially—were little short of miracles. Hundreds of thousands of men were saved who in earlier campaigns would have been fatal casualties.

Like Scotsmen and Jews, "Medicals" enjoyed stories against themselves. One of the best, related by an R.A.M.C. Major, Dr. Cecil Alport, concerns a private detailed for duty as orderly at a temporary hospital, who said to him: "Do you know, sir, the R.A.M.C. are not nearly so bad as they are painted?"

"What makes you think so?" asked the Major.

"Well, sir. After the scrap one of our fellows sat up all night holding the hand of a rebel who had been shot through the head."

"That was very kind of him," said the Major, "but what was the idea?"

"I don't exactly know, sir," replied the private, "though I did notice that there was a hundred-guinea diamond ring on one of his fingers."

"Do you mean to say that he tried to steal the ring?" the Major enquired.

"No, sir, it was his kind heart—besides, I took very good care he did not."

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CHAPTER XVI

HOW THE TANKS CAME INTO BEING

In the story of the long struggle on the Somme in 1916, reference has been made to the first appearance, on the 15th September, of "the tank."[1] *Its subsequent intervention in the fighting, with increasing and eventually decisive effect, has been mentioned in the narrative of the later operations, and in the chapter of reminiscences in which an officer of the Royal Tank Corps tells of his personal experiences with the Corps from its early days.*[2] *Most of this matter, however, has been concerned solely with the activities of the new weapon in the field. The moment seems appropriate to give some account of its origin.*

THE tank was an innovation, an entirely British creation, and one which played a preponderant part in bringing victory to the Allies. Moreover, its sudden appearance in the field was so dramatic, its nature so novel, and its name so grotesque that it excited greater interest than any other military development, and aroused a curiosity which was intensified by the secrecy in which its conception and birth had been shrouded. Lastly, it was one of the major surprises of the War, and the only surprise on land to which we can lay claim.

One Original Feature

It was, in the first place, a self-propelling, armed, and bullet-proof vehicle. There was nothing new about these characteristics, which it shared with the armoured train and the armoured car, both well known before 1914. But it possessed an additional quality peculiar to itself. It was not confined to movement along one line, on the prepared, hard surface of rail or road, but was able—within limits—to travel on soft ground and over obstacles—in short, to go "across country."

To put the matter more scientifically, it was endowed with "two-dimensional" mobility instead of being confined to "one-dimensional" movement.[3] This special quality was the basic difference between the tank and all the fighting vehicles which had preceded it, whether self-propelled or not; and it was obtained by the replacement of the wheel by the caterpillar track—a device borrowed from certain agricultural machines.

The creation of the tank in 1915 was brought about by the same causes as had, through the centuries, led to similar efforts to solve the eternal problem of enabling the soldier to approach, and at the same time strike, his enemy, while himself remaining under cover. There has been, indeed, a tendency to emphasise this aspect of the subject and the fact that the idea of such a contrivance as the tank was not new, and insufficiently to appreciate the more pertinent aspect that it was during the Great War that the problem was solved.

"But I laugh at ideas!" said Marshal Foch. "However good they may be, they possess value only in so far as they are translated into fact." So far as the tank was concerned, idea was translated into fact in 1915.* There were two reasons for this: the first, that though the general problem was the same as it had always been, never before had the necessity for its solution been so desperate, owing to the development by the Germans of the deadly combination of two factors—the machine gun and wire; the second, that the remedy was at hand—also in the form of a combination, namely that of the internal-combustion engine and the caterpillar track.

A Godsend to the P.B.I.

A correct appreciation of the situation, the knowledge of the existence of the means, and the imagination and commonsense to apply them, resulted in the evolution of the tank, which was essentially a fighting weapon. It had two functions: the first and most important, to hunt out and destroy the enemy's machine guns; the second, to destroy wire entanglements sufficiently to allow of the passage of infantry advancing to the attack. By performing either of these duties it became a godsend to the P.B.I., which was being vainly sacrificed in the repeated offensives carried out on obsolete methods.

The British were slow to realise the power of the machine gun. With our long-service troops we had, up to 1914, relied more on our superior musketry, which was admittedly of a quality unapproached by that of any other army. At Mons and Le Cateau, indeed, the volume of fire from our line was such that the enemy suspected that we were using massed machine guns.

The Germans, on the other hand, correctly attached great value to this weapon. They were at first armed with practically the same type as ourselves, theirs being the Vickers-Maxim and ours the Vickers. And the proportion of these weapons with their infantry and cavalry was approximately the same as with our own, though they had additional machine guns with their Jäger battalions. Profiting by the lessons of the Russo-Japanese War, they had paid much attention to machine-gun tactics, more particularly in defence—as we found to our cost—and had entrusted the handling of the gun to specialist troops.

It was during the Battle of the Marne, after we had turned and begun to advance, that we first gained experience of the enemy's skill in defensive tactics. The actions comprised in the battle, though of "rear-guard" nature, were a foretaste of what we were later to face. On the Aisne it was the same story. However much we suffered from the immense superiority of the enemy in artillery, it was his machine guns which—usually in conjunction with an improvised obstacle—in nearly every case stopped our forward movement. And so it continued. Our attempts to get round the enemy's right in "the race to the sea" were held up in the same way.

Impassable and Hideous Groves

Then, after the opposing lines had gone to earth—to face each other for four years—and the Germans had had time to bring their great resources into play, their defences became stronger,

1 *Twenty Years After*, ii, pp. 754–6.
2 *Ibid.*, ii, p. 835.
3 Aeroplanes, air-ships, helicopters, and submarines have, of course, the still greater power of being able to act in three dimensions. It is an interesting fact that when "Mother"—the first tank to be built—reared her huge bulk over various obstacles at her trial in 1916, one of the "Dismal Jimmies" who are always at hand to prevent undue elation or optimism on the part of others, complained that she could not fly.

* For a history of the predecessors of the tank through the centuries see *Tanks in the Great War*, by Colonel J. F. C. Fuller.

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their obstacles grew into impassable groves of hideous barbed wire, their machine guns multiplied, and the operations assumed the form of siege-warfare.

Our successive attempts to break through have been described in the preceding volumes of this work and in many other histories. But, without minimising the part played by the gun, the trench-mortar, the grenade and bomb, gas, and the rifle and bayonet, it may be said of all our offensives that, so long as the German machine guns and wire were not conquered, it was these which finally turned No Man's Land into a shambles and rendered vain the efforts of our gallant infantry.

In 1914 neither the French nor the British realised the strength given to the defensive by modern firearms. The Germans, despite their initial mass-attacks against troops in position, did so to a greater extent. Moreover, for their own attacks they relied on their preponderance in artillery, and exploited this to the utmost on both fronts.

And yet, notwithstanding this advantage, when the strength of the defensive and the difficulty of obtaining a break-through were revealed by bitter experience, they were the first to have recourse to a new "surprise" weapon, other than artillery, to assist their offensive. On April 22nd, 1915, they launched their gas attack.

We, on the other hand, relied on numbers and on weight of artillery until a much later period. Woefully short as we had been, at the commencement of hostilities, in guns, especially heavy guns, and in ammunition, and suffering as we did from this great handicap, our first efforts were naturally directed to making good these obvious deficiencies; and the manufacturing powers of our industry were turned to the mass production of artillery *matériel*.

The output of this *matériel* continued at an increasing rate, and included high explosive shell, capable of destroying defences, with which we had not been originally supplied. During 1915 and 1916, right up to the opening of the first Somme battle, the solution of the problem of crushing the defence seemed to us—perhaps naturally—to lie in the means which had at first been so conspicuously lacking, and with which we had been at such pains to equip ourselves.

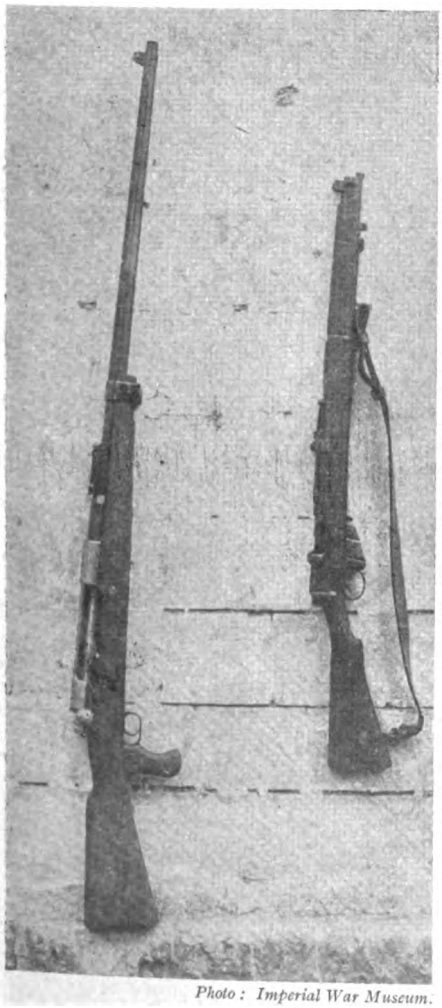

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

THE WEAPON

Here we see the German anti-tank rifle itself, with the British service weapon laid alongside on the right. As a defensive or retaliatory measure the enemy invention was not very successful.

Mountains of Ammunition

It was sought in a greater concentration of guns and a prolongation of the bombardment—both of which slowly became possible as the output of munitions grew. We gradually accumulated mountains of ammunition—especially of H.E. shell—only to discover that, though these might have achieved the desired result early in the War, when the German defences were comparatively weak, they could not do so now that those defences had been strengthened to meet the scale of attack to which they were bound to be subjected.

To refer to the main offensives of 1915 and 1916—Neuve-Chapelle, Loos, and the Somme—whatever may have been our reasons for undertaking them, we hoped to be able to blast our way forward by sheer weight of metal. And in each case we were bitterly disappointed, notwithstanding the fact that in the last battle our strength in munitions had reached incredible proportions.

By that time it was becoming obvious that against properly constructed defences (deep dug-outs, etc. etc.), such as

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

THE AMMUNITION

A German anti-tank rifle cartridge compared with a specimen of ordinary British service rifle ammunition. The German missile—which is, of course, the larger of the two—is one secured at Neulette during August 1918.

the enemy then had, even the colossal bombardments which we were in a position to deliver were not effective. More than this, it was found that they not only failed to attain their object, but to some extent actually made its attainment more difficult. They gave warning to the enemy of the assault to follow, and tore up the ground to an extent which rendered the assault almost impossible.

The efforts of hundreds of thousands of men, of thousands of guns and millions of pounds' worth of shells expended on the principles of the attack then current, were unavailing. Though the German defences were—seemingly—obliterated, neither their deep dug-outs, their machine-gun nests, nor their murderous belts of wire were entirely destroyed; and when at zero hour our infantry went forward, they were mowed down in swathes by machine guns almost before they had gone over the top. In such conditions numbers did not avail. They simply meant increased slaughter.

The Conception of the Tank

In short, having ourselves suffered severely from the enemy's artillery during the period when our defences were hastily constructed and inefficient, we were inclined, as soon as our own artillery increased, to exaggerate its power against an enemy snugly en-

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sconced in works far stronger than any we had ever imagined possible. The truth is that we did not realise the limitations of artillery, and that the engineer had beaten the gunner.

In the meantime, while we were following offensive tactics based on pre-war—but now inapplicable—theories, there were some who, divining from our experiences during the second two months of the War in what direction the German method of defence would develop, had conceived an alternative method calculated to meet it.

One of the first correctly to appreciate—with any useful result—the part likely to be played by the machine gun in the tactics of the enemy was Colonel E. D. Swinton, of the Royal Engineers. At that time the official correspondent with the B.E.F.—the "Eyewitness" of the newspapers—his duties gave him exceptional opportunities for ascertaining what was going on from those who had actually taken part in our attacks.

Having some knowledge of the remarkable cross-country powers of certain agricultural machines, in particular the American Holt tractor, he formed, as early as October, 1914, the plan of adapting, arming, and armouring a caterpillar-tractor of this type, and converting it into a "machine-gun eater," which was finally to materialise as the tank. October 20th, 1914, on which date he put forward this idea to the Secretary of the War Committee in London, may be taken as the day on which the tank was conceived.

The child was not born, however, until sixteen months later; and it is possible here to indicate only on the very broadest lines the evolution and vicissitudes of this embryonic idea during that period. It did not in 1914 meet with sympathy from Lord Kitchener. Nor was it more favourably received at G.H.Q., France.

The Navy to the Rescue

But in January, 1915, its significance appealed immediately to Mr. Churchill, then First Lord of the Admiralty, who forthwith assisted its realisation by forming an experimental body under the Admiralty to explore possibilities, and by supplying the necessary money for this Army device from Naval funds!

Suggestions for a somewhat similar engine of war were meanwhile put forward by certain members of the Armoured Car Section of the R.N.A.S., which was then under the First Lord. In February the scheme was definitely rejected by the War Office as impracticable.

But the technical committee of the Admiralty did not cease its labours, and carried out valuable experimental

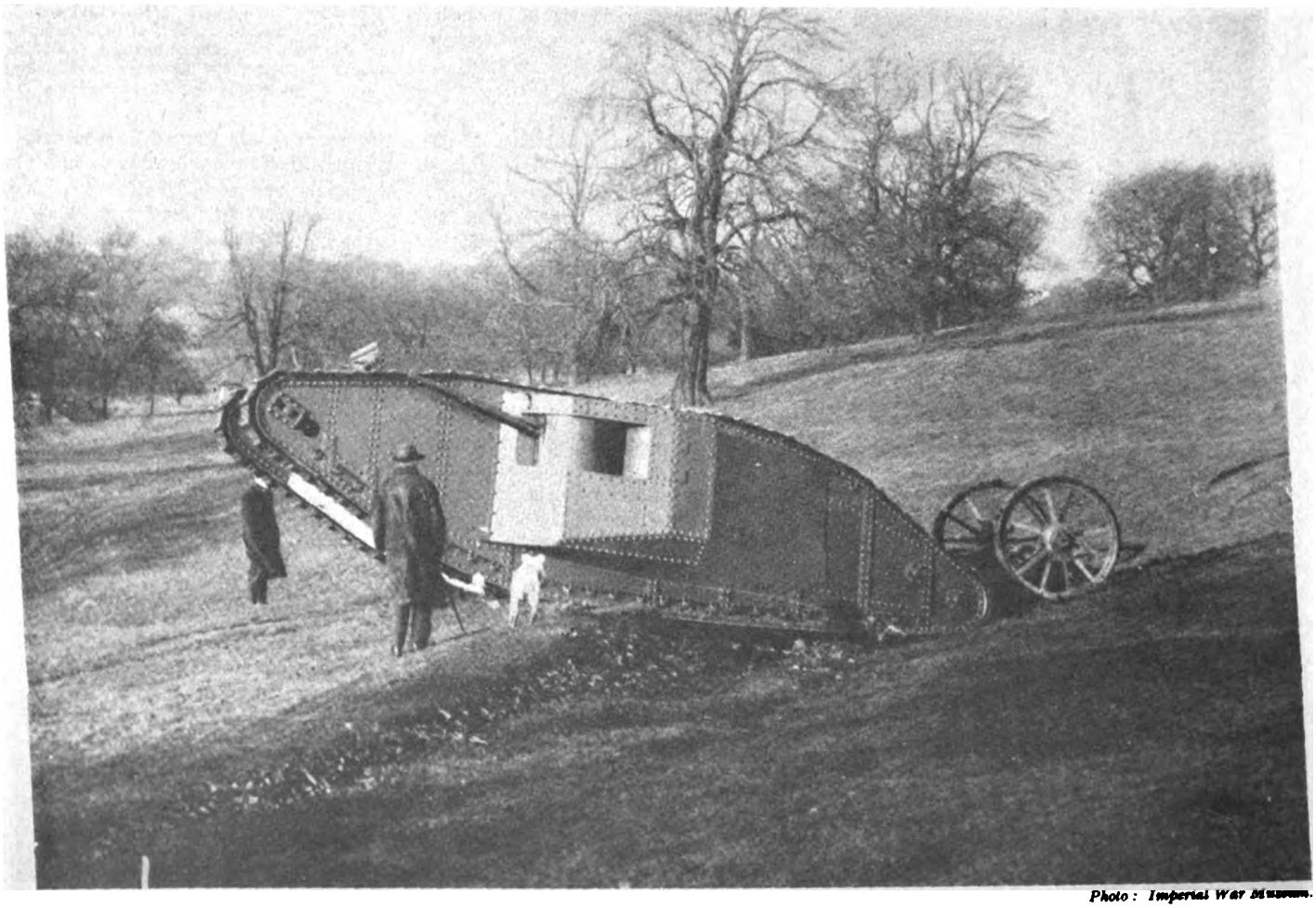

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

THE MOTHER OF ALL TANKS

The above is a picture (taken early in January, 1916) of H.M.L.S. *Centipede*, or "Mother," the parent and prototype of all the British fighting caterpillar-track machines and of those of many other nations. It is true that a previous machine called "Little Willie" was built in the latter part of 1915, but this was discarded on its first trial in September of that year as not fulfilling the requirements of the specification. The essential point about "Mother," which differentiated her from all types of agricultural machines, was the turned-up nose and overhead track, which were special features designed to enable the machine to climb a vertical height of five feet and cope with breastworks as well as to cross trenches.

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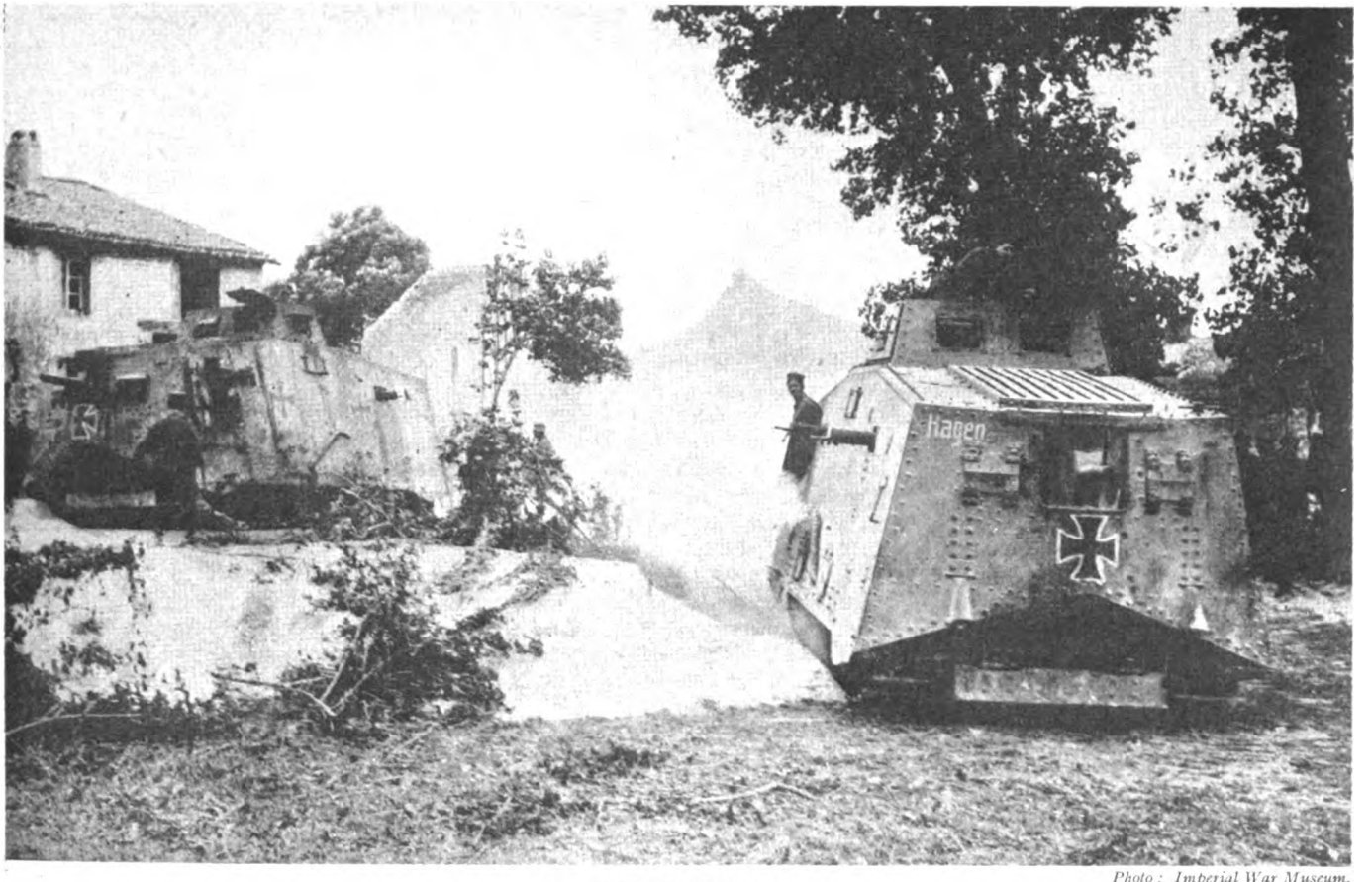

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

GERMAN TANKS

This picture, taken in June, 1918, shows two enemy tanks somewhere behind the enemy front line. A surprisingly long time—luckily for us—after the existence of our tanks had been revealed in September, 1916, the Germans started to produce tanks of their own, and constructed some fifteen. These were first used in March, 1918. The machines were more clumsy than ours and could not climb so well; but they were speedier on level ground. An interesting point in regard to their employment is that our infantry were as unable to withstand their attack as the German infantry were unable to withstand that of our machines.

work. In June, when Colonel Swinton again submitted his scheme, with a specification, to Sir John French, then Commander-in-Chief, the latter forwarded it and recommended that the matter should be taken up and experiments carried out. This specification was passed by the War Office to the Admiralty Committee.

In the following month Colonel Swinton returned to the Secretariat of the War Committee in London, where he was in a position to press matters forward. By September a full-sized model to fulfil the requirements of the specification was constructed by the Admiralty Committee to the design of Commander W. Wilson, R.N., and Mr. W. Tritton, two of its members.

As all the work on the scheme had so far been carried out under the Admiralty, the future engine of war not unnaturally bore a nautical name. It was called a "landship" or "land cruiser." These titles obviously gave away its purpose; and, to conceal its true object, it was on December 24th officially christened "tank" by Colonel Swinton and the late Colonel Dally Jones of the War Committee Secretariat. Thus originated the curious name which has since been adopted throughout the world.

The "Birth of the Tank"

By the end of January, 1916, the first tank, H.M.L.S. *Centipede*, was ready for its official test. On February 2nd it was put through its paces in the presence of a large assembly of Cabinet Ministers and representatives of the War Office, the Admiralty, and G.H.Q., France.

It carried out its set programme—the chief features of which were to cross a trench 10 feet wide, to climb a vertical parapet 5 feet high, and to plough its way through a barbed-wire entanglement—with complete success, and gained the approval of the representative of G.H.Q. February 2nd, 1916, can be regarded as the "birthday of the tank."

A week later, King George V visited Hatfield Park to see H.M.L.S. *Centipede* perform, and thenceforward took great interest in the subsequent fortunes of the Tank Arm. Shortly afterwards, 40 machines were asked for by G.H.Q., which number was increased by the War Office to 100. And thus began the period of preparation and production, which continued for a further seven and a half months, until September 15th of that year, when the new weapon appeared before an astonished world.

Things began to move. Within two hours of receiving the demand from the War Office, orders were issued by the Ministry of Munitions to the firms concerned, and work on the production of the 100 tanks began.

At the end of February it was decided that a special unit under Colonel Swinton—at first called the Tank Detachment—should be formed. This name certainly did not give away much; but for still greater secrecy it was changed to the Armoured Car Section of the Motor Machine Gun Service (from which body it got its nucleus of personnel). It was then altered to the

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Heavy Section, Machine Gun Corps (to which it was affiliated), under which title it took part in the Somme battle.

Later on, in November, 1916, its name underwent another transformation, to that of the Heavy Branch, Machine Gun Corps. In the following June, the reason for secrecy having disappeared, the unit openly became the Tank Corps, and remained so until after the War, when it was honoured with the prefix " Royal," its final title being the one under which it is now known to all of us. Few formations of the British Army have undergone, even through the centuries, so many changes in nomenclature !

" Males " and " Females "

The Heavy Section (to call it by the name which it bore until after it first took the field), was at first to consist of 100 tanks, all machine-gun destroyers—that is to say, armed with 6-pounder guns. But it was not long before it became clear that, although well suited to deal with their proper prey—machine guns—they would themselves be comparatively defenceless against a rush attack.

Their total number was therefore increased to 150, of which half were to be " destroyers " and half " man-killers," the latter carrying no 6-pounder guns, but being armed instead with one Hotchkiss light machine gun in front, and on each side two Vickers machine guns, which would give a maximum rate of fire of 1,200 bullets a minute. The destroyers were dubbed " males," and their consorts " females," obvious names not likely to be forgotten.

After the inevitable changes and delays to be expected in the creation of a new unit for which there was no precedent, it was settled that the Heavy Section should consist of six companies of 25 tanks each. The total personnel was approximately 180 officers and 1,600 other ranks.[1]

Its formation started early in March at Siberia Camp, and was then carried on at Bull House Camp, Bisley, near Aldershot, the home of the existing Motor Machine Gun Service, from which it took over a nucleus of some 700 officers and men, already partly trained in the required direction. The great majority of the other junior officers were obtained from the Cadet Battalions of the Officers Training Corps in London, and at Oxford and Cambridge.

All these cadets had already served abroad in the ranks, and for the Heavy Section were picked those who had special mechanical knowledge. The balance of the rank-and-file were men with technical knowledge, drawn from the motor-engineering trades of the Midlands and the north of England.

Intensive Training

Then followed a period of training. Its intensive nature can be gauged from the fact that the first companies of the Heavy Section took the field in less than seven months after they had been formed, prior to which many of its members had come straight from civil life.

Its variety and scope can be gathered from the words of the commander: " Every N.C.O. and private, in addition to some elementary military work, had to learn to handle the 6-pounder Q.F. gun, two different types of machine gun, and to drive a complicated and entirely novel type of motor. Each was a combination of infantry soldier, gunner, machine-gunner, motor mechanic, and trick lorry-driver.

" If the varied nature of the curriculum, and the short time devoted to it, be compared with what was expected from the men of any branch of the Regular Army before the War, or of the New Armies, the quality of the rank-and-file of the heavy Section will be appreciated." [1]

The difficulties of this period were much increased by the fact that many of the essential articles of equipment had to be borrowed, begged, or stolen because there were none available for issue. As an example, the Army could supply no 6-pounder guns; and until those which had been promised by the Navy were ready the Heavy Section had to content itself with the two taken from " Mother " and one " scrounged " from the R.M. Academy, Woolwich, for which the mountings were improvised from logs stuck into the ground.

It was a time of many improvisations. The 6-pounder Q.F. gun was adopted because it was the only piece which could be obtained. The 105 h.p. engine was adopted because it was the only engine of approximately the required power which was already in mass production. Of machine guns there was no lack.

Training, in so far as it could be carried on without tanks and without an artillery range, continued in full swing through the months of April, May, and part of June, at Bull House; the preliminary gunnery course begun there being continued by actual firing practice on Salisbury Plain, and, by permission of the Admiralty, at the Naval Gunnery School at Whale Island. At this period the number of " parties " of the mysterious H.S.M.G.C. continually travelling about the south of England from one course to another excited some curiosity.

A Close-kept Secret

For the first few weeks all ranks were entirely ignorant of the real nature of the unit which they had joined. It was not until the end of May that the purpose of the H.S.M.G.C. was disclosed, and the tank described to the officers. The other ranks learned later.

It must not be forgotten that, as with so many other war efforts, there were in this case many convergent streams of activity flowing in the same direction to the same end. While the necessary troops to handle the weapon were being collected, trained, and equipped by the Army, its production was simultaneously being pressed forward with all speed by the industry of the country.

In forge, factory, and engineering shop, at Lincoln, Birmingham, Coventry, Sheffield, Glasgow, and other places, men were toiling night and day to turn out the various component parts and to assemble the completed machines, though at first most of them had no more than a vague idea of what they were making.

The Admiralty, which was regarded by the Heavy Section as its Fairy Godmother, had undertaken, not only to furnish the 6-pounder guns and ammunition, but to supply the compasses, and also to give facilities for artillery practice.[1]

But the greater part of the supply of *matériel* was carried out by the Ministry of Munitions. The list of the articles furnished by it would make tedious reading, but it extended all down the scale, from the tanks themselves, complete with engines and machine guns, to such accessories as dummy kite-balloons and clocks. Too great praise cannot be given to this department for the manner in which it met every demand.

As the days passed, the question of time grew more urgent; Sir Douglas Haig was pressing for tanks to

[1] The following figures give some idea of the total potential fire-power of the new formation. On its 150 machines it was to carry in all 150 6-pounder guns, or almost three times the number of 18-pounder field guns which had been with a division of all arms in 1914; and 150 Vickers machine guns, or 20 more than the total number of these weapons with the whole original B.E.F. Finally, there were its 300 Hotchkiss light machine guns, of which the old B.E.F. had had none.

[1] Major-General E. D. Swinton, *Eyewitness*, p. 223.

[1] The first consignment of 6-pounder ammunition had actually been made for the Japanese.

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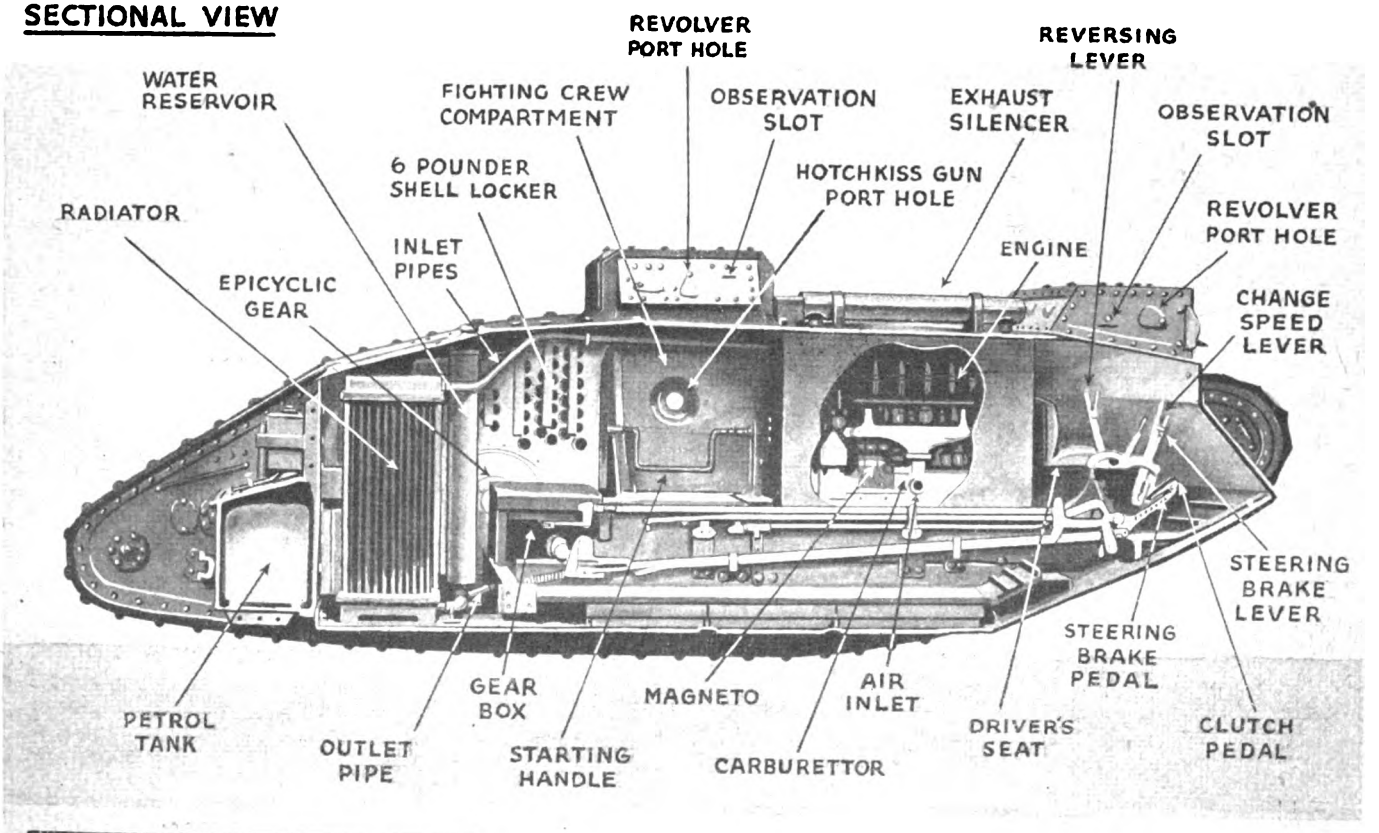
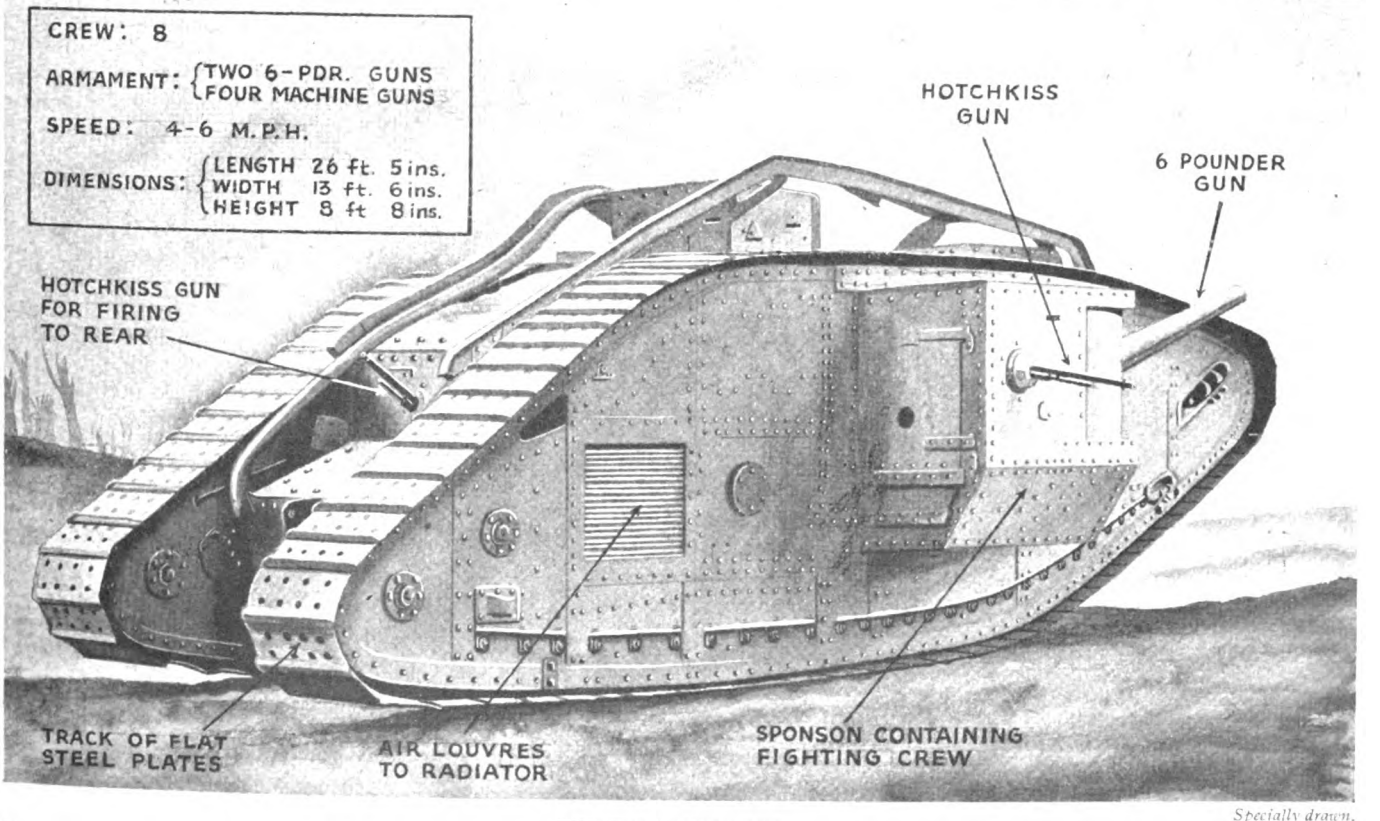
SECTIONAL VIEW




CREW: 8
ARMAMENT: TWO 6-PDR. GUNS FOUR MACHINE GUNS
SPEED: 4-6 M.P.H.
DIMENSIONS: LENGTH 26 ft. 5 ins. WIDTH 13 ft. 6 ins. HEIGHT 8 ft 8 ins.
HOTCHKISS GUN
6 POUNDER GUN
HOTCHKISS GUN FOR FIRING TO REAR
TRACK OF FLAT STEEL PLATES
AIR LOUVRES TO RADIATOR
SPONSON CONTAINING FIGHTING CREW

Specially drawn.

THE TANK EXPLAINED

Something of the structure of this infernal machine, as it existed at the time of the Great War, is here explained. In both sketches the tank is a "male," which means that it is equipped with two 6-pounder guns in addition to its machine-gun armament. The petrol tank is placed in the rear for obvious reasons of protection, although the controls have necessarily to be in the front. Besides the features denoted by name, observe, in the lower sketch, the runners on the roof of the tank; these are for carrying the fascines to be let down into large trenches such as those of the Hindenburg Line.

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A SCENE AT RICHBOROUGH IN 1918

Here two trainloads of tanks are waiting to be shunted on board the train-ferry at Richborough, near Sandwich, from which port they were in 1918 conveyed in bulk over to France. This ferry provided a wholesale method of transporting the machines overseas at a time when we were using them in large numbers—as in the great attack of the 8th August, the "Black Day of the German Army in the history of this war," as it was called by General Ludendorff, when more than four hundred British tanks went over the top. Without this ferry, indeed, it is difficult to imagine how the numbers of these unwieldy and heavy monsters could have been maintained on the scale demanded by our offensive operations at that period.

be sent on to the Western Front, though it was realised that none would be ready for the opening of the Somme attack on July 1st. There was also the subsidiary time-question of synchronising the production of the machine and the men to operate it, since it would have been waste of effort for one to be ready without the other.

"Explosives Area," Elveden

Moreover, some more remote and inaccessible area than Bisley was required for the later stages of training with the tanks when these should be ready. After a search over the south of England, an ideal spot was found on part of Lord Iveagh's shooting estate at Elveden, in Suffolk.

This was taken over in June ; and as soon as it had been cleared of its inhabitants it was proclaimed a secret "Explosives Area," to which admittance was by pass alone, and was guarded by 200 sentries of the Home Guard.

Shortly after the first detachments of men had reached Elveden, the tanks began to arrive from the main factories at Lincoln and Birmingham. They travelled by special train, under cover, on special trucks (of which there were not many in England capable of carrying them), and were off-loaded at night at a private siding constructed within the area.

Secrecy was fostered in many ways. In addition to their (generic) name of "tanks," and their classification into "males" and "females," the machines were also called "Big Willies," so that telegrams and telephone messages about them could be sent in plain English. For instance, a demand for "tails and jacks for two female Willies," though quite clear to the recipient, would not convey much to the uninitiated.

To conceal their precise purpose from those who must know of their existence, currency was given to rumours that they were water-carriers for our thirsty troops in Palestine and Mesopotamia, or, later, that they were snow-ploughs for our Russian Allies ; and in support of this last fiction each machine had painted on both sides in 12-inch Russian characters—"WITH CARE TO PETROGRAD."

All sorts of rumours, also, were circulated in the neighbourhood of Elveden as to what was going on within the cordon of sentries round the "Explosives Area." But whatever the measures adopted, the fact that the secret was kept, and that the tanks did eventually appear as a surprise to the enemy, is

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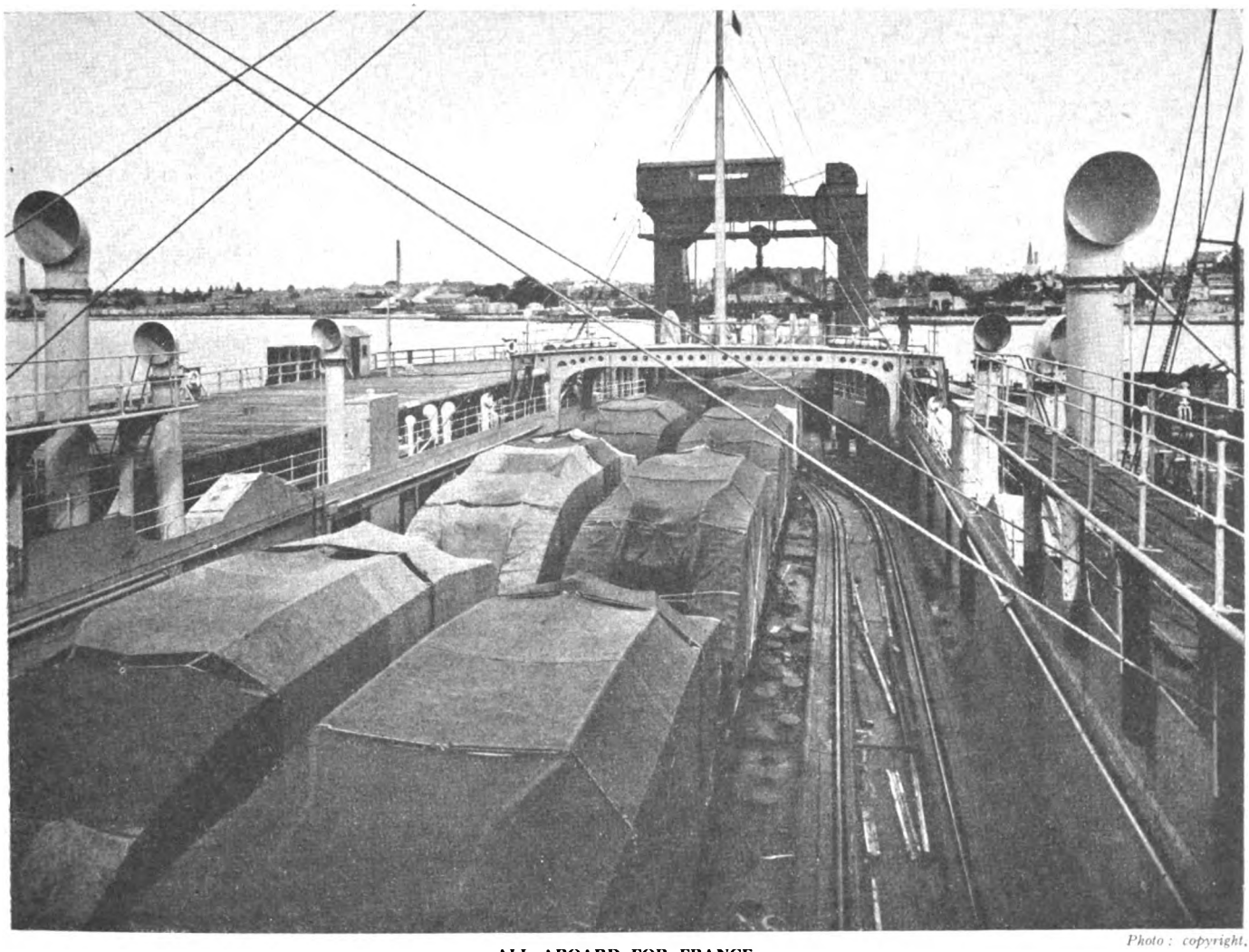

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ALL ABOARD FOR FRANCE

The Richborough train-ferry about to leave England, with two of its three lines of rails loaded up with tanks. This may seem to some to be no more than another picture of terrible, death-dealing weapons in mass. But, monstrous and sinister as these huge engines of destruction appear, even when swathed in tarpaulins, they did possess another side which is not often appreciated as it should be. The tanks were primarily intended to be, and were, in fact, savers of life. And between September, 1916, and the end of the War they must have saved the lives of thousands of our infantry soldiers who would otherwise have been sacrificed in our offensives.

remarkable, and reflects the greatest credit on the thousands of men who were "in the know" long before the machines went overseas.

A Model Battlefield

Before the Heavy Section actually moved to the secret area, a large battlefield, modelled on a sector of the front in France, was constructed there for it by three battalions of Pioneers. This represented the British support and firing lines, No Man's Land, and the German position back as far as the support line, all on a front of 1½ miles; and included wide and deep trenches, breastworks, abatis, wire entanglements, shell-craters, dug-outs, communication trenches, machine-gun nests, magazines, grenade stores, etc. etc.—in fact, everything which, according to the latest information, the tanks were likely to encounter, even to the appropriate notice-boards in German.

Briefly, it was as perfect a replica of the real thing as knowledge, money and hard work could make it. Time was the difficulty, since the Pioneers, who were not in the secret, had to complete their work and leave the area before the "snow-ploughs" turned up.

There naturally were not many visitors, but one, and a very interested one, was the late General Estienne, the originator of the French tanks or *chars d'assaut*.[1] His great anxiety was that the British machines should not be used, and their secret revealed, before those of the French were ready to be thrown into the fight.[1] In July a demonstration attack was carried out before Mr. Lloyd George, then Minister of Munitions, and before various high military officials. This showed to the most sceptical the capabilities of the machines. A few days later, the King honoured the Heavy Section by coming to Elveden to witness a second demonstration.

During July and August the pressure increased, to meet Sir Douglas Haig's wishes that as many machines as possible should be ready to go overseas. The training now included, amongst other things, the driving and mainte-

[1] General Estienne had the idea of the *char d'assaut* at about the same time as Colonel Swinton conceived the British machine. But he had no knowledge of the caterpillar tractor; and his scheme was more for a machine to carry infantry forward under protection from the German machine guns than for something to search out and destroy the latter.

[1] Our Allies were later than ourselves in starting tanks, of which they were at this time building 400. The French machines were not used until April, 1917, in General Nivelle's ill-fated offensive.

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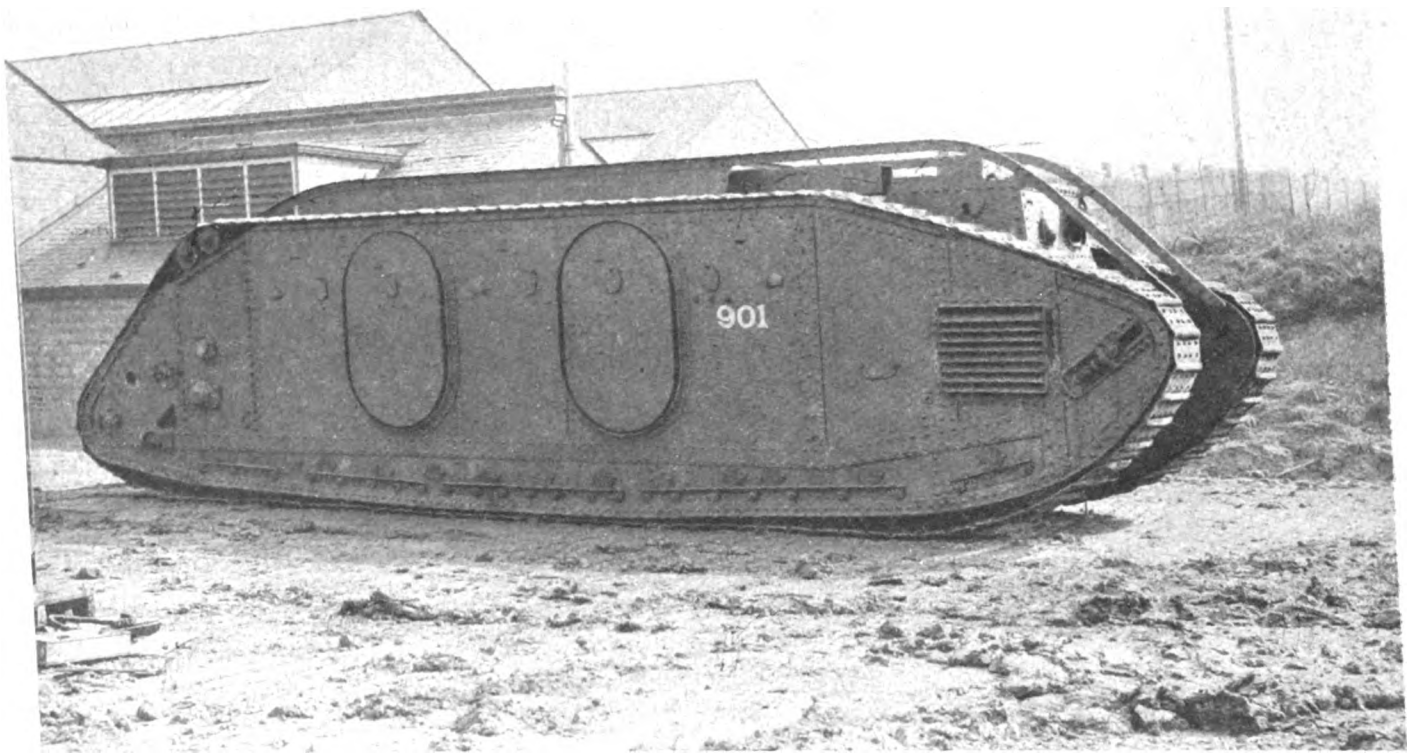

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

A SUPPLY TANK

Here, for a change, is a non-fighting machine—the Mark IX or Supply Tank. Its purpose was to carry 10 tons of supplies or a platoon of soldiers through the fire zone. From its general appearance and character this tank was called "The Pig," but it was nevertheless a lineal descendant of "Mother." The photograph was taken at the place of manufacture, Fosters' Works, Lincoln. Unfortunately only a few machines of this type reached France before the Armistice.

nance of the tanks, elementary tactics, shooting with three weapons, wireless communication, communication with aeroplanes by means of daylight signalling lamps, approach-marches by night, the laying of telephone cables in grooves ploughed by the tanks, and the tearing away of entanglements with grapnels.

Putting an End to "All That"

Meanwhile, the news of our repulse, and of the slaughter endured in the first days of the Somme battle, served only to spur on those at Elveden to further efforts. A sense that they were in possession of something which would put an end to "all that," added to the weight of responsibility and anxiety felt by all.

At last the flag fell for the great adventure. In the latter half of August, and during the first days of September, two companies, with a workshop, left for France, their tanks, loaded up at night, to the number of 50, going by Avonmouth, where there were facilities for shipping them. The personnel had not in all cases completed even their very hasty training, and were new to the machines they took out, not all of which had been fully tested.

Nevertheless, and although this was to be the Heavy Section's "baptism of fire" and its début in an entirely new rôle, all ranks were filled with confidence in their weapon. Inspired with the spirit of the crusaders, they felt that, whatever the future had in store for the new and untried Arm, and whatever might be its shortcomings and failings, if it helped our sorely tried infantry at all in their ever-recurrent and hitherto hopeless task of attacking, it would have justified its existence.

Many of the officers now setting forth had already served with the P.B.I. in France, and had "gone over the top" in at least one bloodily-repulsed offensive. They had "had some," and *knew* what it was to advance against uncut wire and unshaken machine guns.

The interval between the arrival of the companies in France and the date on which they were to go into action was utilised for further practice and preparation; and demonstrations by the H.S.M.G.C. became a sort of "show"—a circus-performance for the instruction and amusement of the staffs of the British and French Armies.[1]

From Yvrench, near Abbeville, they moved up to "the Loop," close to Bray-sur-Somme, and then to their position of assembly for the battle. On the

[1] Major Clough Williams-Ellis, *The Tank Corps*, p. 26.

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From DOMPIERRE to FLAUCOURT

Then and Now

Photo: Imperial War Museum

AFTER THE FRENCH CAPTURE

A picture of Dompierre on July 2nd, 1916, one day after the French had captured it. As might be inferred from the date of its fall, the village lies in the Somme area, and is midway between the river and Estrées-Déniécourt, or 7 km. south-east of Bray and 10 km. west-south-west of Péronne. The road on which it stands is that which leads, in somewhat tortuous fashion, along the south bank of the river from Amiens to Péronne. The 1916 capture was the work of the I Colonial Corps of the (French) Sixth Army.

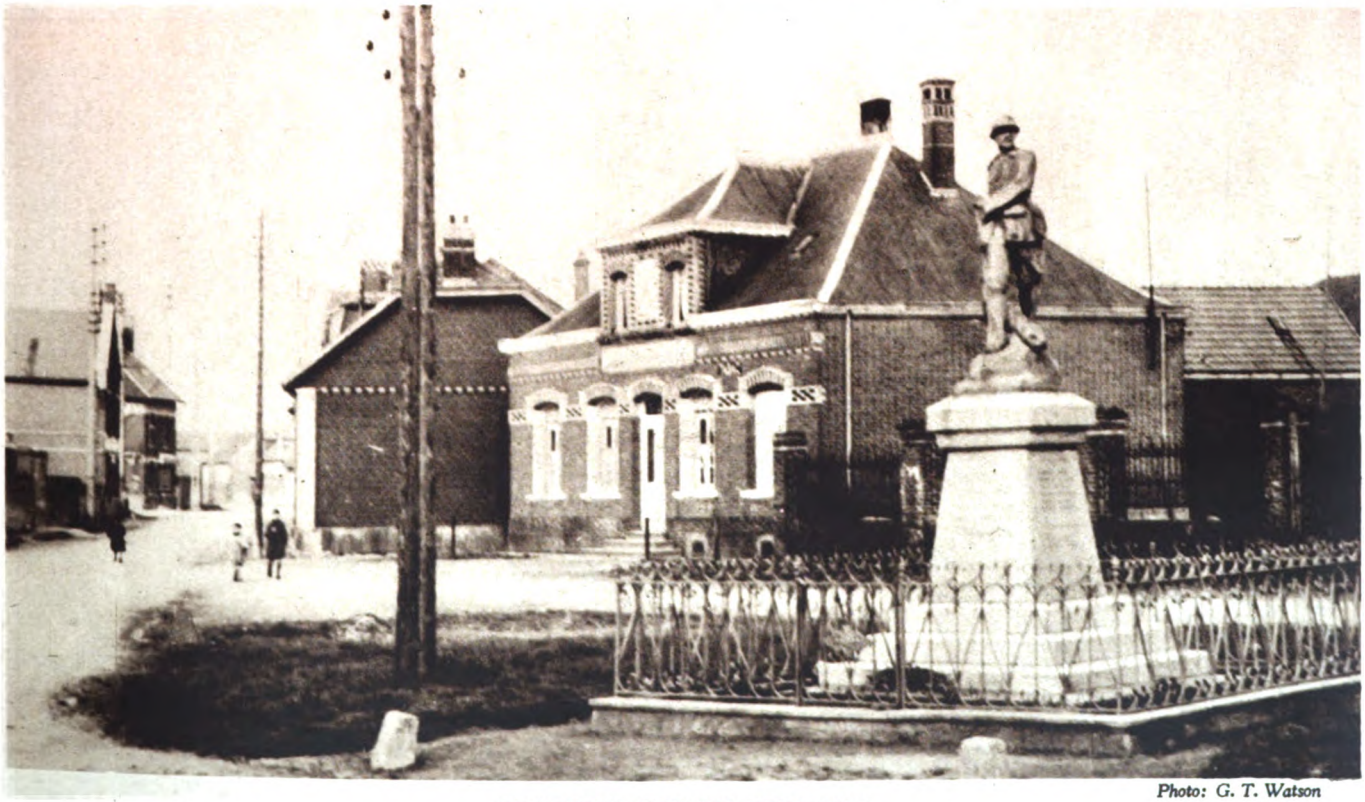

Photo: G. T. Watson

GRATEFUL FOR ITS FREEDOM

The War memorial and main street of Dompierre in the year 1937. The British 66th Division, acting in close co-operation with the 39th, retreated through the village on March 26th, 1918. These two formations were part of General Watts's XIX Corps. Earlier in the War, the French had withstood two heavy German attacks on their lines at this point on January 28th and 29, 1916. The final recapture took place during the last week of August, 1918.

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Photo: A. P., Paris

A FRENCH CEMETERY

A war-time view, taken on March 12th, 1917, of the French military burial-ground known as Cemetery A, in the Ravin des Glatz, near Assevillers. The latter village itself has been illustrated in two "Then and Now" pairs of pictures, both in Volume Two. Its position is 10 km. south-west of Péronne, 2 km. south-east of Dompierre, and 3 km. north of the Amiens-St. Quentin road.

HERBÉCOURT CHURCH

Herbécourt, 3 km. north-west of Dompierre, in March, 1 39th Division. By the capture of the village, which took pla the enemy was able to gain a footing on what was known mass of relatively high ground whose possession enabled hir both north and south.

SOARING HEAVENWAR

There is one small British cemetery attached to Herbéc of the village, 5 km. south of Hem-Feuillères station. This to troops of the Royal Sussex Regiment, and also to gur casualties incurred during February and March, 1917. occupying it, however, are Australians, who number

Photo: A. J. Insall

ASSEVILLERS FROM THE NORTH

A view of the village, which now accommodates a population of about 190, from the road which leads down, through Herbécourt, from the Somme bridge at Feuillères. Like ourselves, the French have made extensive alterations to the cemeteries which their troops laid out during the struggle, and rough spectacles such as that of Cemetery A in the Ravin des Glatz are no longer to be found.

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HERBÉCOURT CHURCH

Herbécourt, 3 km. north-west of Dompierre, in March, 1918, lay in the path of the 39th Division. By the capture of the village, which took place about 8 a.m. on the 26th, the enemy was able to gain a footing on what was known as the Flaucourt plateau—a mass of relatively high ground whose possession enabled him to enfilade the British line both north and south.

Photo: Imperial War Museum

SOARING HEAVENWARD

There is one small British cemetery attached to Herbécourt, lying on the western side of the village, 5 km. south of Hem-Feuillères station. This burial-ground owes its creation to troops of the Royal Sussex Regiment, and also to gunners, who laid in it their first casualties incurred during February and March, 1917. The majority of fallen now occupying it, however, are Australians, who number 51 as against 8 U.K. dead.

Photo: G. T. Watson

Photo: Imperial War Museum

THE FATE OF FLAUCOURT

Flaucourt is situated 2 km. south-east of Herbécourt, on the road to Barleux, and is the nearest to Péronne of the four villages illustrated in this section. Indeed, much of its military value lay in the fact that a lane connected it directly with the Somme at Biaches, immediately opposite Péronne's suburb of Ste. Radegonde. This picture is dated July, 1917.

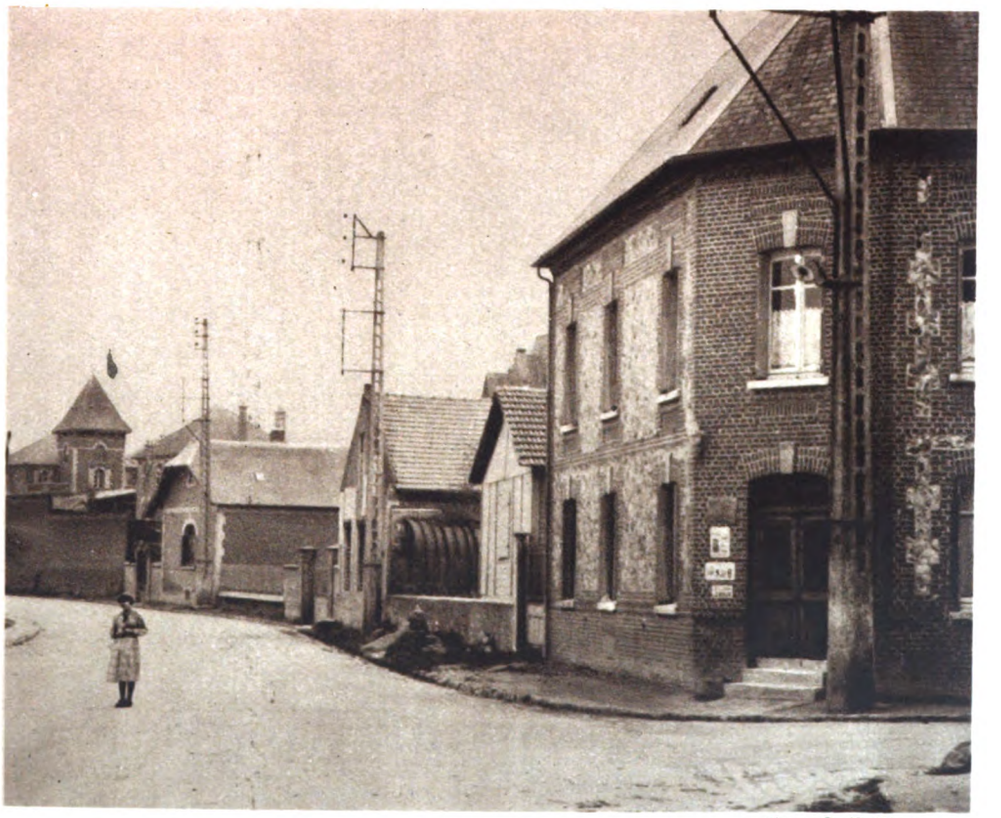

Photo: G. T. Watson

COMPLETE WITH VILLAGE BELLE

Notice the three small advertisements on the wall to the left of the doorway. These are printed on metal plates, and the centre one advertises a product called "Kub." Legend has it that in 1914 suspicions were aroused by the fact that in every village these "Kub" plates were being renewed. Inspection was therefore made, and is said to have revealed that every new plate bore on its reverse side a map eminently helpful to an invading force!

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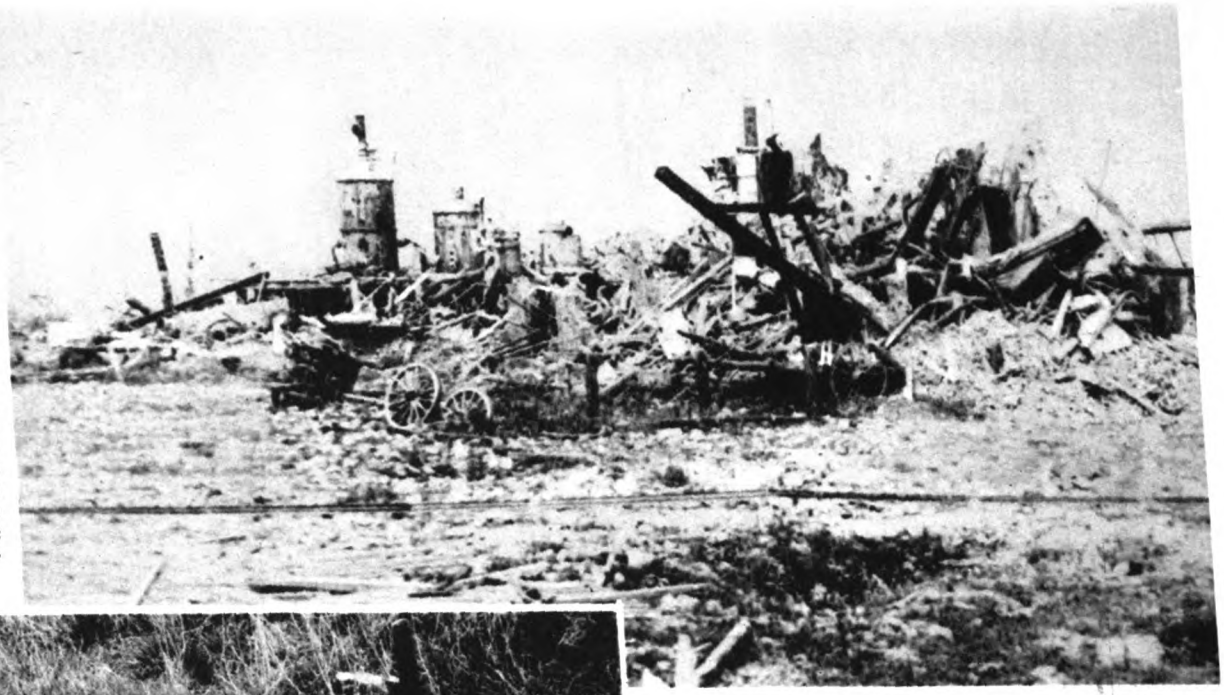
Photo: Imperial War Museum

BROKEN UP

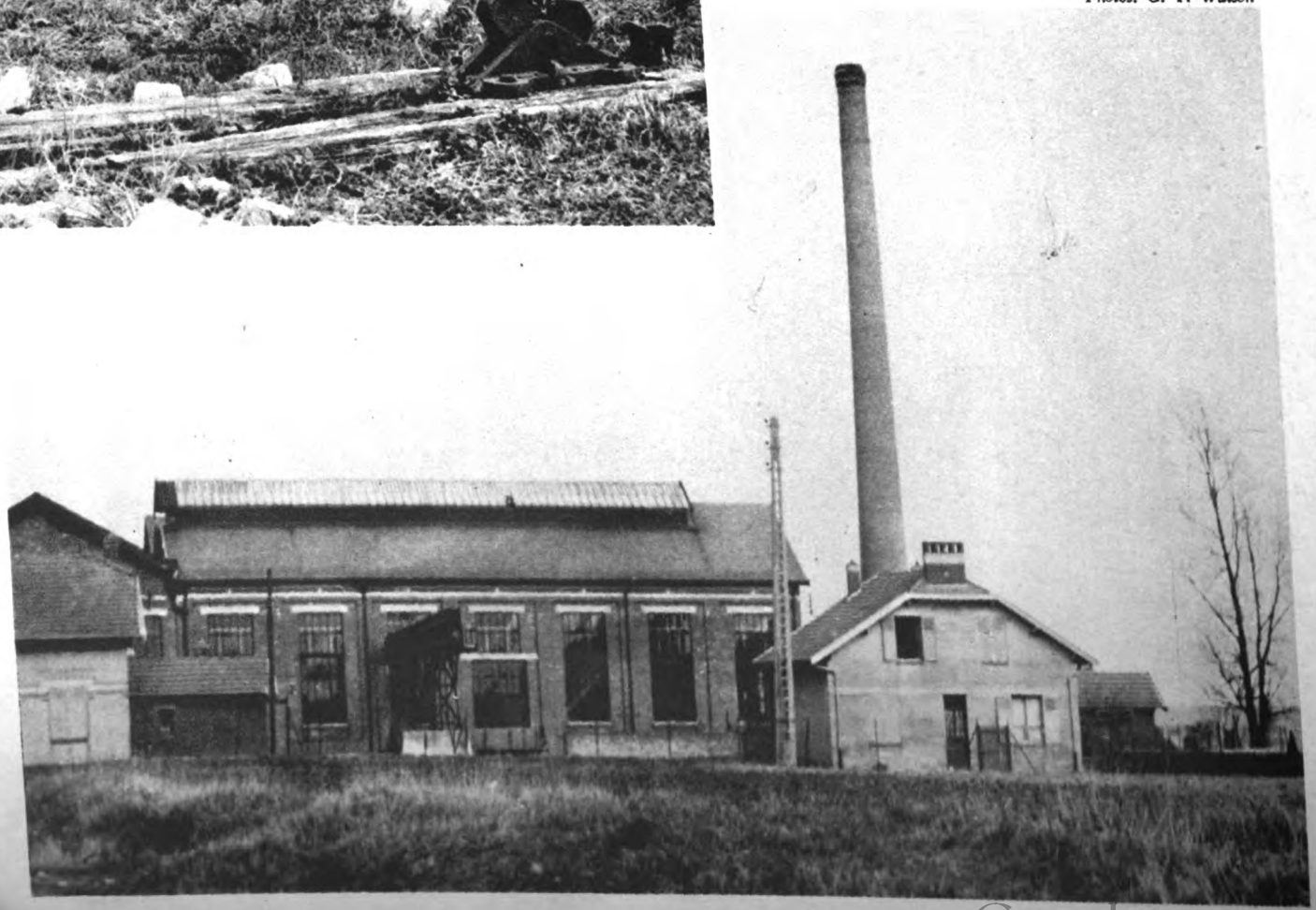
The picture on the right shows the sugar refinery at Flaucourt in July, 1917, and at the foot of the page appears its modern equivalent. The 8th, 66th, and 39th Divisions, after holding the left bank of the Somme throughout the 24th March, retired on the 25th to a line running from Hattencourt northward to Frise. This line ran west of Flaucourt.



A REMARKABLE SURVIVAL

The small photograph on the left furnishes a remarkable instance of war-time survival. The railway which serves the new sugar refinery is none other than one originally laid down by British troops. The points-lever seen here clearly shows the letters "L.Y.R.—H." (Lancashire & Yorkshire Railway, Horwich) and the date 1917, while the waggons in use still bear U.S.A. nameplates.

Photos: G. T. Watson



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morning of Friday, September 15th, through the ground-mist which overlay the valley of the Somme, the greater part of these two companies of tanks crawled over the British front line in an attempt to revive the momentum of an offensive which had by then lasted for ten weeks. What happened has been briefly related in the narrative of that day's operations.[1]

Premature Employment

There has been much criticism of the employment of the tanks before all were ready. The chief argument of those who were against what they regarded as their premature use—and the number included all who had been responsible for their conception and creation—was that while so small a number of machines could not, however successful, affect the main course of the operations, the disclosure of their existence would prevent any future surprise on a decisive scale. But this view was not shared at G.H.Q.

In connection with this question, it has already been mentioned that the tanks were one of the major surprises of the Great War.[1] They were. But had their employment been postponed until all the machines under construction could have been used, it would have been far greater. What is called the "Element of Surprise" is admittedly one of the most important and decisive factors in warfare; and its attainment has, in theory, at least, always been the aim of every commander. In 1914 the first two great surprises on land were—to the British—the aggressive intention of Germany and—to the Germans—the last-hour decision of Great Britain to stand by France and Belgium. After the outbreak of war most of the surprises were brought off by the Central Powers. First there was the immediate mobilisation by the Germans of their large number of Reserve Corps, which greatly increased their striking force in the West at the very commencement of hostilities. Then there was their production of the monster howitzers (the "Fat Berthas" of 42-cm. calibre secretly constructed by the Austrians at Skoda in Bohemia), which so speedily reduced Liége, Namur, Antwerp, and Mauberge.

Unexpected—but more in the nature of a revelation to the enemy than a deliberately arranged surprise—were the high pitch to which the Germans had brought the use of the machine gun, and the fire-power of the long-service British infantry and cavalry. In April, 1915, came the deliberate surprise of poison gas. And in September of the next year—also an intended surprise—came the tanks. A noteworthy point about the

[1] *Twenty Years After*, ii, pp. 754–6.

[1] See *ante*, p. 260.

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

A GUN-CARRIER

Gun-carrying tanks were produced some time after the fighters took the field. The machine depicted here is shown carrying a 60-pounder gun dismounted. The body of the road-carriage of the gun can be seen in front of the gun itself, while the wheels are carried outside the body of the tank on each side, projecting beyond the two tracks. Not many of these carriers were made, and some were converted into supply-tanks to carry various stores, etc., up to the front line.

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two last lay in the fact that at their first appearance the enemy were in each case totally unprepared to meet their attack.

Discussion as to the wisdom, or unwisdom, of the policy adopted in 1916 does not fall within the scope of this chapter, nor does the account of the later growth and activities of the Tank Arm. But the 15th September, 1916, was not only the culmination of a period in the history of the tank: it was the culmination of a period in the history of warfare. It marked the end of the reign of the machine gun. As long ago as 1920, General Fuller wrote of it: "... history's verdict, it is thought, will be that they [the tanks] had so far proved their value that September 15th, 1916, will in future be noted not so much for the successes gained that day, but as the birthday of a new epoch in the history of war." [1]

[1] Fuller, *Op. cit.*, p. 58.

Ten years later Captain Liddell-Hart, with equal truth, stated: "But, far more significant, it [the appearance of the tanks] cast its shadow over the whole future of war. And as it thus becomes a greater landmark in the history of the war than in the history of the Somme, so it is likely to become a still greater landmark in the history of War." [1]

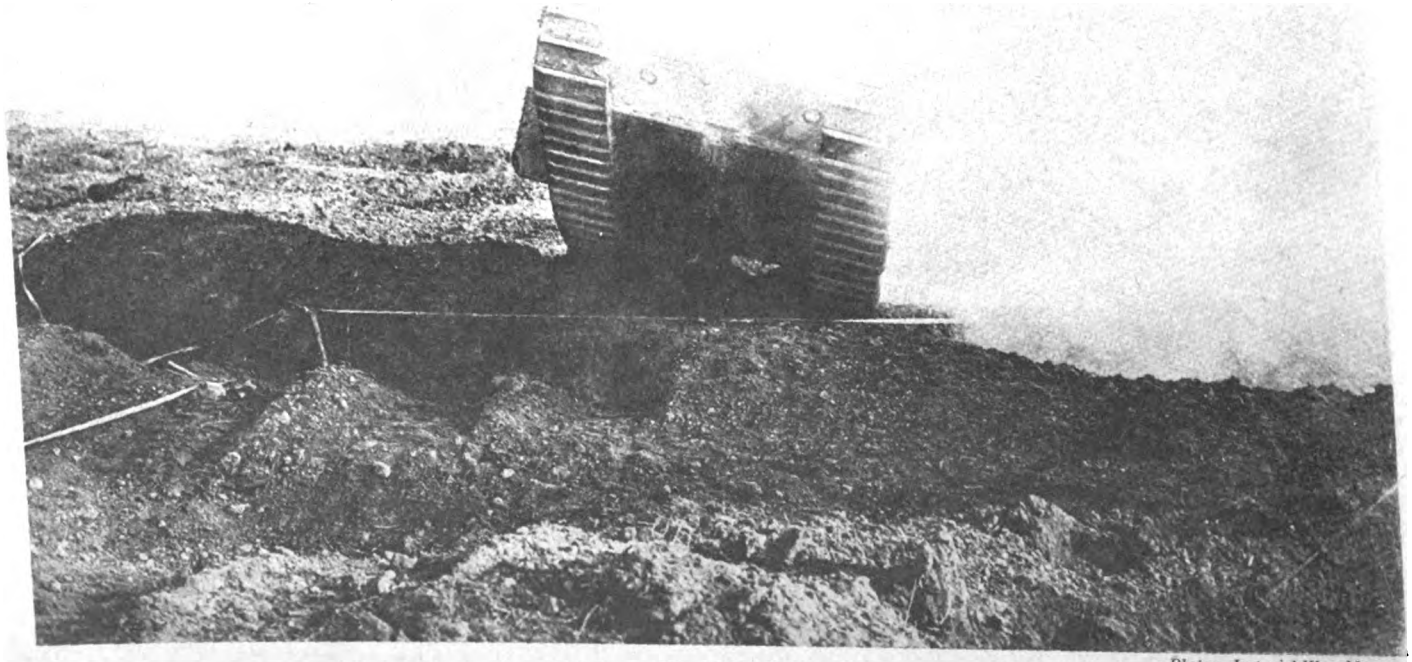
A Permanent Weapon

Twenty-one years later, looking round on what is going on in the world, we find not only how accurate these opinions were, but how fully justified were the foresight, faith, and pertinacity of the pioneers of this development in the Art of War, who forced on its trial in the teeth of scepticism, inertia, vested interests, and all the usual obstacles which confront every innovation in every walk of life.

[1] Captain B. H. Liddell-Hart, *The Real War*, p. 269.

Not only have tanks been adopted by every force in the world entitled to be called an army; they have been, and are even now, in the forefront of the battle, as witness the operations in Manchukuo, Abyssinia, Spain, and China. Against a properly-prepared modern defensive position, infantry will not—in fact, cannot—advance without their assistance.

Thus came into being the tanks, in the guise of the Heavy Section Machine Gun Corps—sometime, according to report, also known to those who were the chief object of its attentions as "*Die Schützengrabensvernichtungautomobilpanzerkraftwagenabtheilung.*" This unit was the child which grew into that giant which played so prominent a part on the Western Front during the last year of the Great War, and is now known as the Royal Tank Corps.



IN ACTION

Photo: *Imperial War Museum.*

A photograph taken in October, 1916. Enough has been written in this chapter and elsewhere in *Twenty Years After* to drive home the importance of the tanks to the Allied cause. The tank is a saver of life rather than a destroyer. At the time when the first tanks went into action on the Western Front the task of the infantryman was gradually becoming impossible. It is difficult, without incurring severe casualties, to storm positions protected by machine guns, concrete, and wire, unless the attacking troops are supported by some weapon of precision which operates with them, and deals with local problems as they arise. This rôle the tank is able to fill.

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CHAPTER XVII

THE GOTHAS OVER BRITAIN

There can be hardly any doubt that the apparition of the long silvery Zeppelins caused more apprehension, coupled with a sort of fascination, to the people of Britain than was ever the case with the more prosaic heavier-than-air bombers. It is improbable that in any future war Zeppelins will play a predominant part in offensive operations, and this being so, it is well to consider the performance of the German bombers, as it will be from such machines, improved out of all knowledge and in vastly greater numbers, that the next deadly hail will descend. Perhaps the most significant fact that emerges from the following chapter is disclosed in the concluding paragraph. "When we started bombing the German towns, air raiding on England pretty well died out."

"WHEN the War shall be but a faded memory, the Zeppelin will be long remembered, but the Gotha will be forgotten. The German airship was a symbol of terror, yet it fascinated the public. The Gotha made no such popular appeal. Nevertheless, so far as air raiding is concerned, the Gotha proved the more sinister and deadly weapon."[1] This statement is very true.

No Lessening of Attacks

In spite of the failures of the airships in the autumn of 1916, the Germans could not afford to relax their aerial pressure against England. In the higher strategy of the War the raiding of Britain had come to play an important part. At the close of 1916 there were employed in Britain on air-defence duties nearly 17,500 officers and men, and 120 aeroplanes with further personnel amounting to nearly 2,400 officers and men. In addition, there were observer corps composed of men of low medical category or over age.

The police forces and fire brigades of the country were also absorbed in air-raid duties. The consumption of anti-aircraft ammunition was increasing; and the number of new guns and searchlights required was proving an appreciable tax on the resources of the Ministry of Munitions.

During 1916, moreover, the railway services were continually being dislocated, not by actual damage from bombs, but by suspension of normal working due to air-raid alarms. After any prolonged stoppage on the main lines, it might take whole days to restore a normal flow of traffic. On at least two occasions the supply of ammunition for the Western Front was so seriously delayed between the munition factories and the ports of shipment that the results were quite perceptible in France. Even after the Air Raid Warning system had been fully instituted, there were continual difficulties arising from delays due to reduced speed and other precautions imposed on the railways.

In the munition factories themselves the application of lighting regulations involved serious interruptions of work which, in extreme cases, caused a complete cessation of output. In April, 1916, Messrs. Palmer's Shipbuilding and Iron Company made a statement in which it was said that on air-raid nights the position at the blast furnaces was "one of extreme gravity, the whole plant being in positive danger of destruction by explosion at times," owing to the regular slagging or releasing of the iron from the furnaces having become impossible.

Steel Works Upset

This condition was accentuated when the men at the boilers came away, and the blast engines reached a standstill. "A good portion of next day is spent in trying to get them worked round." In steel shops, "on the alarm being received, practically everybody leaves the place. The whole aspect of these air raids on a steel works is one of extreme gravity." On the morrow of a raid not more than 10 per cent. of outside workers would be in their places at the usual hour; 20 per cent. might stay away all day. The suppression of fire in blast furnaces, at the threat of a raid, was always costly and sometimes serious in its effects.[1]

The Germans were perfectly well aware of these facts, and accordingly there was every inducement to maintain the air threat to England. If airships could no longer serve that end, recourse must be made to the aeroplane. The appearance of the twin-engined bomber, the Gotha (type G. IV), towards the end of 1916, rendered such a course feasible. Bombing Squadron No. 3 was formed into a special unit of thirty-six Gotha machines, under the command of one Captain Brandenburg, for the sole purpose of raiding England.

The unit was stationed at Ghent, the six flights being distributed in pairs at Gontrode, St. Denis Westrem, and Mariakerke. The preparation of the squadron for its new task was delayed owing to various causes, and it was not until May, 1917, that it was at length ready to make its first flight.

The moment was favourable for attacking England. Ever since the defeat of the Zeppelins in late 1916—and also, owing to their hesitating attacks, in early 1917—there had grown up a tendency (born of ill-placed confidence, so it was to prove) to reduce the intensity of the defence measures which had defeated the airships. Even the lighting restrictions were in prospect of being relaxed, until the Coal Controller demanded a still greater reduction of public lighting for reasons of national economy.

There is room for wonder how, in many towns, an extension of the black-out was at all possible. In Sheffield, for instance, out of a total of 12,000 street lamps only 45 were lit in February, 1917. In most towns not more than a quarter to a fifth of the usual number of lights were in use. It is true that the Midland towns were on many an occasion saved by the complete darkness in which they were shrouded from the Zeppelins. But when the warning system was working really well, it was felt that some more lighting might have been allowed on normal nights.

Street-lighting Difficulties

The answer to this claim is twofold. Firstly, the majority of street lamps in use had at that time to be lit or extin-

[1] Morris, *The German Air Raids over Britain*, p. 205.

[1] *Official History: War in the Air*, III, pp. 246–7.

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Photo: Imperial War Museum.

TIMES CHANGE—

A grim war-time view of the quaint old village of Le Transloy, about 7 km. south-south-east of Bapaume, on the Péronne road. A branch-road from here also leads to Lesbœufs, Morval, and Combles. In July, 1916, the enemy had a very strong defence system covering these villages, which lay a good distance behind his line at the beginning of our offensive. We established a footing on the Le Transloy spur late in October, but were unable to master the village owing to the strength of the Le Transloy—Loupart Line.

guished singly and by hand. Secondly, there was, and is now, generally speaking, no separate circuit for street illumination. It is normally connected with interior lighting; hence the virtual impossibility of turning off street lamps at an instant's warning. Most people preferred to exist in darkness, rather than be caught by a raid with street lighting full on.

More serious than the matter of lighting was the actual reduction in the scale of the defences. Little by little air-defence guns and personnel had been drawn upon for overseas, and the deficiencies had not been made good. Moreover, it was agreed that the aeroplane, and not the gun, was now the principal weapon against the Zeppelin; and so the establishment of guns was ordered to be further reduced. It has to be admitted, however, that the weapons thus withdrawn were chiefly allotted to the merchant navy, which was then sorely in need of them in its struggle against the German submarine.

Nevertheless, the reduction in the number of pilots trained for night-flying was a far more serious matter. The most astonishing outcome of this all but universal confidence arising from the defeat of the Zeppelin was the order that no anti-aircraft gun should fire at a seaplane or aeroplane, even if recognised as hostile, except such guns as were specially told off for that purpose along the Coastal Area.

At 5 p.m. on May 25th the first daylight aeroplane raid on England was made: the new campaign had begun. On that day there was much dense cloud, which prevented the German machines from being seen; but this circumstance also saved London from their visit. Coming in over the Essex coast, 21 Gothas flew high over Essex, and then, owing to bad visibility, turned south over Gravesend and on towards Folkestone.

Shorncliffe camp was bombed, entailing a casualty-list among Canadian soldiers of 17 killed and 93 injured. Folkestone town also suffered heavily, 16 men, 31 women, and 25 children being killed, and 31 men, 48 women, and 12 children injured. The bulk of the casualties occurred in Tontine Street, crowded with shoppers at the time. The Chief Constable described the scene thus:

A Vision of Carnage

"I saw an appalling sight which I shall never forget. Dead and injured persons were lying on the ground. A few horses were also lying dead between the shafts of vehicles, and fire had broken out in front of premises that had been demolished."

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Another account described the streets as "running with blood." The total casualties in the raid amounted to 95 killed, 195 injured. One German machine was accounted for on the way home by British aircraft from Dunkirk.

A wave of anger swept the country. But it was not all directed against the raiders. By some inexplicable mischance, the warning signal which had duly been sent out had never reached Folkestone. More serious still was the revelation that the anti-aircraft defences were utterly inadequate to meet this new form of attack. Neither was the situation likely to improve.

To correct this state of affairs would need some time; but the authorities did not meet the situation with sufficient promptitude or decision. It need only be remarked that the Admiralty at this juncture opposed the proposal that night-flying aeroplanes should be fitted with W/T apparatus, on the grounds that such an application of wireless might interfere with Naval coastal communication.

But the Germans drove home the lesson by repeating the raid on June 5th. At about 6.5 p.m. some 22 Gothas, following the same course as on May 25th, appeared over Essex. On this occasion, however, they contented themselves with bombing Shoeburyness and Sheerness. At the former place the damage was very small, and two soldiers were killed. At Sheerness the effects were more severe, 11 men being killed and 34 injured—mostly military casualties. One Gotha was shot down into the Thames by the gun at Barton's Point.

On the same day the Army Council had received a letter from Lord French stating, "I cannot too strongly impress on the Army Council my opinion that the means placed at my disposal for aeroplane defence are now inadequate, and that a continuance of the present policy may have disastrous results."

Through German Eyes

It was not long before those words were justified. Shortly before 1 a.m. on June 13th, one enemy aeroplane flew over Margate, dropping five bombs, which did little damage. But this single machine was one of a formation which now flew over Essex and headed straight for London. The story of the attack is best told in the official German statement subsequently made by Captain Brandenburg:

"London was reached by 17 aero-

Photo: A. J. Insall.

—AND SO DOES LE TRANSLOY

The Le Transloy—Loupart Line was not captured by the British until the night of March 12th/13th, 1917, when the Germans were retiring. The 63rd (Royal Naval) Division moved back to the sugar factory just north of Le Transloy about noon on March 24th, 1918. Meanwhile the 47th Division, assisted by the 51st Brigade of the 17th Division, was endeavouring to make a stand on the south side of the village, but early in the afternoon was forced northward on to the ruins by a hostile turning movement. Le Transloy was finally abandoned soon after 2.30 p.m., to remain in German hands until September 2nd.

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planes. The visibility was exceptionally good. With perfect clearness, the Thames bridges, the railway stations, the City, even the Bank of England, could be recognised. The anti-aircraft fire over London was not particularly strong, and was badly directed. Many enemy fighting aeroplanes had, meanwhile, nearly reached the height of the squadron. In all, 16 enemy aircraft, which flew independently, were counted. The number which ascended may be rightly estimated at about 30.

"Only one of them attacked. Our aircraft circled round and dropped bombs with no hurry or trouble. According to our observation, a station in the City, and a bridge—probably Tower Bridge—were hit. Of all our bombs, it can be said that the majority fell among the docks and among the City warehouses. The effect must have been great. After the bombs had been thrown, the squadron closed formation again. The aeroplanes, lightened of the loads, flew well, and the pursuing enemy aircraft gave up at the coast. All the aeroplanes landed safely at their aerodrome." [1]

The report may be accurate enough, but the material damage was not quite so great as the German aviators imagined. No bridge was struck, and the actual losses amounted to a value of just under £130,000. But the casualties were more serious than in any other German air raid of the War: 162 killed and 432 injured. The bulk of the bombs fell within a radius of one mile from Liverpool Street Station; and many came down between East Ham and the Royal Albert Docks. The tragedy of the day took place in Upper North Street Schools, Poplar, which were struck by one bomb that killed 16 children and injured 30 more, as well as four adults. Another school was struck, but there the bomb luckily failed to burst.

[1] *Deutschlands Krieg in der Luft*, pp. 111–12.

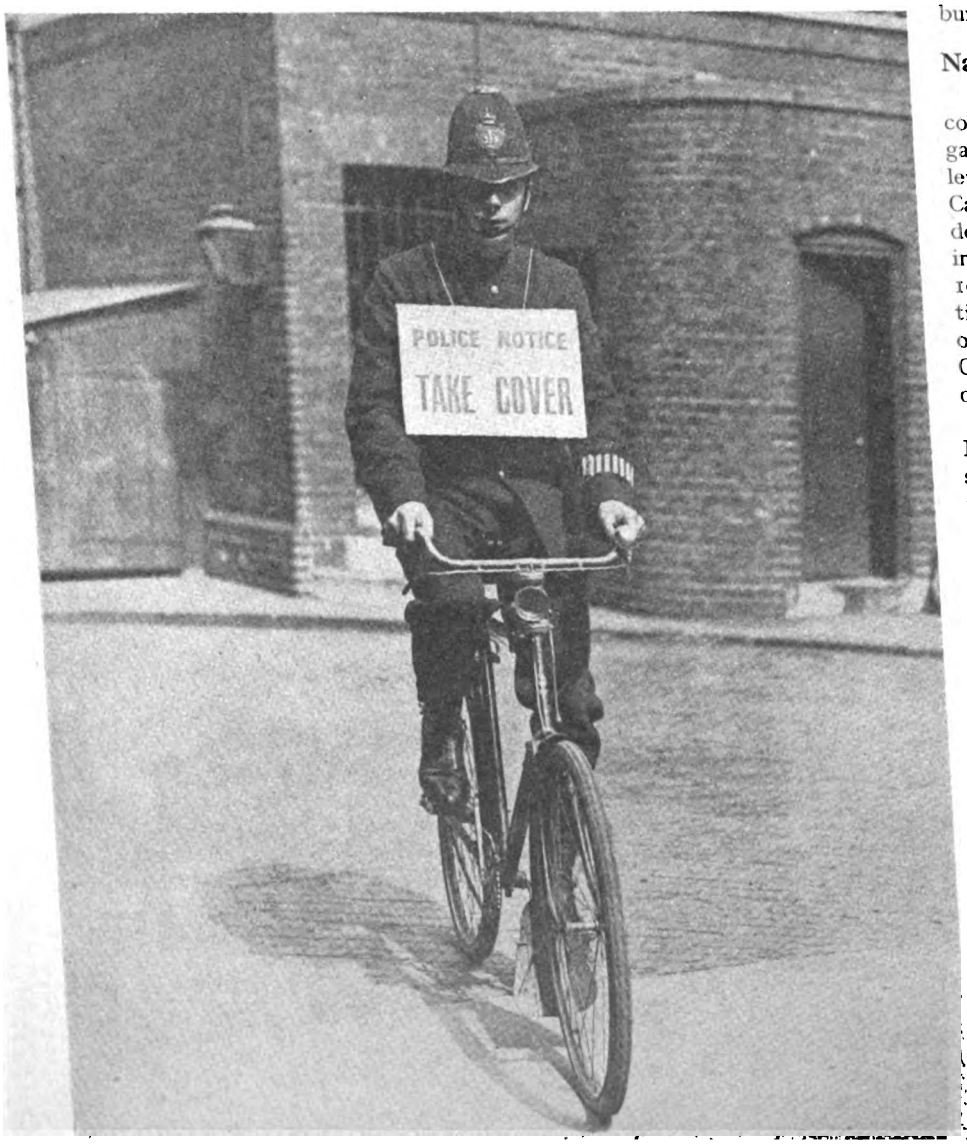

Photo: Topical Press.

WHO REMEMBERS THIS?

Some people take cover in any case when they see a policeman, but this warning writ large across the Bobby's heart was for the benefit of those who were not rendered prudent by having the word "guilt" writ large across their own. A point of interest connected with air-raid warnings is the comparatively late introduction of maroons for the purpose. This valuable warning method had previously met with vehement opposition.

National Anger Aroused

The effect of the raid throughout the country was profound: soon indignation gave way to a stubborn resolve to "get level" with the enemy. The War Cabinet met the same day, and the main decision taken was for an immediate increase of the Royal Flying Corps from 108 to 200 squadrons. Many suggestions were made as to the establishment of permanent patrols on either side of the Channel, while the question of carrying out reprisals was put forward.

But difficulties arose at every turn. Patrols in the air are very far from satisfactory, even when the number of machines and other circumstances allow. Sir Douglas Haig, moreover, was contemplating his new Flanders offensive to free the Belgian coast, and this latter measure would, he thought, unquestionably be the surest method of nipping the aeroplane-raid menace in the bud. If he were obliged to give up his fighter squadrons for home defence, in addition to forming an air force for the purpose of bombing German towns, the effect on the forthcoming offensive (the Third Battle of Ypres) might entail the abandonment of the attempt to free the Belgian coast.

Now, the chief trouble affecting home defence was that the type of machine employed for attacking airships was a stable, steady-going aeroplane of only moderate performance. Defensive tactics were based on the capacity of a single such machine to tackle a single airship. The latter presented an enormous target, while the incendiary ammunition, if it got home in two or three bursts of fire, could hardly fail to ignite the hydrogen gas which kept the airship in the air. In other words, Zeppelin-chasing was a very special sort of business, which had successfully been simplified to a regular procedure.

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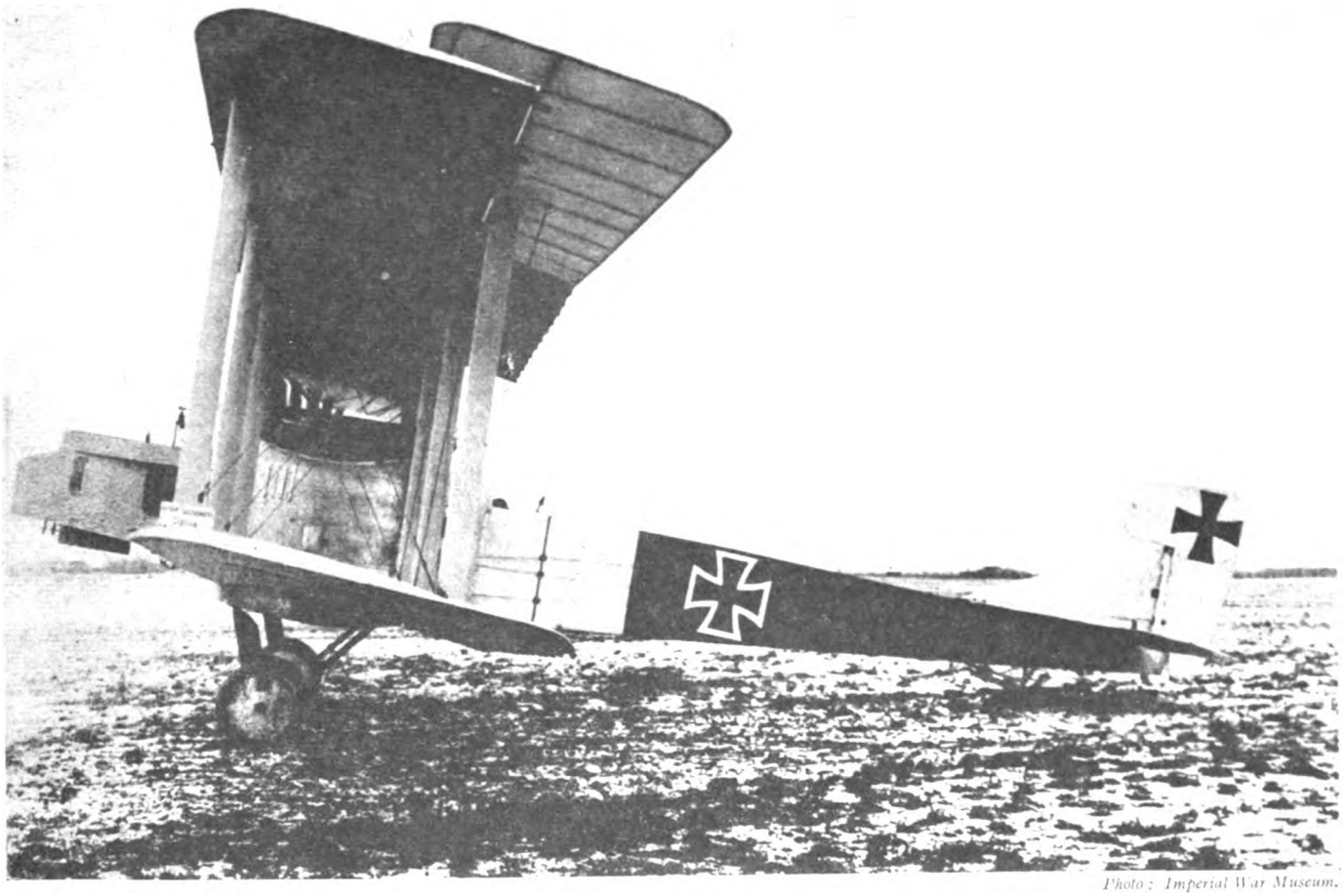

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

LONDON'S BANE

A Gotha bomber (type G. III) of the sort which raided the metropolis and other parts of England. On page 179 of this volume we gave statistics of the casualties caused by Zeppelin raids. The corresponding figures for aeroplanes are as follows:—There were 52 effective attacks, as a result of which 2,772 bombs were traced as having fallen on British soil. Casualties totalled 2,907, consisting of 282 men (civilians), 195 women, 142 children, and 238 soldiers and sailors killed, and 741 men (civilians), 585 women, 324 children, and 400 soldiers and sailors injured. The monetary value of the damage done amounted to £1,435,000.

But to attack a large formation of Gothas, well able to respond to attacking fire, and more speedy than the airship, was a totally different proposition: one that the aeroplanes available for home defence were not truly capable of undertaking. In the first raids, numerous machines—in one case as many as 90—had ascended to fight the Gothas, and right bravely had they attempted to carry out their mission. But they were mostly of different types and performances. None of them flew in formation; and many were unsuitable for "fighter" duties. What could they do? They certainly could never be expected to defeat a whole squadron of raiding Gothas.

Haig Forced to Disgorge

Haig, much against his will, was at length persuaded to give up two whole "fighter" squadrons to guard Britain against the raiding machines: one was sent into Kent, and the other kept at Calais for the purpose of intercepting any returning raiders who might be fatigued after a long flight, and possibly by a protracted pursuit.

But, in accordance with a verbal arrangement, these two squadrons were recalled to the Army in Flanders on July 5th and 6th. The very next day the Gothas were again flying over London. On July 7th, at 9.30 a.m., one Gotha dropped bombs on Margate, while the squadron, 21 strong, came in over Essex. The enemy flew directly west, turned, and made straight over the metropolis in a generally eastward direction. After bombing the City and East End, they flew straight back much as they had come.

Not less than 78 pilots of our Army and Naval Services went up in various attempts to intercept the raiders. The Flying Corps aircraft were of twenty-one types. Some of them, it is true, were efficient fighting-machines; but what could they do, as individuals, ascending from all points of the compass, against the compact and well-handled German squadron? Thirty-six at various moments most gallantly attempted to engage the enemy. There were several casualties among these single-handed attackers, and one Gotha which was suffering badly from engine trouble, and flying alone, was at last shot down into the sea. Four more crashed, owing to tricky wind, on landing.

This second remarkable attack on London in full daylight set the City humming like a hive of bees. A special Cabinet was held, of which Sir William Robertson has left the description, "one would have thought the whole world was coming to an end."[1] Sir Douglas Haig was once more ordered to send home two squadrons, in which command he acquiesced, but complained that the

[1] *Soldiers and Statesmen*, II, p. 17.

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Photo: A. P., Paris.

THE CHURCH OF VILLERS-AU-FLOS

Villers-au-Flos, nowadays a modest village of 260 inhabitants, is situated 5 km. south-east of Bapaume and 3 km. north-north-east of Le Transloy, on a little-frequented lane connecting two main roads. The place first came into our hands during the Hindenburg Line retirement of Spring, 1917, and remained with us for the regulation year before passing back to the Germans for the equally regular period of five months and a bit.

loss of these additional machines must imperil the results of the struggle for air-supremacy which was preceding the opening of the Third Battle of Ypres. As for the bombing of German towns which was now proposed, he maintained that should his aircraft be taken away for such a purpose, it might necessitate a complete change in his plans for the coming battle. In the end it was agreed that only one squadron should be sent to England.

Importance of Home Defence

The fact is, as Sir William Robertson has pertinently stated, that " when war is afoot the requirements of the Home Defence, whether on land, on sea, or in the air, will, except perhaps in the case of a great crisis, such as that which occurred in March, 1918, invariably have to be given precedence over requirements connected with operations abroad." [1]

The Cabinet now became engrossed in this matter of air defence. It transpired that the Royal Flying Corps and Royal Naval Air Service habitually put forward their requirements; the Air Board then studied the question; and in due course the Ministry of Munitions manufactured the aircraft and other supplies as ordered. Such was the feeling created by the revelation of this inter-departmental slowness that it is not impossible to trace the creation of the Royal Air Force to that air raid of July 7th, 1917.

The ensuing course of events was neither rapid nor straightforward. The Government first assembled a Committee to investigate the matter of Air Defence and to make recommendations. Mr. Lloyd George was to preside, but in the end the Committee resolved itself into a " one-man-show " on the part of Lieutenant-General Smuts, recently arrived from South Africa, and now in high favour with Mr. Lloyd George. General Smuts's more general recommendations did not directly affect the question of the raids; in respect of the latter he urged the preparation and application of anti-aircraft barrages to oppose the oncoming raiders, while he insisted on the necessity of three " fighter " squadrons being made available for meeting Gotha attacks.

Lastly, he urged the appointment of an officer possessing considerable air-fighting experience to command what was now to be termed the " London Air Defence Area "—a considerable zone which embraced many of the south-eastern counties. This officer was appointed on August 5th, 1917, in the person of Brigadier-General E. B. Ashmore.

Before his arrival, Lord French had put forward a new scheme of anti-aircraft artillery for covering London, whereby 110 new guns of 20-cwt. and 3-inch calibre, to be gradually augmented by another 80, should be assigned to the air defence of London. This artillery, however, could not at first be provided, since, in view of the growing submarine

[1] *Soldiers and Statesmen*, II, p. 18.

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menace, more guns were still needed for the defence of merchant shipping.

Artillery Barrages

At the same time a whole elaborate scheme of air-defence artillery barrages was worked out in readiness to oppose any new attack. Each barrage was calculated to meet raids by hostile squadrons operating from any quarter at any height. By a system of code-words it was rendered possible to order any one or more barrages to meet whatever attack might materialise. The whole warning system was overhauled to meet the new conditions ; while every method was studied whereby seconds might be saved in the transmission of information concerning a raid.

After all the preparations had been completed, some weeks elapsed without incident, until the defenders at length felt greater confidence that, with the resources now at their disposal, they could give a better account of themselves. In the matter of proving their assertions they were—pleasantly, perhaps, from the civilian population's standpoint—disappointed, for not one of the remaining Gotha raids of that summer ever penetrated as far as London.

On July 22nd, at 8 a.m., 22 Gothas made the Suffolk coast, turned southwards, and proceeded to bomb Felixstowe and Harwich. Most of their bombs fell into the harbour, but 13 persons were killed and 26 (including two women) injured. One-hundred-and-one defence pilots went up, but the raiders were located with such difficulty as to render any chance of their being engaged rather hopeless. In any case, the British aviators still lacked cohesion.

One Gotha is said to have been forced down to the sea, on its return, by a patrol from Bray-Dunes. This casualty, however, is not acknowledged by the Germans, who admit the loss of only one machine, which crashed on landing.

On August 12th, 12 Gothas were seen from Felixstowe, but they turned towards Southend. This time 16 British machines of No. 61 Squadron ascended in time to come up with the raiders ; and, in their haste to keep away, the enemy began to lose formation. Nevertheless, they were able to drop their bombs on Leigh, Westcliffe, and Southend, and thereby killed 32 and injured 43. Although pursued out to sea, they then succeeded in getting away with the loss of one machine. Four others were afterwards wrecked on landing, and a fifth made a forced descent on the Belgian beach.

Foiled by English Weather

On August 18th, 28 Gothas made yet another attempt to reach England, but the weather became so threatening that they were compelled to turn back. Their homeward journey was not completed without casualties. One machine landed on the Belgian beach. The remainder were forced by rising wind over the Dutch island of Schouwen, where they dropped six bombs. Two of the raiders were shot down by the Dutch anti-aircraft defences, and their crews interned.

What happened to the remainder is not clear. That a number of crashes occurred is probable, since a few days later, on August 22nd, when it was decided to attempt another flight over England, the squadron had only 15 machines in an airworthy condition, and of these four turned back very soon owing to defects. The remainder made Margate at 10.40 a.m., and then swung south-east at the approach of British aircraft.

Dropping bombs, which occasioned some damage and casualties, over Ramsgate, they soon made off, for the anti-aircraft fire proved so accurate that two

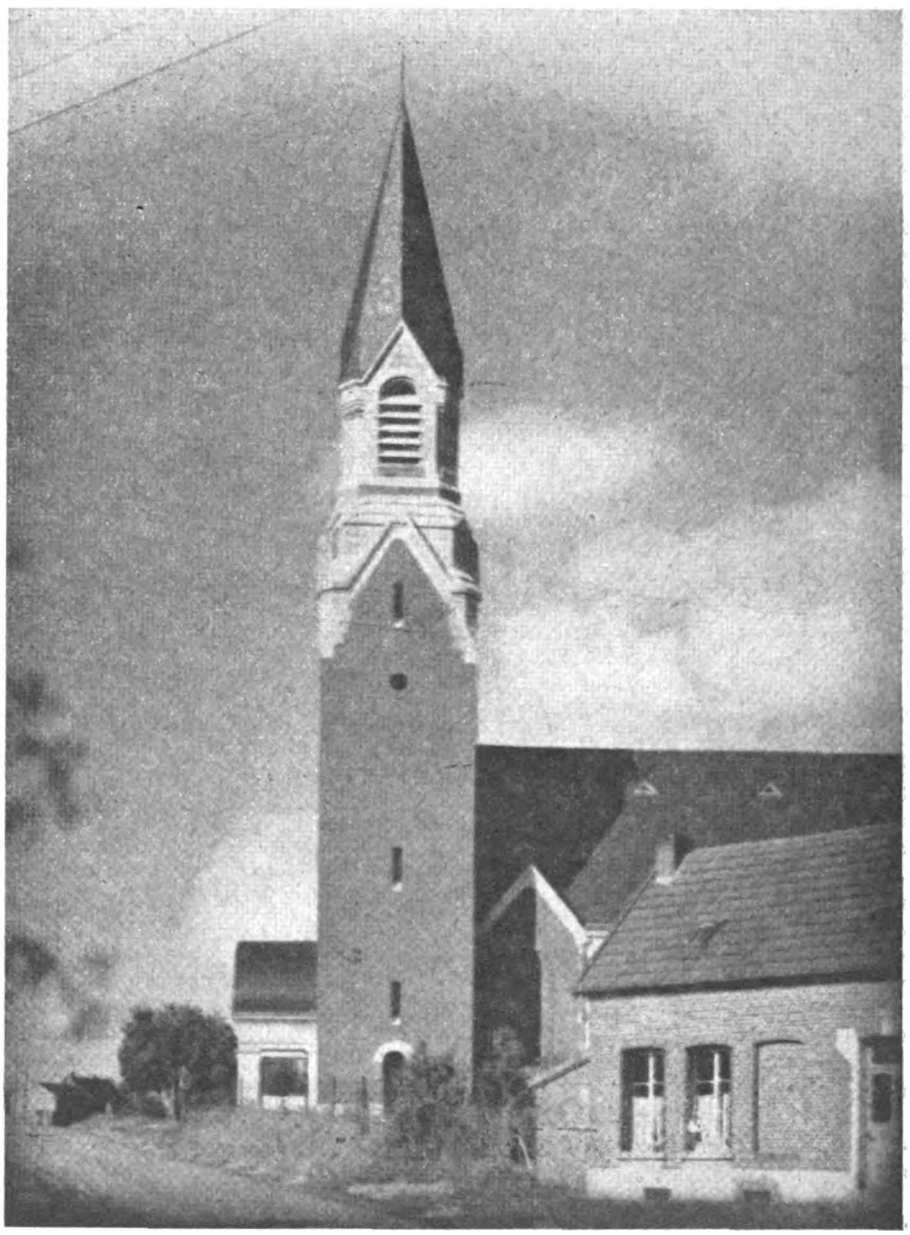

Photo : A. J. Insall.

HAPPY DAYS AGAIN

Villers-au-Flos first figured in the March Retreat, when arrangements were made for part of the 2nd Division to be withdrawn into temporary reserve there on March 24th, 1918. In point of fact our general retirement of that day extended well beyond this village, which had passed over to the enemy long before nightfall. The recapture was effected on September 2nd.

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of them were shot down. One crashed into the sea, and the other fell in flames not far from Ramsgate. The remaining raiders then recrossed the coast at Deal, and flew over Dover at 11.10 a.m. After doing some damage to the latter town, they returned home, still pursued by various aircraft. On the French side several British machines went up, and some fighting took place with German fighters which came out to help the Gothas home. Of these fighters our Dunkirk pilots claim to have accounted for not less than five.

Thus ended the Gotha daylight campaign, as vexatious an enterprise as the Germans undertook in the whole War. For months a single Gotha squadron had seemed to hold London at its mercy; and its raids had so seriously perturbed the Government that the Royal Flying Corps was ordered to be doubled. Twice British squadrons had been recalled from overseas for the defence of the home country at a most awkward moment. And these recalls had effected nothing. Never was the hopeless weakness of passive defence, and still more of defence measures ordered to take effect "in penny numbers," more visibly exposed.

End of Daylight Raids

That the daylight campaign came to an end must be ascribed largely to the effective manner in which the defence measures were improved. The daylight raids of August began to reveal a growing uneasiness on the part of the German pilots concerning the greater activity and more formidable organisation of the defending aeroplanes and guns.

But to the main result, and to the subsequent recourse to night-raiding, the Germans were themselves contributing. Brandenburg, the capable leader and trainer of the Gotha squadron, had been badly injured while testing a new machine in June. He was succeeded by one Kleine, a capable aviator, but a man who was not popular. The reinforcing personnel for the squadron was unquestionably declining in quality; and the new machines sent to replace casualties were also markedly deteriorating.

Some of the pilots of 1918 were not adequately trained. The men of the squadron were never informed beforehand of an impending "England flight." Often they would be hauled out of the drinking-dens of Ghent just in time to get ready to start on a raid. The results of this deterioration were not yet fully perceptible, but coming events were casting their shadows ahead when the decision was taken to substitute nocturnal raids for the daylight bombing-attacks which had so greatly perturbed the population of London in June and July, 1917.

On Sunday, September 2nd, came the first of the raids carried out by Gotha aeroplanes on bright moonlit nights. At 11.5 p.m. two machines appeared over Dover. So unexpected was their arrival that neither guns nor searchlights could open on them. Casualties and damage were slight, but on the next night, September 3rd, the Gothas, evidently satisfied with their experiment, returned to the attack. This time the affair was more serious, entailing heavy casualties.

At 10.35 p.m. two machines came over the Isle of Thanet, but did little damage beyond breaking glass. Another group came up the Thames estuary, and at 11.10 p.m. their bombs began falling on Chatham. Two fell into the drill-hall of the naval barracks, causing the heavy casualty-list of 130 naval ratings killed and 88 injured. Outside the barracks a few casualties were caused, and minor damage occurred. Sheerness was also attacked, at about 11 p.m., with about 12 bombs, all of which narrowly missed serious targets.

Hidden—by Moonlight

It seemed at the time that the raiders numbered ten, though German accounts do not put their total at higher than five. Sixteen British machines went up, but saw nothing. Indeed, a noteworthy feature of the raid was the extent to which the brilliant moonlight made it difficult to pick up the Gothas, which were flying in a remarkably clear atmosphere against a very dark sky. The enemy were never glimpsed more than fitfully, while the searchlights were greatly handicapped by prevalent conditions. Moreover, all aircraft, whether hostile or not, were being reported as hostile, so that the defence was greatly handicapped.

The main feature of the night's proceedings, however, was the action of Major G. W. Murlis-Green, commanding No. 44 Squadron. It had always been held that the single-seater fighter, with which that squadron was equipped, was not a safe machine for night-flying. Murlis-Green, however, thought the experiment well worth trying, so he and two other pilots of No. 44 hazarded a flight in their Sopwith "Camels" that night. To the immense satisfaction of all concerned, the attempt was fully successful. From that date night-flying by "fighter" machines became a regular practice.

Next night the Gothas were once more on the move, and this time they reached London. New tactics were tried: instead of coming over the metropolis as one formation, they flew in separate groups, if not singly. At the time, when all available information had been carefully sifted, it seemed as though 26 aeroplanes had bombed London; but German records now available state that only 11 machines started, of which two turned back. This can be assumed to be correct, since the reporting of aeroplanes at night always errs on the side of exaggeration.

The bombing of the city began about 11 p.m., and lasted, with intervals, for about two hours. Fifty-seven bombs fell, causing 16 deaths and 56 cases of injury; and there were other casualties at Dover and Margate. The greater part of the damage in London must have been caused by a single Gotha which flew over Hampstead to Charing Cross. Aiming a group of four bombs at the railway station and bridge, it caused the third of these to fall on the Embankment, where a tramcar was wrecked and damage caused to Cleopatra's Needle which may be seen to this day.[1]

The Mysterious Casualty

Some 800 anti-aircraft shells were fired at the raiders. The gun at Borstal was confidently stated at the time to have hit one; but as no trace of wreckage was found on land or in the Medway, which was even dragged, the claim was disallowed. The German records, however, admit that one aeroplane was lost "in unknown circumstances" over England. Where and when did it vanish? Was it struck by the Borstal gun, and its flight finally ended in the Thames estuary?

After this raid the weather deteriorated so far that the risks of the moonlight enterprises threatened to become disproportionate to their results. The Gothas therefore desisted. Fortunately for ourselves, the weather continued unfavourable during the bright period, so that it was not until the next phase of the moon that the enemy dared to try again.

This welcome breathing-space gave the defence a chance of improving its armament, and still more its methods. The opportunity was turned to some

[1] This is almost the last trace of the damage done during these raids. Most of the flagstones that were scarred by the burst of the bomb have been removed, but the granite blocks are heavily marked.

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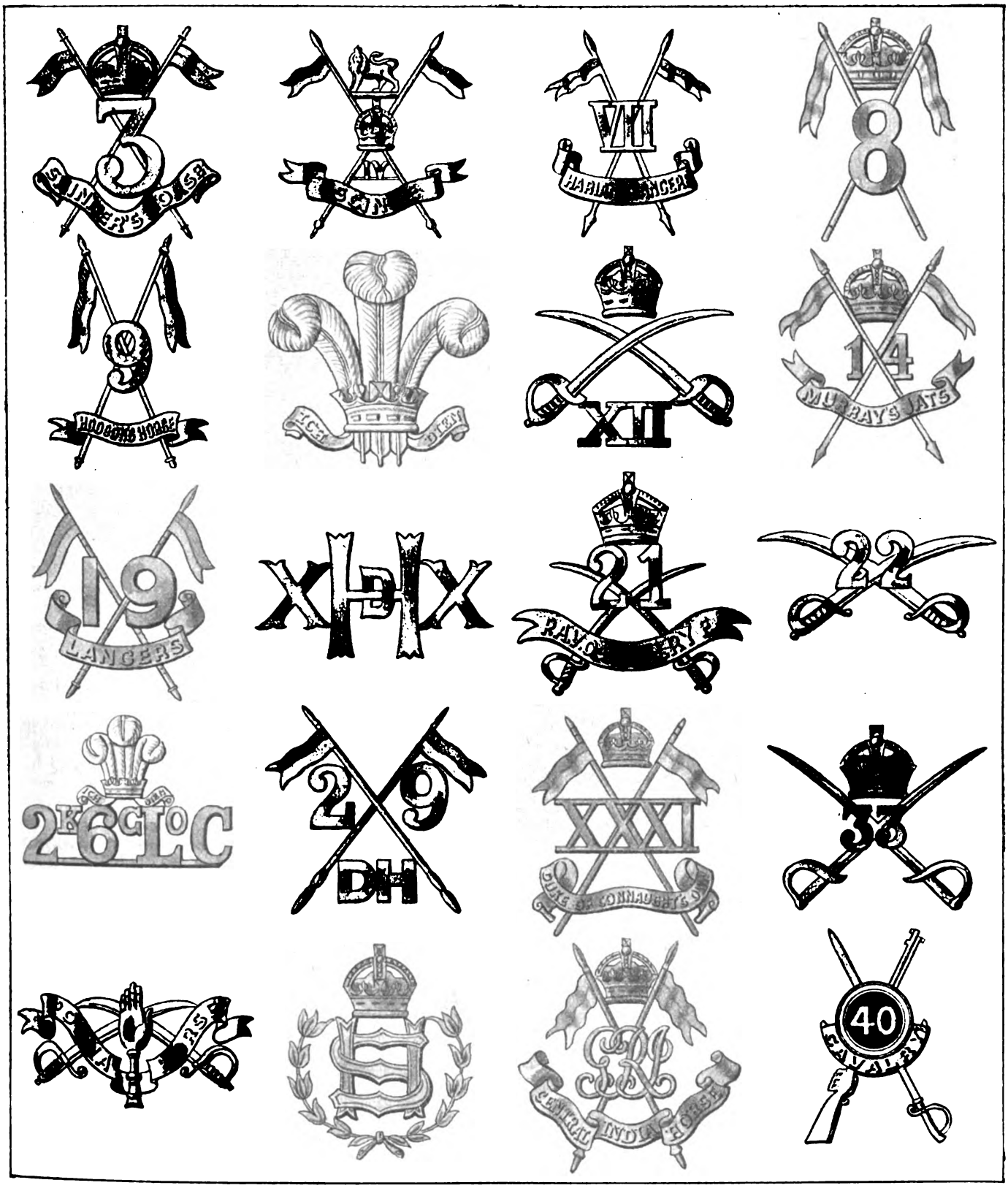

Specially drawn.

OVERSEAS BADGES—NINTH SERIES

Indian badges—selected, as will be future series, from those worn on head-dress, collar, or belt—are featured on this page, and, from left to right, beginning at the top, represent the following units : 1—3rd Skinner's Horse. 2—4th Cavalry. 3—7th Hariana Lancers. 4—8th Cavalry. 5—9th Hodson's Horse. 6—11th King Edward's Own Lancers (Probyn's Horse). 7—12th Cavalry. 8—14th Murray's Jat Lancers. 9—19th Lancers (Fane's Horse). 10—20th Deccan Horse. 11—21st Prince Albert Victor's Cavalry (Frontier Force, Daly's Horse). 12—22nd Sam Browne's Cavalry (Frontier Force). 13—26th King George's Own Light Cavalry. 14—29th Lancers (Deccan Horse). 15—31st Duke of Connaught's Own Lancers. 16—33rd Queen Victoria's Own Light Cavalry. 17—34th Poona Horse. 18—35th Scinde Horse. 19—38th King George's Own Central India Horse. 20—40th Cavalry.

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account. Just as the airships had done in 1916, the Gothas once more brought about an anxious situation in higher political circles in London ; and General Smuts was again entrusted with the task of making recommendations for putting an end to the raids. His memorandum on the subject was in the hands of the War Cabinet in 24 hours.

The main defence against air raids, he maintained, was the counter-offensive against the enemy's air bases. As palliatives, he recommended firstly the provision of more numerous and powerful searchlights ; and secondly the installation of " balloon aprons "—that is, a species of wire screens suspended in the air from observation balloons. This device had been tried with success in the defence of Venice, but was as yet unknown in England.

But the General's main contention was that we must on all accounts provide more and better searchlights. Only by illuminating the raiders would it be possible to assist the defending aeroplanes to find their prey ; and the process would, eventually, be a repetition of the policy which had proved so successful in defeating the Zeppelins. It should be noted in passing that General Smuts did not make adequate allowance for the development of night-flying which had originated in the attempt by No. 44 Squadron.

Photo : Sport & General.

ERECTING SEARCHLIGHTS

Workmen installing anti-aircraft searchlights on the top of Apsley Gate (how many people know that that is its correct name ?) at Hyde Park Corner. This gate is a graceful feature of London whose architectural beauty is seldom appreciated, except by provincials and foreigners who mistake it for the Marble Arch. The gate was designed in 1828 by one Decimus Burton ; and it is fortunate that when the searchlights were on top of it no German bomb brought disaster.

Reorganising the Guns

During the next few weeks, therefore, efforts were made, firstly, to find the necessary searchlights ; secondly, to provide the necessary " balloon aprons "; thirdly, to put in hand an extension and reorganisation of the existing gun defences. The last-named object was achieved by placing the guns further out from the metropolis, while " silent belts " (*i.e.* areas closed to friendly machines) were instituted, in which the guns were to fire at sight on any aeroplane entering their view. It was this scheme that began to take shape before the next attack of the Gothas.

The " ballon aprons " were more difficult to manufacture and to organise.[1] They were formed by three captive balloons, kept 500 yards apart ; between these was stretched a steel cable, from which hung streamers of piano-wire, 1,000 feet in length, at 25-yard intervals. Any aeroplane touching a streamer would almost certainly be upset. There were three aprons in operation in January, 1918 ; by the middle of April there were seven, with an eighth approaching completion. By June ten were ready, and it was then decided to abandon the full programme of 20 which had been ordered. The original aprons would rise to a height of 9,500 feet ; the newer aprons were to be sent up to a height of 12,000 feet. This was more than adequate to prevent low flying ; indeed, the Gothas of 1918 seldom flew above 11,000 feet.

The gunnery side of the defence was not overlooked. New instruments for finding the height of the raiding aeroplanes were devised and ordered, and these were slowly absorbed into use as produced. The whole system of shell barrages was elaborated, and further provision was made for firing them at varying heights, to suit the nature of the raid. Delicate sound-locators were also designed and employed to assist in the detection of enemy aircraft, and to give the gunners a chance to prepare for countering any form of attack.

Raiding Betimes

With the approach of the full "harvest" moon, it was anticipated that the

[1] These were mobile ; their location was constantly changed to meet the tactics of the Gothas. They were sent up only on " likely " nights.

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From the original in the Imperial War Museum.

"A DAYLIGHT RAID ON LONDON, 7th JULY, 1917."

N. G. Arnold painted this picture on the roof of the Royal College of Science, Exhibition Road, South Kensington; and the dome in the foreground is that of Brompton Oratory. The raid was a great attack in which 24 machines (including the German 3rd Air Squadron) participated, London and Margate being the targets. Casualties numbered 57 killed and 193 injured, in addition to two pilots and one observer killed, and one observer injured, among the airmen of the defence force. Four raiders came down, all in the sea, on the way home.

Gothas would be heading for London once more. But it was not imagined that their attacks would be resumed as early as September 24th, when the first lunar quarter fell due. The brightness of the night rendered such a flight just possible. On the other hand, since the moon set at 10.20, the raiders had to be clear of the country before that hour.

At 7 that night they began to cross the coast at intervals, and at heights no greater than 8,000 feet. They made their landfall at widely-scattered places, from Orfordness in the north to Dover in the south. Only three reached London. Fourteen people were killed and 36 injured, of whom the majority were struck by a single burst in front of the Bedford Hotel in Southampton Row. Another bomb fell in Dean's Yard, close to Westminster Abbey, without causing damage. Yet another fell into Burlington House (the Royal Academy), but damaged only some statuary.

Outside London, Dover was severely attacked with 55 bombs; yet these killed only five people, and injured only 11. Various places in Kent and Essex were bombed; but the damage and casualties were slight except at Malling Camp, where two soldiers were killed and 10 injured.

This raid was noteworthy for the fact that no sooner were the Gothas on their way home than the Zeppelins arrived over the Midlands. Their appearance was somewhat disconcerting to the defence, and it may be regarded as a most fortunate occurrence that this form of double attack was virtually never repeated.

Next night, September 25th, the Gothas reappeared, 15 of them crossing the coast between 7 p.m. and 7.30 p.m. Once more only three machines reached London, while the remainder bombed East Kent. Of the 34 bombs which fell in that county, scarcely one did harm. One house was damaged, and one soldier injured. Twenty aircraft ascended to attack the raiders, but no report of any casualty was made, although one serious air combat took place. The Germans admit the loss of one machine, ascribing this to gunfire; but the anti-aircraft guns could fire only on sound, owing to clouds, and made no claim as to having obtained any hit.

Enter the "Giant"

The weather conditions on the following nights were so poor that not until September 28th did the Germans return to the attack on London. This raid introduced a new type of machine into the aerial campaign—the "Giant," so called because of its size and its large cargo of bombs, as well as its armament of many machine guns. The aeroplanes of this type were mostly three- or five-engined machines, of low speed (75 to 90 m.p.h. maximum), but of strong construction, and able to stand rough conditions. The crew numbered five,

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Photo: Imperial War Museum.

MORTAL REMAINS OF A CHÂTEAU

The once fine château whose mouldering corpse appears in this photograph is that of Havrincourt, a village at the intersection of the Bertincourt—Cambrai and Marquion—Trescault roads, 17 km. due east of Bapaume. The illustration is dated November 27th, 1917—one week after Havrincourt had fallen to the British.

and the cargo of bombs usually weighed one ton.

Twenty-five Gothas, with two "Giants," set out that evening; but owing to bad cloud 16 Gothas turned back, although some of these may have come overland before doing so. In any case, none of the raiders penetrated far inland: they contented themselves with bombing various areas from Harwich in the north to Deal in the south.

In spite of the cloud, the machines were met with violent anti-aircraft fire. At 8.47 p.m., one of the two which had approached Deal was claimed as a victim by the guns; it was said that the aeroplane was actually seen to fall. H.M.S. *Marshal Ney* also claimed to have hit another off Ramsgate at 7.50 p.m. Soon after 8 p.m., three raiders were sighted along the coast of the Isle of Sheppey, and the gunners confidently stated that one of them had been hit.

In each case a search was made for wreckage on land and at sea, but not a vestige of any aircraft was ever found. Nevertheless, since the Germans admit that three Gothas failed to return, it may well be that the gunners' claim was correct. Even that, however, was not the full tale of loss, since no less than six machines were wrecked on landing after their flight.

These heavy casualties reduced the raiding craft on the following night, September 29th, to seven Gothas and three "Giants." Over London there was much cloud, and visibility was very poor. It was not surprising, therefore, that at the time there were thought to be no less than 18 Gothas over the country. It is probably correct to assume that four raiders reached London, between 9.10 and 9.45 p.m. Most of their bombs fell in Notting Hill and Kennington, while two burst in Waterloo Station, damaging permanent way and rolling stock.

"Archie" Worse than Raiders

A noteworthy feature of the raid was the damage caused by anti-aircraft shells, of which 12,700 were fired, killing two and injuring 24 people, and damaging 290 houses. This considerable expenditure of ammunition resulted in one Gotha being shot down in flames off Dover. The attackers also lost one other machine, which made a forced landing in Holland.

On September 30th, when the moon was at its full, the attack was renewed. The raiders were first reported at 6.40 p.m., and the last enemy machine was not clear of the country until 10. The numbers were estimated at 25, but German records make it clear that there were only 10 Gothas and one other machine engaged; and the last-named only reached Dover.

Of the remainder, it is probable that eight flew over London. The airmen's statements show that they believed this

Photo: A. J. Insall.

A CHÂTEAU IN MORE THAN NAME

Havrincourt was stormed on November 20th, 1917, in the opening offensive of the Battle of Cambrai, by the 62nd (West Riding) Division, after which the 36th (Ulster) Division also distinguished itself in the fighting hereabouts. Less than a year later, it was again the 62nd which took the village—the date being September 12th, 1918.

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raid to have been one of the most effective of the War, and that they had bombed the City, the Admiralty, and Thames-side warehouses. As a matter of fact, the casualties and damage had been remarkably light (monetary value £7,600), and chiefly confined to the East End, where the Midland Railway sheds were struck.

The attack on Margate, even if far lighter in weight of bombs, was much more destructive. The anti-aircraft guns had again fired by sound, since their targets had been seldom, if ever, visible. No less than 14,000 shells had been expended, and these on falling back to earth had killed two and injured 14 people.

On October 1st, for the fourth night in succession, the Gothas attacked London. Eighteen machines came overland " in waves " between 6.50 p.m. and 10 p.m., and of these at least eight bombed London. Hyde Park, Belgravia, Euston, and Pimlico in the western area all suffered; while the north-eastern suburbs were indiscriminately attacked. Ten people were killed and 28 injured, and nearly 700 houses were damaged. The county of Kent was also a target for bombs, but these proved virtually harmless. Once more some 10,000 anti-aircraft shells were fired, and caused 14 casualties. Of damage to the raiders there is no record.

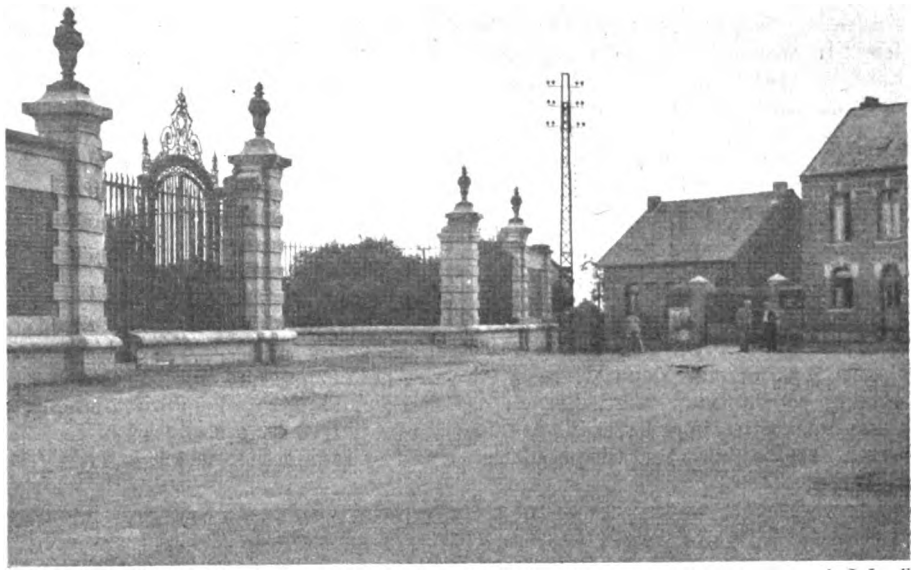

Photo: A. J. Insall.

OUTSIDE THE CHÂTEAU GATES

Havrincourt was one of the earliest villages to feel the German thrust of spring, 1918, the 12th Manchesters of the 17th Division being heavily attacked there four times during the afternoon of March 22nd. The LXXVIII Brigade R.F.A. was especially brilliant in assisting the defence, and the village was held until the general withdrawal.

A Bad Week

The weather then became altogether unsuitable for aeroplane work, and London enjoyed a month's spell of undisturbed nights, except for the " silent " Zeppelin attack of October 19th. For one whole week the metropolis had been profoundly moved by a series of nocturnal raids, the effects of which are not yet forgotten. It had not required more than two or three dozen enemy machines to produce a sense of uneasiness which had increased rapidly as the raids multiplied. It needed, finally, only the arrival of two or three raiders to cause the entire defensive system of warnings, gun barrages, and air patrols to be set in motion!

Not even in the Napoleonic era had the whole country been made to feel such a sense of all but total helplessness. Nothing could show more clearly the psychological value of this new weapon of war. That the population of London neither lost its head nor attempted to force the Government into unsuitable measures of defence is substantially true. But there were whole districts of the city, more particularly in the East End, where the demoralisation of individuals was likely to spread, and was in fact productive of much mischief.

On September 24th it was estimated that some 100,000 people had sought shelter in the underground railway stations. As the raids went on unchecked, the desire to leave the threatened districts of London grew apace. Every

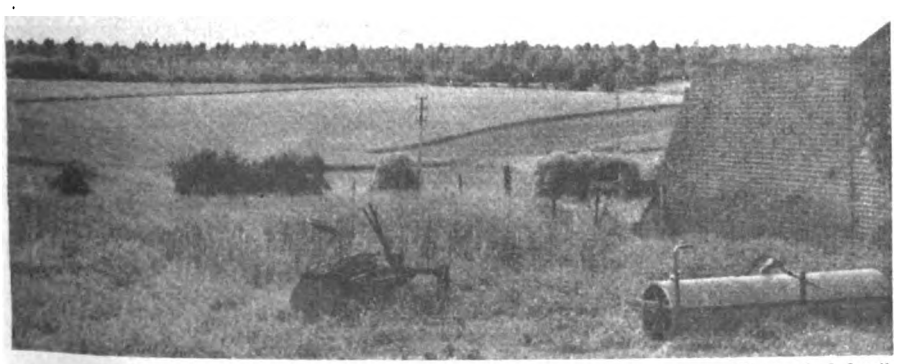

Photo: A. J. Insall.

HAVRINCOURT WOOD

This very large wood lies south of the village, and was penetrated by the British during the fighting of April 4th, 1917. In the final phase, the New Zealanders reached the northern edge of it on September 4th, 1918, and the high ground further north was carried on the 9th. The above photograph was taken from the fringe of Trescault, on the wood's eastern side.

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night the main-line stations were besieged by crowds who sought the open country, where they hoped to find a night's respite from the tension of the raids.

Neither was this so-called " panic "—for in no way did it resemble a panic—confined to the East End, as is so often alleged. The underground stations of Kensington, Earl's Court, and other western districts showed little difference. The throngs here may have been more quiet and more restrained, that is all.

Londoners Cracking Up ?

Small wonder that the Government became anxious when rumours grew apace that official deputations were coming to interview Lord French or other authorities, in order, so it was said, to state their opinion that the population of East London would not support a continuance of the War unless the Gotha raids were stopped. Soldiers back on leave from the front mostly affected to scoff at this attitude. But it was remarkable how many men—mostly, it is true, not of the first quality or of the highest medical category—became infected with that feeling of apprehension which, at bottom, nearly all of them began to experience after being at home on a few nights which seemed to favour an air raid. If one-half of the population of London was unmoved by the drone of the Gotha overhead, there was surely another half which began to feel nervous at the sound, however distant, of a bursting bomb.

Again it must be repeated that troops in the field undergoing air bombing have to be judged by a standard of coolness and of indifference which is totally inapplicable to a civil population. And even the best of soldiers, while in London on leave, could be seen, when it came to protecting their women and children, taking precautions which might have been derided at the front.

But there were also serious material results accruing. To begin with, the anti-aircraft guns defending the metropolis were showing the effects of the growing consumption of ammunition. The life of these guns was normally estimated at 1,500 rounds ; yet many of them had now fired over 27,000, with the result that their shooting was growing woefully inaccurate and short. General Smuts was once more called upon to convene a committee of experts to consider the matter, and also to study the question of retaliatory raids on Germany.

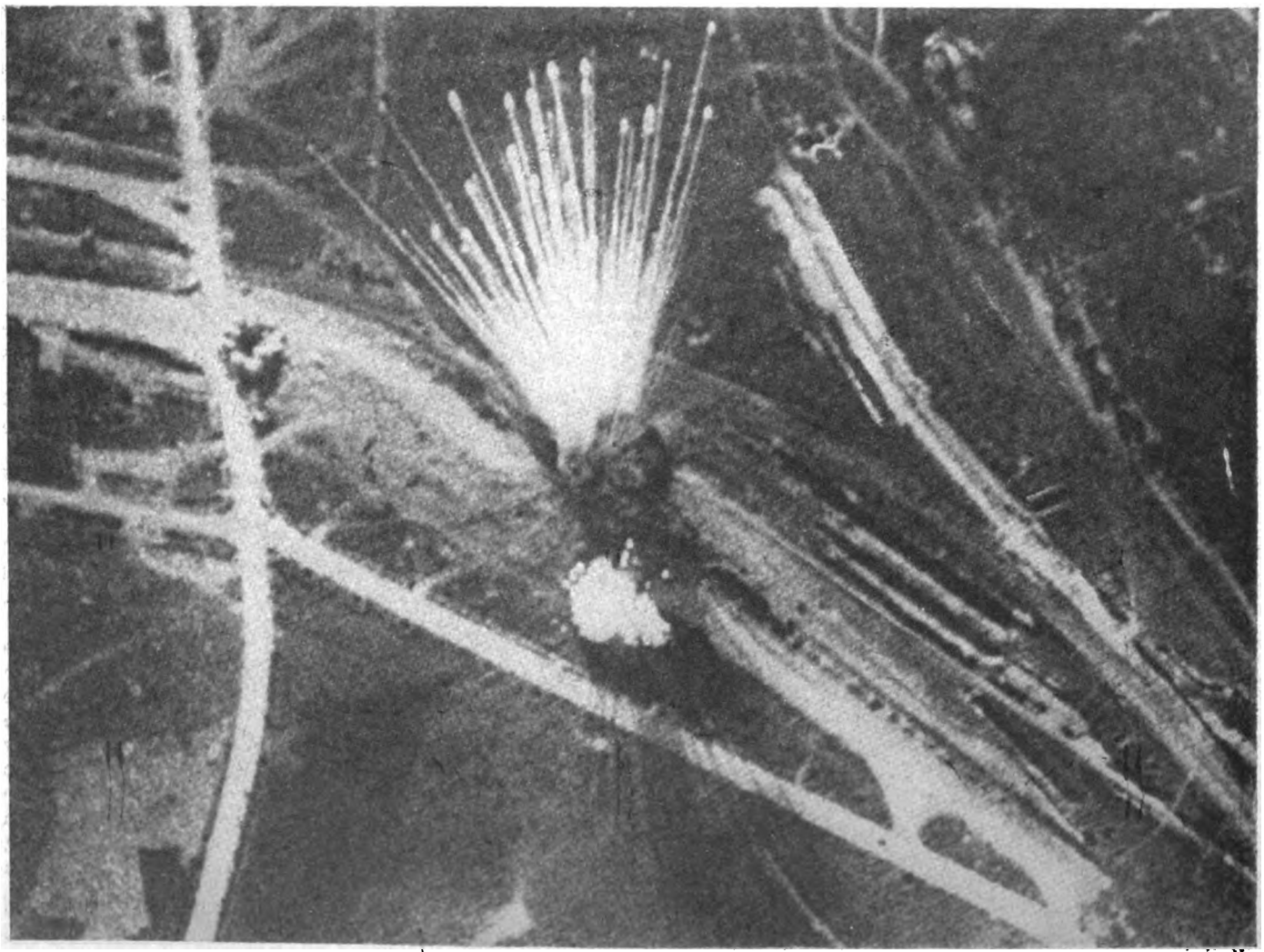

Photo : Imperial War Museum.

A HIT ON AN AMMUNITION TRAIN

A good aerial photograph taken as a bomb explodes on an ammunition train, locality and date being unspecified. Between July, 1916, and the end of the War British pilots took 401,375 photographs over the Western Front, 3,440 over the sea, 3,682 over enemy regions visited by the Independent Air Force, and in the other theatres numbers ranging from 66,720 over Mesopotamia to 542 above the Red Sea. This constitutes a fine record of camera-work, and is an incontrovertible testimony to the great contribution made by our war-time aviators toward the modern science of aerial mapping.

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Photo : Sport & General.

DON'T YOU BELIEVE IT!

No eye but the camera's, or that of a very far-gone inebriate, saw this kind of thing over war-time London. The curious effect is produced by the movement of searchlights across the sky during the rather lengthy exposure necessary to obtain a nocturnal photograph with the cameras of more than twenty years ago. The scene is the Victoria Embankment, London, in the very early period before the masking of lights had been ordered.

Secondly, and even more seriously, this spell of air raids was totally disorganising the output of munitions. At Woolwich Arsenal on the 24th September, the normal output of ·303 ammunition by the night shift sank from 850,000 rounds to 740,000. The percentage of hands present was only twenty-seven. Even next day the disorganisation of the factory was such that the day shift could produce only 640,000 rounds in place of the usual 850,000. And this state of affairs was typical of every factory in south-eastern England that was working on munitions within range of the Gothas.

General Smuts's Plans

General Smuts's committee reported with commendable speed. It was decided to reduce the charges fired by the anti-aircraft artillery, and thereby to prolong the life of the guns. But by so doing the defence was sacrificing range and power, and lengthening the time of flight of the shell. This necessitated an entire revision of the barrage system, since the barrages had to be set at different angles, and needed more guns to produce the same effects.

It is, indeed, probable that the value of the barrage was somewhat exaggerated at the time. Constantly it was reported that the raiders were " turned back " by this or that intense curtain of shell fire. That they turned on such occasions is doubtless correct, but that every such movement was the direct outcome of the shell fire is very far from certain; it was often only the " jinking " of the aeroplane to puzzle the anti-aircraft artillery.

Perhaps the most important measure now taken to put a stop to the raids was the decision to form an " independent " air force, whose sole mission should be to retaliate on the German Rhineland towns. Sir William Robertson wired to Sir Douglas Haig as follows : " Continuous raids on England are causing interruption in munitions work and having some effect on general public. Cabinet desire immediate action against those German objectives which can be reached from the neighbourhood of Nancy."

One squadron of long-range bombing aeroplanes was consequently ordered to proceed to the aerodrome of Ochey, near Nancy, for this specific duty; and eight large naval Handley-Page bombers were sent by the Admiralty to join it.

Lastly, it was decided to improve the machines with which the air-defences were equipped. The slowness of most of the British aeroplanes available at home, and their indifferent rate of climb, imposed a severe handicap on the pilots. Moreover, the large size of the Gothas was still very puzzling to the British airmen, and led to constant underestima-

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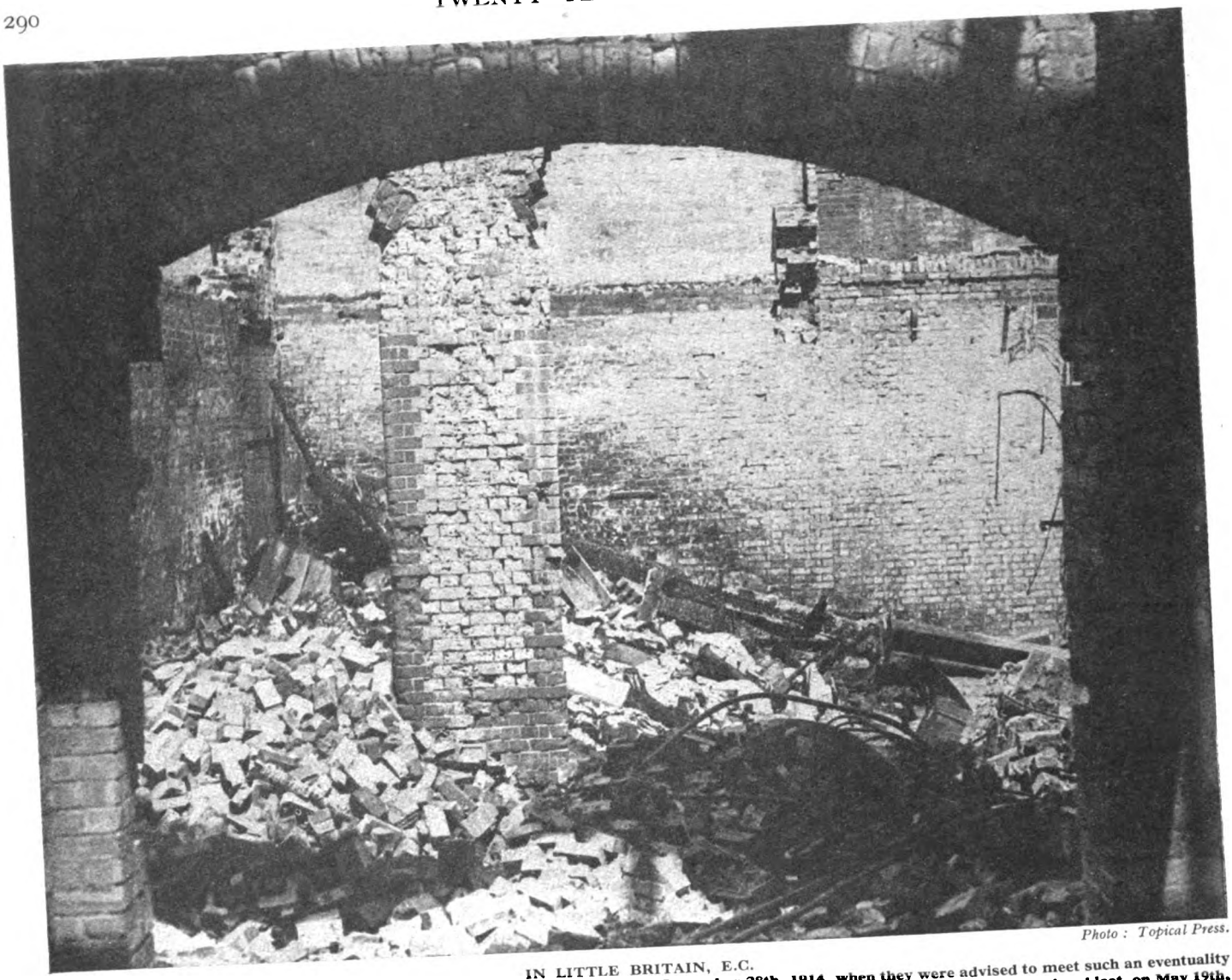

Photo : Topical Press.

IN LITTLE BRITAIN, E.C.

The inhabitants of London were first warned of the possibility of air raids on December 28th, 1914, when they were advised to meet such an eventuality by taking refuge in the basements of the houses. The earliest attack on the city took place on May 31st, 1915 ; the thirty-second and last, on May 19th, 1918. Above is a typical scene of bomb damage in the vicinity of the General Post Office.

tion of their range. In addition, the flashes of the machine guns were found to be so blinding to the pilot that he usually lost his target, perhaps at the first round that he fired. It was to cost many experiments—and, unfortunately, much time—before various gunsights and other devices were found to enable him to overcome such serious handicaps.

Training for Night-flying

Even then, it was not yet every airman who was competent to fly the faster and heavier machines by night. The selection and training of night-flying pilots thus became a matter of urgency. The duty fell to the lot of the newly-formed VI Brigade of the Royal Flying Corps, a formation which was created for the dual purpose of home defence and of providing a school for all night-flying pilots required either at home or overseas. This brigade soon grew into an important and efficient section of the Flying Corps.

The greater part of the month of October proved, as we have said, uneventful from the point of view of Gotha raids. But the next full moon, the so-called Hunter's Moon, once more tempted the raiders across the sea. On October 29th the light and weather appeared entirely favourable to the Germans in Belgium, who cannot have been aware of the bad weather rapidly approaching England from the west.

It would seem that several machines set out on a raid, and that when the conditions suddenly appeared to grow indifferent, the majority turned back. Three or four of them, however, kept on, and were reported to have crossed the coast in the vicinity of the Thames Estuary ; but owing to wind and cloud the British observers were at a considerable disadvantage, while the Gothas themselves were clearly unable to find their bearings. Eight bombs fell in Essex, and then the raid fizzled out. The machines turned back, and consoled themselves with dropping their bombs on Calais on the way home.

Two days later, however, the weather had so far improved that 22 Gothas left their aerodromes for England, London being once more the objective. But clouds again came up, and rendered difficult the tasks of attacker and attacked alike. Nevertheless, on this occasion the barrages seem to have been successful in turning back the less stout-hearted of the enemy. There is no doubt that the defence was improving. A few Gothas, however, were successful in dropping some 85 bombs along the

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riverside to the south-east of the City. The casualty-list amounted to 8 killed and 14 injured, the material damage being surprisingly small except at Erith.

Before the Weather Broke

The raiders who had been turned back dealt more severely with the county of Kent, where nearly 200 bombs fell; but except at Ramsgate, where a gasometer was wrecked, the damage was again not really serious. Fifty British machines went up, and there were two aerial fights. The outcome of these is unknown, although it is certain that one Gotha, possibly injured by aeroplane or gunfire, fell in flames over Belgium, while four more were wrecked on landing. After this attempt the weather conditions grew so unfavourable that no further raid took place during the Hunter's Moon.

Winter weather was now setting in, and with it there came a cessation of that systematic raiding which had so disturbed the British public during late September. The enemy aircraft, moreover, had suffered severe losses owing to crashes on landing, and the squadron was beginning to show signs of a decline in quality and skill. Captain Kleine was at this time relieved in the command by Captain Brandenburg, who had made the Gotha so efficient an instrument of war; but even his return did not mend matters entirely, although his influence was not without effect.

It would seem, too, as though the machines now coming into service were not quite of the same class as formerly. Certainly they were no longer flying so high. The ceiling of 15,000 feet which had been attained during the daylight raids of 1917 was falling. In early 1918 one Gotha which was brought down was credibly stated to have been incapable of reaching more than 10,000 feet, and many were not flying higher.

How far this might be ascribed to overloading is not clear. But in any case the task of the defence was, in this respect at least, growing slightly easier. On the other hand, the Germans were inclined to rely more and more on "Giant" machines, a procedure which enabled them to carry a greater number of bombs while employing a smaller number of aeroplanes.

During December, raids took place whenever favourable weather and moon conditions coincided. Early on the 6th London was once more attacked, 19 Gothas, accompanied by three "Giants," having set out. Three Gothas turned back, and six reached the metropolis, which was bombed during one hour, beginning at 4.30 a.m. The prevailing feature of this raid was the incendiary bomb, of which no fewer than 395 were dropped. Damage by fire was caused in various parts of Whitechapel, Finsbury, and Kennington, to the value of nearly £100,000. Of H.E. bombs only 28 could be counted, and these killed two and injured seven persons.

Two Gothas Laid Low

The raiders which turned back flew over eastern Kent, bombing promiscuously as they went, and causing damage to Sheerness and Margate. Once again the barrage can be said to have been more effective than of old in repelling the enemy, while 34 machines went up to intercept him. But there was no air fighting. The guns, however, could claim two victims: one Gotha made a forced descent near Canterbury, and another at Rochford. Both machines were destroyed by their crews. It is believed that a third damaged machine fell into the sea.

On arriving home two more raiders

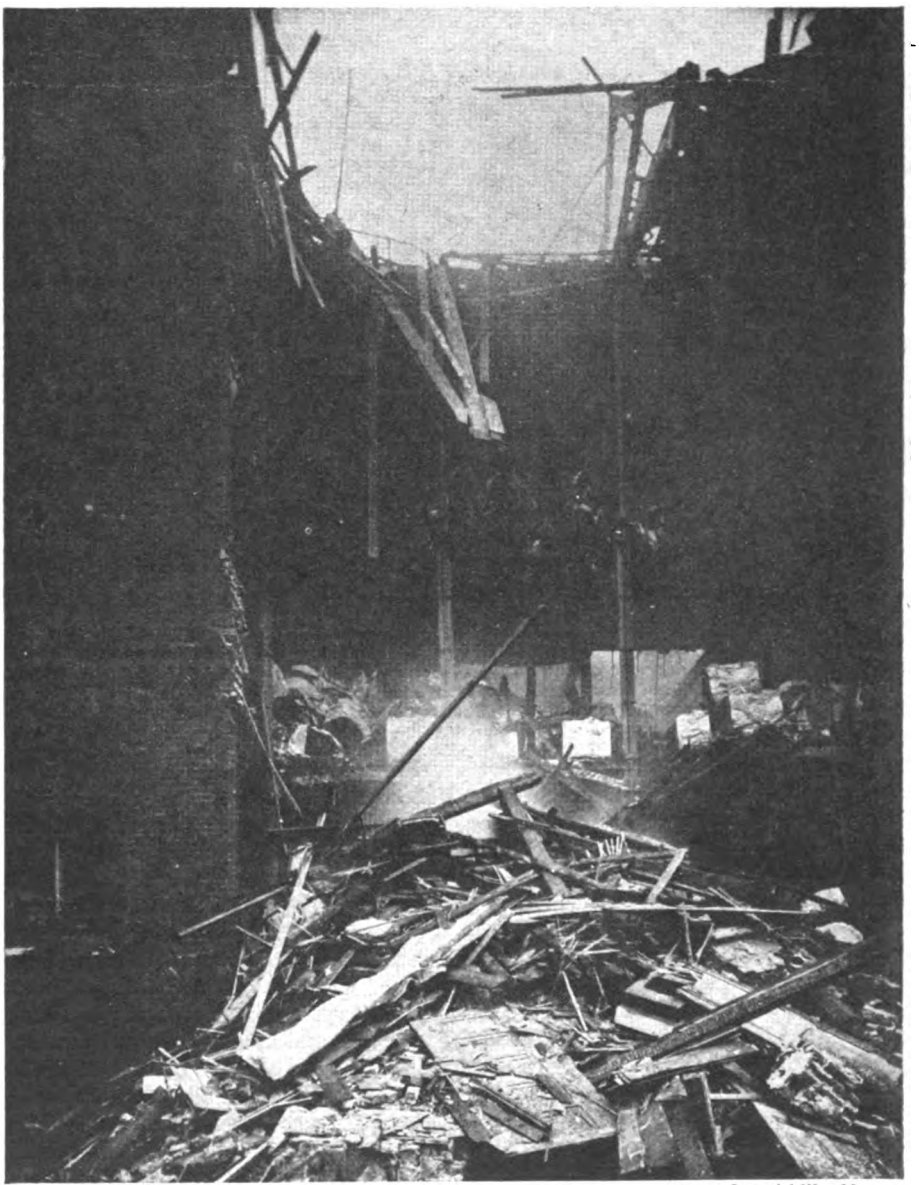

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

IN LONG ACRE

During the aeroplane raid of January 28th, 1918, a large bomb fell on the pavement immediately under the north wall of a famous printing and publishing establishment in Long Acre, London, W.C., and, exploding in the basement, caused the collapse of the superstructure. In addition to wrecking half the building, the bomb started a fire, which rapidly spread until the whole of the edifice was involved. The premises were being used at the time as an air-raid shelter, and of the persons taking refuge there 38 (including 19 women and 10 children) were killed, and 85 (including 38 women and 14 children) injured.

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Photo: Imperial War Museum.

AS LEFT BY THE GERMANS

The railway station and yard at Heudicourt as left by the enemy in the spring of 1917, during his withdrawal eastward. The village is on the Bapaume—Bertincourt—Roisel line, and also on the Péronne—Gouzeaucourt road. It is 13 km. north-east of Péronne, and was first entered by British troops on March 30th, 1917. The above photograph dates from May 16th following. In our advance of a year-and-a-half later Heudicourt was taken and lost on August 30th, and retaken on September 1st. The British extension to the Communal Cemetery contains 82 United Kingdom and 3 Overseas fallen.

made forced landings and yet another was wrecked on its own aerodrome. These repeated accidents point to a deterioration in the flying personnel, and perhaps to a greater strain being imposed on them by the growing efficiency of the defence.

The failure of the incendiary bomb was marked, this being the second occasion on which an attempt had been made by the Germans to create panic in London by fire.

For the next 12 days the moon was unfavourable. Then, on December 18th, the enemy reappeared. This raid, it must be confessed, was to some extent a surprise for the defence. The moon, barely five days old, gave scarcely any light, but a fall of snow showed up the country from the air. The Thames, in particular, stood out like an inky streak across a white table-cloth.

Fifteen Gothas came out, and were followed by a single "Giant." London was attacked by six Gothas at various times between 7 p.m. and 8.30 p.m. In rear of them the "Giant" dropped, among others, one bomb, weighing 6 cwt., near Eaton Square; and one incendiary bomb ignited in Buckingham Palace Gardens. The damage was greater than usual, amounting to some £320,000; and Margate suffered in like manner, 227 houses being wrecked. The county of Essex also was bombed, but the damage was slight.

Of the 47 British pilots who ascended, one, Major Murlis-Green, seems to have damaged a Gotha, which, after bombing Bermondsey, made off in a crippled condition, only to fall into the sea off Folkestone. The guns claimed one hit; and this may be correct, for the casualties among the returning raiders were not slight. One machine crashed as a total loss; two more were damaged in making forced landings; two others caught fire on their aerodromes; where yet two more were also damaged, though in a lesser degree.

Bombarding the Waves

There was to be one more attack in 1917. On December 22nd one Gotha and two "Giants" made east Kent, but dropped all their bombs into the sea. The raid would have been totally without incident but for the fact that the Gotha experienced engine trouble which caused the crew to make an emergency landing near Margate, where they burnt their machine and surrendered.

The result of the raids of the last three months of the year had been to increase the confidence of the defence. Guns were gaining in the accuracy of their

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Photo: A. J. Insall.

A SCENE OF GREAT HEROISM

On March 22nd, 1918, the line Chapel Hill—Heudicourt station was held by troops of the South African Brigade, with the 11th Royal Scots attached, and was attacked about 9 a.m. For several hours the defenders held the enemy at bay, and then for several hours more after being forced back to the line Heudicourt station—Révélon Farm. The station fell soon after 4.30 p.m., but the company of Royal Scots in the farm held out until 6 o'clock, by which time it had, in the words of a German regimental history, "covered the retreat of the main body even at the cost of being destroyed itself."

barrages, while the VI Brigade of the R.F.C., now in possession of more and better machines, was also acquiring valuable experience. Of the decline in the quality of the Gotha personnel enough has been said. Only one point needs further mention: the virtual surprise of the raid of December 18th caused the introduction of maroons in the system of Air Raid Warnings.

Hitherto this method had been steadily opposed by various authorities; but the partial failure of the existing system on the occasion in question converted even the most hardened opponents to a method which had now become all but inevitable if warnings were to be effective. The lack of such a system had led to the London telephone lines becoming congested with calls made from all over south-eastern England for the purpose of "warning" friends; and the telephones ought to have been kept clear for the purposes of defence.

The tendency of the Germans was now to use fewer Gothas with an increasing proportion of "Giants," and to abandon all thought of flying in formation or even in groups. They were also ringing the changes in their mode of attack: they might come north or east towards London, and then try a feint to lure the defence away from the true point of attack. But on the whole their manœuvres were not any more successful than before.

The beginning of the year 1918 was marked by the formation of an Air Council at the head of the new Royal Air Force; and although the existing system of air defence was not in any way altered, the problems accruing therefrom henceforth received far more authoritative treatment. It was calculated by the new Air Staff that the Germans possessed, at the very outside, some 120 machines capable of employment against England, and that, in the event of these being sent out to raid, not more than 80 might be expected to come over this country. To meet such an attack the minimum equipment of the defence would be some 350 guns, 620 searchlights, and 265 aeroplanes. It was even proposed to build underground hangars for defence; and a beginning was actually made at Manston Aerodrome, Kent.

The 1918 Season Opens

The raiding season of 1918 did not begin until January 28th. On that day there was so much cloud and mist on both sides of the Channel that only 13 Gothas and 2 "Giants" managed to take off, and of these six turned back.

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Of the remainder only three Gothas and one "Giant" arrived over London. The raid, however, proved severe. The City, Holborn, Vauxhall, and Hampstead were bombed; 51 persons were killed and 136 injured; and damage to property amounted to £173,000.

There was a stampede in the East End, caused by the warning maroons being mistaken for bombs; and a rush for the air-raid shelters at Bishopsgate and Mile End stations resulted in 14 deaths and 14 severe injuries, mostly among women and children. Three bombs fell close to the bridges across the Thames, but failed to effect any hit.

The bombs dropped by the "Giant" proved highly destructive. One, certainly weighing 6 cwt., fell in Long Acre alongside Messrs. Odhams' printing establishment, and brought it down. The huge weight of the massive paper rolls, stored high up in the building, proved too great for the floors shaken by the force of the explosion; and the crash of these caused the intermediate floors, on which stood the heavy printing presses, to collapse. The whole mass subsided into the basement, which was crowded with people sheltering. An outbreak of fire followed, and in the end 38 persons were found to have been killed and 85 injured or burnt. It is even rumoured that a few were drowned by the water poured on to the blazing ruins by the fire engines.

Nevertheless, the "Giant" had a narrow escape, for it was hotly pursued by two machines; but in the resulting air combat one British engine was put out of action, and the pilot forced to land. However, the enemy then flew straight into a balloon apron, and was considerably damaged, actually falling some hundreds of feet and being saved only by a miracle. The pilot just regained control before crashing, enabling the raider to escape with two streamers of the apron hanging to its wings.

One of the Gothas was engaged, and fell to earth in flames at Wickford. The guns did not succeed in obtaining a hit, although it is claimed with some semblance of probability that certain of the enemy were turned back. But four Gothas were damaged, on their return, in landing at their aerodromes.

A Fruitless Attempt

On January 29th four "Giants" started for London. One very soon turned back; another was met by such an accurate barrage near Billericay that it dropped

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

TWISTED STEEL

A photograph of the railway yards at Merris two months after the final British recapture of the site. Merris, at the present day a village of some 800 souls, is situated 6 km. south-west of Bailleul, on the Bailleul—Hazebrouck line. Outtersteene, Vieux-Berquin, and Strazeele are its neighbours on the eastern, southern, and north-western sides respectively. Two illustrations of the countryside adjoining Merris village will be found on pages 302 and 303.

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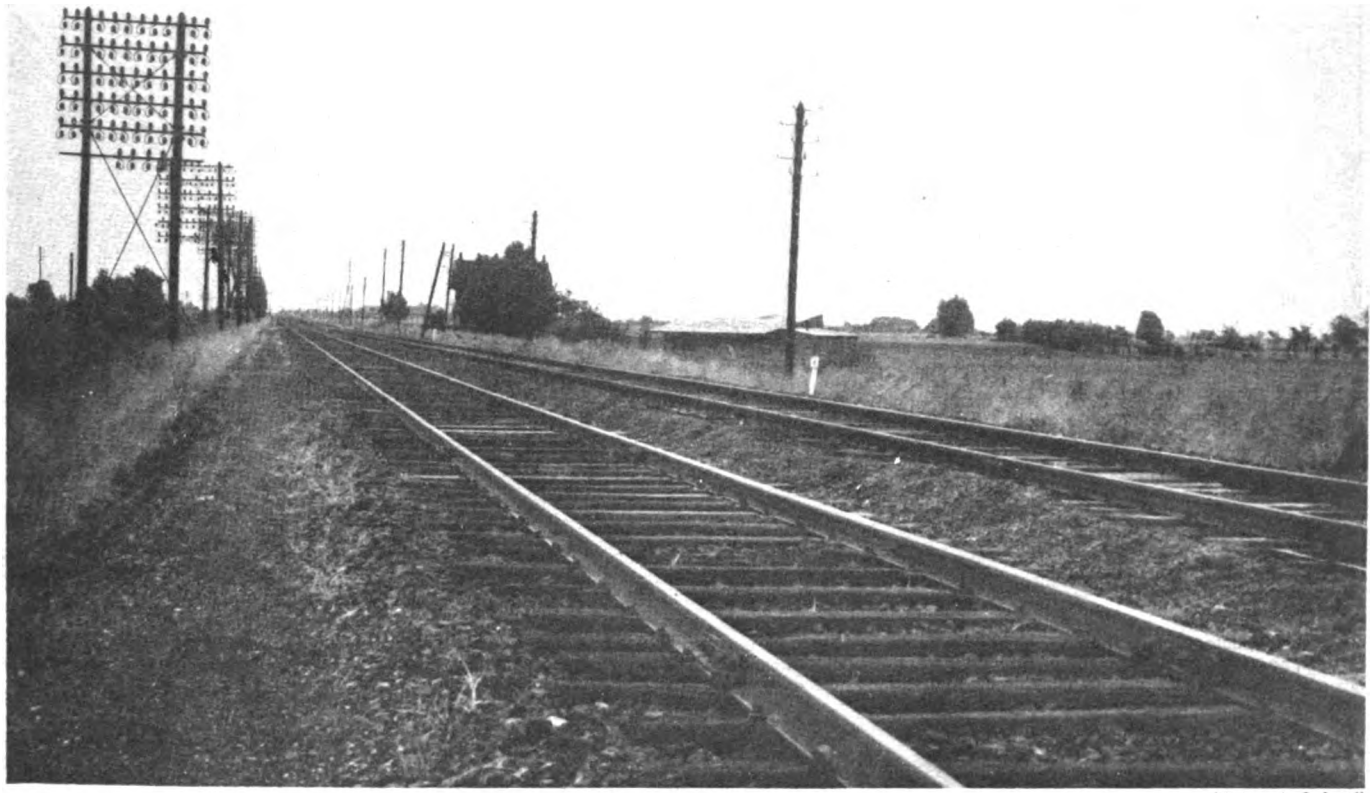

Photo: A. J. Insall.

PERSPECTIVE

The railway yards at Merris now belong to the past, although local people, especially those employed on the line, still remember them. Their situation was in the meadow seen to the right of the fine "straight" here shown. British troops first made acquaintance with the village when the 6th Division (III Corps) advanced against the line Vieux-Berquin—Merris on October 13th, 1914. This line was successfully reached, and subsequently passed. The enemy's *6th Cavalry Division* had been holding Merris.

its bombs on Essex and went home. Of the two remaining, one was attacked at 12,000 feet by a machine of No. 37 Squadron, with the effect that it turned hurriedly west. Then, hastily dropping its bombs over Isleworth, Kew, and Brentford, it made off, but was again attacked over Gravesend. Once more it escaped, when its assailant was temporarily blinded by one of his own tracer bullets exploding on a blade of his own propeller.

The last of the "Giants" was likewise attacked over Benfleet, in Essex, and after dropping all its bombs over Wanstead made off, pursued spasmodically the whole way to the coast.

Following this there was a lull. Not until February 16th did conditions again favour the raiders. Five "Giants" set out, but only two reached London. One of these was carrying a new bomb, weighing no less than one ton. The pilot dropped this ton bomb on the Royal Hospital, Chelsea, where it demolished the whole north-eastern wing of that historic building, causing some five casualties. Three children were recovered alive out of the wreckage.

The other pilot dropped eight 1-cwt. bombs and two 6-cwt. bombs on Woolwich and Beckenham; but the damage, apart from seven deaths, was surprisingly small. Near Dover a third "Giant" dropped its bombs harmlessly. By this time three of its five engines were failing, and the pilot was very lucky to make good his landing on return.

On the night of February 17th a single "Giant" reached London, although confused reports of a large-scale raid were abroad, owing to acoustic conditions, wind, and faulty observation. This time the raider flew over the city from the south-east, dropping some 19 bombs in a line from Lee to St. Pancras. Only the last six, falling round that railway station, did much damage. Twenty persons were killed and 22 injured out of a crowd which was sheltering under the arches of the terminus.

On February 18th there took place what must be regarded as the only real false alarm of the raiding campaign. On that night Calais was once more bombed, and it is possible that in the operation some of the raiders came near the Kentish coast. It needed only this alarm, in such an atmosphere of strain, to set rumours afoot, with the consequent distribution of warnings. The defence aeroplanes were soon reported as enemies, and no less than 4,000

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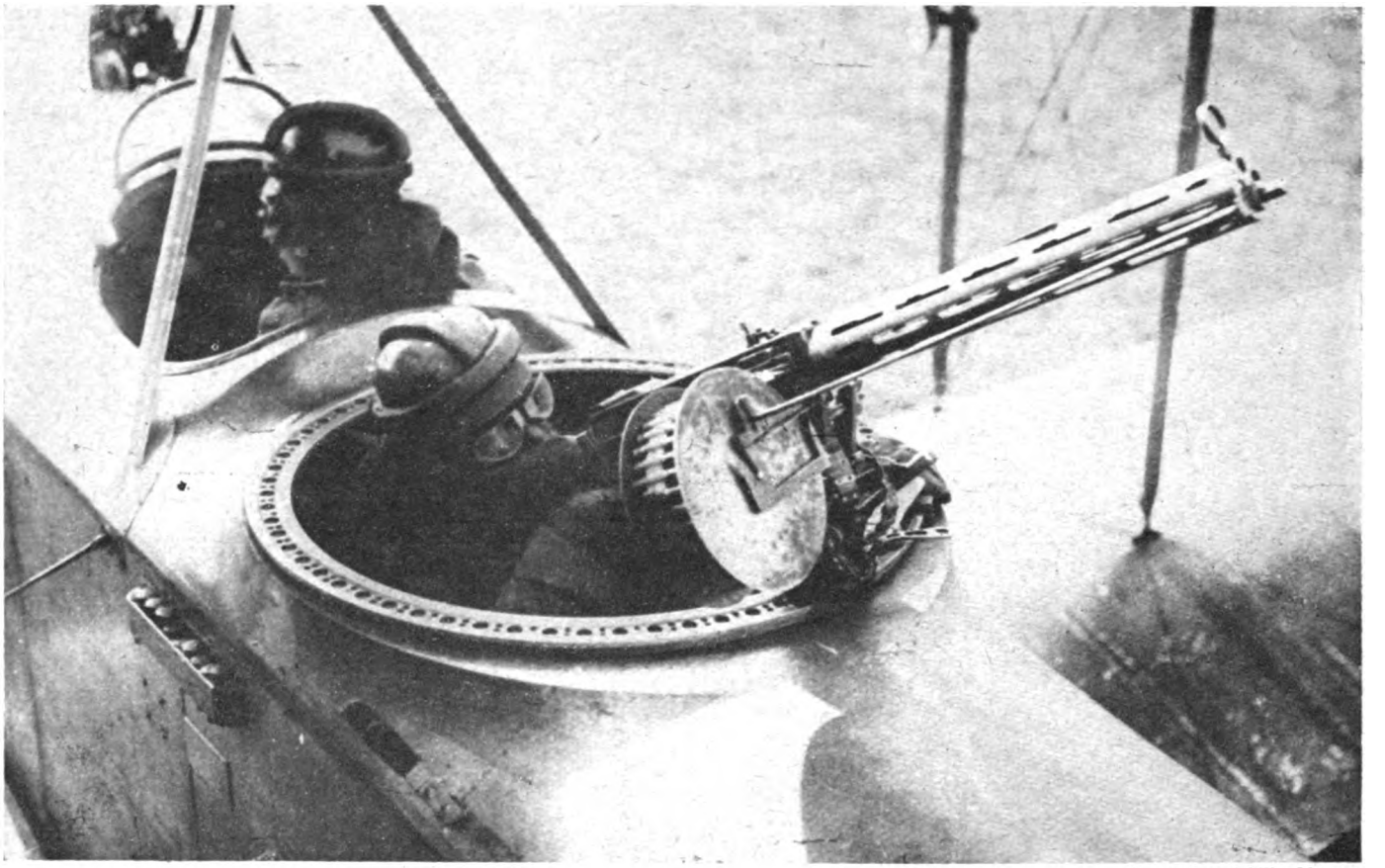

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

AN OBSERVER AND HIS GUN

A close-up photograph of the pilot's and observer's cockpits in a German 2-seater biplane, showing the method of mounting the machine gun on a swivel, and also the peculiar structure of the gun itself. The weapon is of a type known as the "Parabellum." The purpose of this armament was, of course, for defence or offence against other aircraft.

rounds were fired from anti-aircraft guns. Fifty-five pilots went up. The whole incident provides an example of how sensitive and nervous the defence is apt to grow under the tension of a protracted aerial campaign.

The Maida Vale Explosion

On March 7th took place one of the most surprising air raids of the War. The night was moonless, but the sky was lit up by that rare phenomenon, the aurora borealis. Profiting from its illumination, six "Giants" set out for England. One turned back with engine trouble; another reached Luton, in Bedfordshire. A third managed to come in as far as Billericay. Only three actually made London.

Of these last, one obtained a direct hit with a bomb of one-ton weight on No. 67, Warrington Crescent, Maida Vale. The missile exploded on a substantial wall high up, and laid low 23 houses, besides doing an incredible amount of small damage to house property. From other hits St. John's Wood, Hampstead, and Battersea all suffered. Outside London, however, there was little damage.

The raiders seem to have been very much out in their reckoning, owing to the absence of moonlight, and were evidently hard put to it to make their way home, where two of them were badly damaged on landing. On the other hand, although 42 pilots went up to attack the enemy, the darkness rendered them almost helpless. The searchlights picked up their quarry at moments, but never for long enough to render it a good target for the aeroplanes.

The "Giants," however, were growing more chary of venturing out; and there now set in a prolonged period of rest for the anti-aircraft defences of England. But although the vast improvement in the armament and methods of the defence can be held largely responsible for this relief in the pressure of the attack, other causes were contributing to the same end. It has already been shown how the Gotha squadron was declining in efficiency. The "Giants" too were having a "bad patch." And there is no question that the strain of the aerial campaign in France during late March and the whole of April was causing the Germans to interrupt their raids. They no longer had the personnel, the machines, or the material resources to lavish on the bombing of London.

There is also the important fact that by this time the Allied air campaign against the Rhineland towns had begun. To assess the influence of that factor is beyond the scope of this narrative. Let it be said that its effect on the German High Command was far from negligible.

The Last Raid of All

There was, however, to be one more raid on London before the end. On May 19th the moon rose at 10.40 p.m., and was up until 1.30 a.m. Conditions being perfect, a final and complicated raid took place. Forty-three machines had been assembled for a "monster" attack on the city, quite after the orthodox German manner. Thirty-eight Gothas, three "Giants," and two smaller aeroplanes set out to bomb London and Dover.

They left their aerodromes at five-minute intervals, and all came in individually over the Kent and Essex coast, at various points between the Naze and Hythe. They soon became aware that

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the defence had somewhat altered, and not to their advantage. The aeroplane patrol zone had been enlarged, while the position of the gun " barriers " had been strengthened and shifted. The searchlights had been increased, and sections of of them specially deputed to assist the defending aeroplanes.

No fewer than 82 British aeroplanes took the air, and there was a good deal of air fighting. Owing to the nature of the raid and of the defence, it is extremely difficult to describe its actual course, a task which is rendered yet more uncertain by the fact that seven raiders never returned to Belgium to account for their actions.

Those which returned had much to say of the efficiency of the London defences, but their stories perhaps were exaggerated, and it is therefore better only to describe the raid from the point of view of the fall of the bombs. The attackers were carrying 14½ tons of H.E. missiles, of which 72 fell in various parts of London. Not fewer than 48 persons were killed and 165 injured ; more than 1,000 buildings were damaged seriously or slightly ; and the value of the damage inflicted amounted to over £130,000. Outside London 36 bombs were counted in Essex and 49 in Kent. In both cases the damage was only slight.

But the raid will ever be memorable for the success of the defence. Three Gothas were brought down by gunfire, and three by aeroplanes. A seventh crashed in Clacton after serious engine trouble. Yet an eighth was wrecked on landing at its aerodrome. London was never molested again during the War.

9,999 Misses for Every Hit

The guns had fired over 30,000 shells —10,000 for every aeroplane hit ! The first of their three victims had bombed Sydenham and Catford, and was struck on its way home ; it crashed into the sea off Foreness. The second was hit off the Essex coast on arrival, and came down in flames before ever dropping a bomb. The third was brought down at Dover.

Among the victims of the aeroplanes, the first was engaged twice, and finally brought down near Harrietsham after having been hit many times ; it was destroyed by fire. The second was met over Faversham at a height of 8,700 feet, when one engine was put out of action and the raider lost height. Captain Brand, the attacker, pursued it relentlessly until it caught fire ; and so close was he that he was scorched by the flames as the burning wreck fell by the sea wall at Harty Ferry. The third machine was engaged twice, the second time over Hainault Forest at a height of 10,000 feet. From that altitude the raider was gradually forced down by fire to a height of 1,500 feet, when it burst into flames and fell at East Ham.

Such was the last aeroplane attack on London. Only three times more did an enemy machine fly across the Strait. On June 17th one flew at a great height over Broadstairs and Margate. The same thing happened on July 18th, and a third machine appeared over Deal on July 20th.

By this time, events in France were so shaping themselves that the German Air Force had even fewer machines and aviators than in the spring to spare for raiding England. Finally, in August, 1918, the High Command ordered the total cessation of raids against London, and also against Paris.

The aerial attacks on England, and particularly on London, had unquestionably exerted a very great influence on the course of the War. The raids had never been so severe or so sustained as to go anywhere near breaking the will of the nation, or to do much more than exasperate the population against the enemy. But the trouble and anxiety which they imposed on the Government and the higher authorities was real and out of all proportion to their military value. And so it will ever be with regard to aerial warfare.

What the Figures Show

On the strictly military side of the account the German air raids can be summed up thus. In 51 airship attacks some 5,800 bombs were counted and traced as having fallen on British soil, making a total weight of nearly 200 tons. These caused casualties amounting to 556 killed and 1,358 injured. The material damage reached a figure of nearly £1,530,000. There were 52 aeroplane attacks, as a result of which 2,772 bombs were counted and traced on English soil. These caused 857 deaths and 2,058 cases of injury. The monetary damage came to £1,435,000.

These casualty-lists and losses may seem tiny when compared with those suffered by the armies abroad ; yet in the whole vast reckoning of the War they assumed a significance out of scale with their true importance.

Again, the defensive apparatus which these few dozen German airships and aeroplanes called into being in England seems preposterous in extent and importance. In no other field of war did the defence put forward so colossal an effort to parry so weak a thrust. At

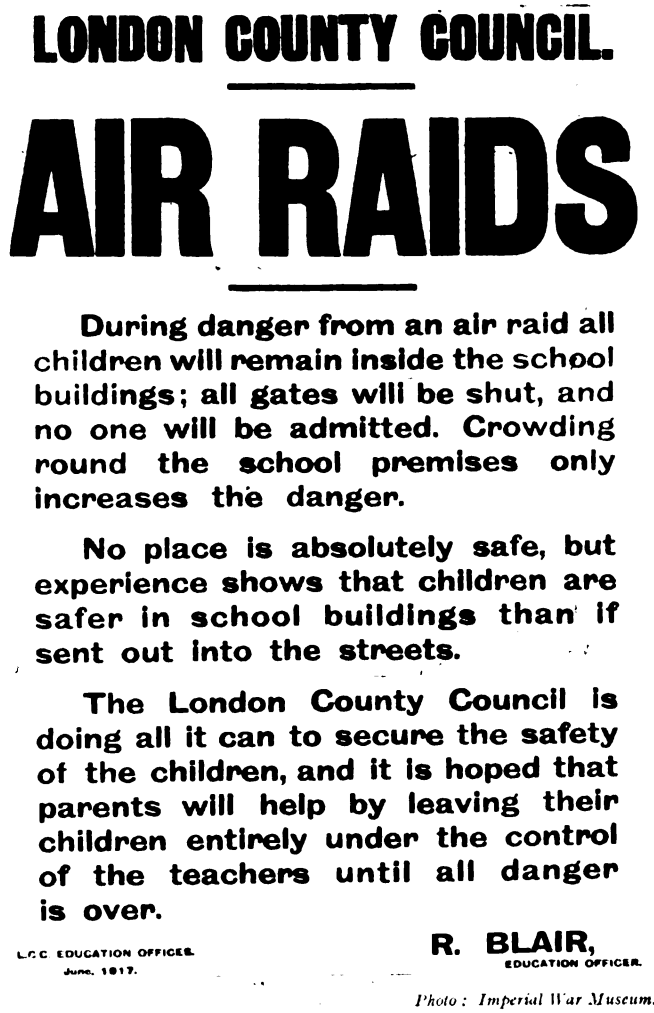
LONDON COUNTY COUNCIL.
AIR RAIDS
During danger from an air raid all children will remain inside the school buildings; all gates will be shut, and no one will be admitted. Crowding round the school premises only increases the danger.
No place is absolutely safe, but experience shows that children are safer in school buildings than if sent out into the streets.
The London County Council is doing all it can to secure the safety of the children, and it is hoped that parents will help by leaving their children entirely under the control of the teachers until all danger is over.
L.C.C. EDUCATION OFFICER.
June, 1917.
R. BLAIR,
EDUCATION OFFICER.

Photo : Imperial War Museum.

THIS TELLS ITS OWN STORY

An anti-air attack warning published by the Education authorities, on June 23rd, 1917, in an endeavour to remove the encumbrance to educational establishments of importunate parents at air-raid times. Air-raid drill formed a regular feature of most schools' curricula at this period.

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Photo : Imperial War Museum.

AT MAIDA VALE

Effects of the raid of March 7th, 1918, on Warrington Crescent, Maida Vale. An out-size bomb fell on the dividing wall between Nos. 63 and 65, the explosion also demolishing Nos. 61 and 67. Out of 17 persons in these houses at the time only 2 escaped injury, and many were killed. A remarkable fact is that one of the uninjured persons was on the second floor of No. 65, one of the buildings directly hit. Many other houses on both sides of the crescent were also damaged to the extent of shattered glass, etc.

Photo : Imperial War Museum.

AT THE POST OFFICE

London's G.P.O. damaged in the Gotha raid of July 7th, 1917. A small bomb struck a flat roof on which stood a wooden building. The roof was brought down over an area measuring 30 feet square, and the gas-pipe which had fed the structure on top was severed. The gas was ignited by the explosion, and a fire ensued, while falling girders and masonry damaged the room below the roof. The casualties amounted to one killed and four injured—all men.

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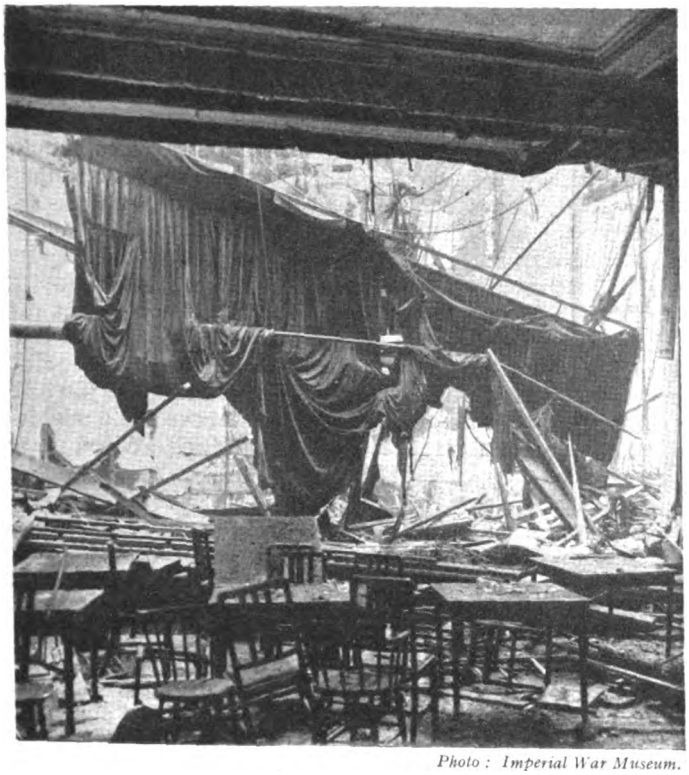

Photo : Imperial War Museum.

A DRAMATIC ACT

The Little Theatre, John Street, Adelphi, London, following damage by a medium-sized bomb during the raid of September 4th, 1917. The missile fell fair and square on the roof of the theatre, which at the time was being used as a club for soldiers. Our photograph shows the wrecked stage, badly in need of scene-shifters.

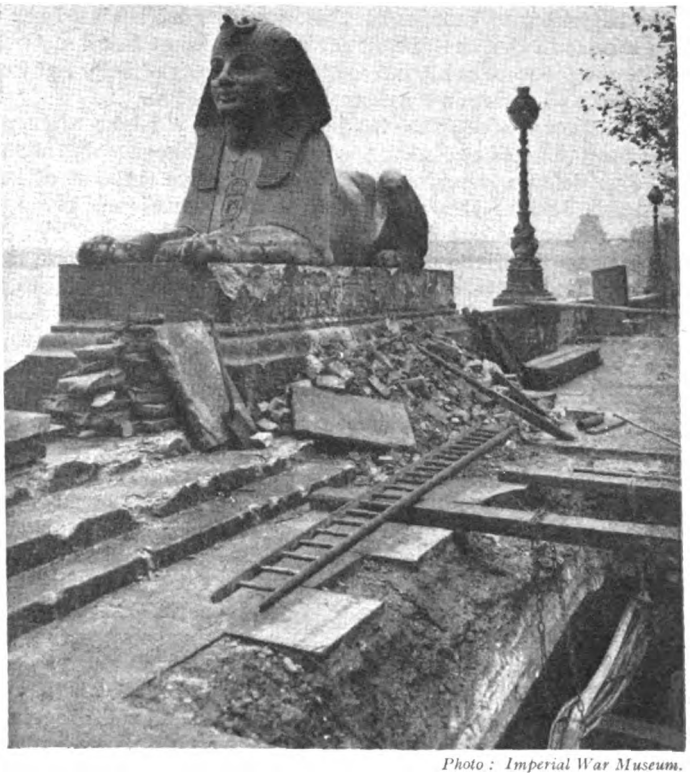

Photo : Imperial War Museum.

BY CLEOPATRA'S NEEDLE

Also during the raid of September 4th, 1917, a bomb penetrated the paving of the Embankment into the subway containing cables, gas-pipes, and water-mains. The Sphinx was slightly wounded, the Needle merely scratched; but 3 persons were killed and 9 injured, including a number of passengers in a passing tram-car.

Photo : Imperial War Museum.

BAYTREE ROAD, BRIXTON

A cleanly neighbourhood, to judge from the prevalence of baths. Notice also, in respect both of this photograph and of the Warrington Crescent view opposite, a curious feature of these explosions—that although ceiling, floor, and most of the walls of a room might be utterly destroyed, on a surviving piece of wall a picture would sometimes continue to hang without so much as having lost its alignment.

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the beginning of June, 1918, there were in service in Britain, and fit for action, 469 guns, 622 searchlights, 258 height-finders, and 10 sound-locators (out of an establishment of 664), the whole manned by 6,136 officers and men.

The defence squadrons of the 6th Brigade had in this month 166 aeroplanes effective out of a total of 376. The strength of the personnel was 660 officers and 3,639 other ranks. There was also the Balloon Wing (for the aprons), absorbing 82 officers and 2,573 other ranks. And all this enormous apparatus was set up to counter an enemy force which on one occasion numbered 43 machines, but as a rule never succeeded in sending more than three to eight or nine raiding aircraft over London, where by far the greatest weight of anti-aircraft defences were concentrated!

Points of View

A few anti-aircraft gunners comparing notes after the Armistice put the matter this way.

"Look here, old chap," said the Home Defender; "you laugh at me for my share in the War. That won't do; just remember that I got knocked out at Loos and was never passed fit again for service overseas. Wouldn't I have gone back if I could! You little realise what I and my pals, nearly all returned with 'Blighty' wounds, had to put up with.

"Night after night, whenever they thought a raid might come—which seemed five times as often as they actually did come—we stood to: a little sleep; perhaps a false alarm; then, the headlong scurry and racket of a barrage not so prolonged, but just as bad as ever in France. Bits of shell from neighbouring guns pelting down. The ghastly feeling of not knowing where the blinking things were. The bursts of their bombs, sometimes close and generally behind; and us wondering whether the devils were getting at our own families!

"And next day! More than once some of us, on going out, were booed and laughed at for our incompetence! Constantly shifting guns, fatigues of all sorts. As often as not short-handed, one man doing the work of three. Officers always changing, and with the new arrivals having to start a merry round of drill again. Ever new methods of fire, new gadgets—you call that a cushy job. It never was.

"You talk about France and 'real war.' Bah! you don't know what this kind of war was! You over there, you saw the last convulsions of an obsolete and worn-out system of war. Here in England we saw the birth-pangs of a new type of conflict which one day may convulse Europe and sweep away every army of the world in one great catastrophe that can and should be avoided, if only people like you would understand that the war which you fought over there is a thing of the past!"

"That's all very fine, old boy!" retorted "Archie" from Flanders. "I grant you all that is true. But remember: if we hadn't kept one or two hundred times as many German aeroplanes tied down in France as you had over London, you'd have had a mighty rotten time at home. Wiped out, you'd have been!"

Capping Them Both

Whereupon an ex-War pilot, overhearing their remarks, broke in: "It was never 'Archie' that put an end to the raids. When we started bombing the German towns, air raiding on England pretty well died out. I don't believe anything will ever put a stop to that kind of war, except giving as good as you get. Certainly our bombing attacks deserve the thanks of both of you, no more nor less. I claim that we did the trick—and shall do it again if needs be."

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

COMPARATIVELY INNOCUOUS

A German aviator holding in position an aerial camera of the type used by the enemy during the later stages of the War. Surviving pictures taken by the Germans tend to show that in general the Allied achievements in the aero-photographic field were superior at the start, and maintained their lead despite the immense improvements made by both sides. The majority of cameras were built into the aircraft.

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CHAPTER XVIII

MEMORIES IV.—A WELSHMAN RETURNS TO THE LYS

It has been the experience of most men who have returned to the Western Front in the days of peace that they are drawn to those parts which they know best. The ex-soldier differs greatly from the ordinary tourist, who is content to be conducted over the battlefields seeing as much as possible each day. To the man who fought it is enough that he should seek out some spot that once was familiar. A quiet corner, maybe, in what is now a lush meadow, or perchance a ruined farmhouse, may mean far more to him than all the stately memorials up and down the battle-line. There, in the place he knew, come crowding back to him memories of men and of days that are gone. Such was the experience of the writer of this chapter during a visit to the country of the Lys.

I HAVE not set foot in Flanders since the beginning of 1919, although I have been elsewhere in France and in Belgium. A few years ago I spent a week in a small estaminet on the banks of a river, not far from Ghent. There was an apple orchard sloping gently down to the waterside, rich and heavy grass lay underfoot, and tall poplars pointed silently to the white clouds; beyond the river, a regiment of pollarded willows filed across the fields toward a clump of trees. The spiked turret of a château peered above the tree-tops.

A Lys-side Village

When I stepped off the motor-bus on to the *pavé*, I stood for a moment and glanced quickly up and down the village street. There met my eye a huddle of houses set unevenly, with roof-shadows sharply drawn on the whitewashed walls, and painted shutters weathered into grey; a brown church; a crooked telegraph post; and two old women dressed in black. Everything basked in strong sunlight, and in silence but for the distant rumble of the bus.

"I know it all," I said to myself. "I have seen it so many times before, on a summer afternoon."

I opened the door of the estaminet, put my suit-case on the red-tiled floor, and stood at the bar. The rich, earthy smell of tobacco, an alphabet of bottles on the shelves, a rubber stamp and a fine scrawl of a signature on an advertisement: these I knew.

I drank my beer and put my suit-case in a bedroom. Another red-tiled floor, a small rug, a large quilted counterpane, and blue curtains. I opened the window, for the room was chill and damp, and smelt of whitewash. Then I went out, walked through the orchard, and sat down on the river bank. On the opposite side two men and a boy were fishing, but they did not break the stillness. The water flowed lethargically, barely moving the weeds.

"A great deal of water has flowed under the bridge since then": that common saying came into my mind. For this was the River Lys, and twenty years had passed since last I saw it. At least, I thought that it was the same river, the river of Armentières, Erquinghem, Sailly-sur-la-Lys, Croix-du-Bac, Bac-St. Maur, Estaires, La Gorgue, Merville, St. Venant.

I went back to the estaminet and looked at a large map on the wall; there seemed to be so much water in Flanders that it was hard to trace one river, and the map was not well printed. But I came to the conclusion that this was the authentic River Lys of Flanders. For me, at any rate, it was *the* River Lys.

If I had a copy of Hazebrouck 5A (a good map, that), I could make sure of it. No, for Armentières lay near the eastern edge of Hazebrouck 5A, surely. Could I remember whether the Lys flowed east or west at Estaires? I could not remember. But I had already decided that this was *the* Lys.

Back Through the Years

If I walked upstream, against the flow of time and water, for twenty years and many miles, I should find another orchard and another summer evening, with "C" Company all present. Or perhaps not all; but at this interval of time let it pass. There are casualties, even in peace.

It was one of the many "last evenings before going up the line," when the world looked tender and lovable and the sky spoke of peace far away. The sergeant-major came to say that a piano had been found, and that for a small fee the owner was willing to let us take it to the orchard for the evening, provided we kept a tarpaulin over it to keep out the damp. Would the officers come, and would I ask the adjutant to play the piano?

We assembled in the orchard in the dusk, a hundred-and-fifty men lying about on the trodden grass, talking and smoking. A thin haze of tobacco smoke hung as a pale-blue shadow against the darkening sky, and two candles in the piano sconces gave a round blur of yellow light. The air was still, and in the distance a rumble of far-off shell fire served as an echo to the thunder of a limbered waggon passing along the road. We sang a chorus or two, somewhat untidily, to unstiffen the minds of all, to weld us into a unity of mood.

Some forms had been lashed together to make a precarious platform, and on this the sergeant-major, by virtue of his office the president and prime mover of such an enterprise, stood to announce that Corporal Jackson "would oblige" by singing a song.

Corporal Jackson walked across to the piano.

"Music?" asked the adjutant, with a smile.

"No sir, got no music."

"What are you going to sing?"

"*Don't Stop Me*, sir."

"I won't . . . but what's the tune?"

Jackson bent down and hummed into the Adjutant's ear.

"Right you are, corporal. Carry on."

"Will you play a few bars first, and then the tune for the dance after the chorus?"

Corporal Jackson walked to the centre of the stage and gave an expert shuffle with his feet to test its stability. "Mind them boots, corporal, the Quarter's looking," shouted one irrepressible member of the company.

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Photo : Imperial War Museum.

TROPHIES AT MERRIS

Apart from its brief period in the fighting zone during October, 1914 (see caption on page 295), Merris did not again come into the front line until April 12th, 1918. On that date an enormous dent, five miles wide and nearly three miles deep, was made in the right and centre of the XV Corps (Lieutenant-General de Lisle). The left flank of the 31st Division was pushed back on to Merris, where it stood its ground as best it might with a three-mile gap to its north ; and here, on the 13th, it took part, with the remnants of the 29th Division and the 4th Guards Brigade, in the magnificent defence which gave the 1st Australian Division time to detrain, and so saved Hazebrouck.

Old Memories, Old Tunes

The words and the tune were old, even in those days :

> Don't stop me, don't stop me,
> I've got a job to go to,
> 'Twas advertised in 'ninety-eight,
> If I'm not there I'll be too late. . . .

Then Private Walton hunched his shoulders and adjusted the weight of his body carefully from one leg to the other until he found a position of equilibrium. From his pocket he pulled out a mouth-organ, wiped it carefully on the under-side of his sleeve, shook it, knocked it gently against his palm to remove any crumbs of tobacco or biscuit, and suddenly burst into harmony. He blew and tapped his foot and swayed until he had made the audience sing to his tune.

And then another tune forced itself to the surface of my mind, breaking through the years and the silence to remind me that Signaller Downs also stood up to sing : the long-drawn-out sequence of Gertie Gitana's *Nev-vah mind*, a song which declined in speed as it grew in sentiment. . . .

The moon rose in the blue-grey sky, mellowing the darkness and deepening the shadows under the trees, turning the orchard into a fine setting for a noble stirring of the spirit. Over the subdued chatter of many voices and the noise of the occasional lighting of a match came the silvery spray of notes from the piano. The adjutant was playing quietly to himself, meditating in music. The talking ceased, and men turned away from their comrades to listen, until there was a dead silence under the trees to make a background for the ripple of the piano.

The silence broke in upon the player, and he removed his hands from the key-board for an instant. The world plunged into a deep pool of stillness, rising again to hear a supple cascade of showering notes as he played one of Debussy's *Arabesques*. When he had finished, there was a pause of a second or two before the applause began—enough of a gap to show that his listeners had been travelling with him into another land.

A summer night in an orchard, with a moon low in the sky, and in the heart of each man a longing. If music could not speak in such a setting, it were not music. . . .

A New Skin on the Earth's Bones

But all this was two decades ago, and in another world. If I were to walk upstream until I reached " C " Company's orchard in Riez Bailleul, I should find nothing there but the trees and the lush grass. Men and music have gone with the years, and nothing remains but the wide spread of calm landscape, and the busy life of a new generation of men and women in the places where we gave our days and nights and our youth to war. Old trees and new trees, grass in its perennial youth, a new skin upon the bones of the earth we knew so well.

> But what of the bones that bear no skin
> So deep in that wet soil ?
> Let them be buried in their market-place :
> I bought this peace but paid no price
> So great as theirs.

If I walked the country from Armentières to St. Venant, I should find beauty everywhere, and I could not bear it. I might, perhaps, wear the uniform of curiosity, and travel quickly in a car over the surface of the country, protecting myself by the very speed of my motion ; but if I were to walk, as I had walked then, I should stand naked

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before all my past. Billet and muddy lane, the turn of a ditch, the sudden widening of a village street, a grey spire against the moving clouds, the rattle of harness: they press too close against the heart of a man past middle age.

I knew, therefore, that I could not follow the River Lys upstream. Whatever I might find of loveliness would be twin sister of the green quiet now spread before my eyes—the long meadows and the pencilled shadows of the trees. The very permanence of beauty is too sharp a reminder of the pain and waste, the slaughter and the fury, the long-drawn waiting for the dawn. There were no ghosts in this orchard.

If it were possible to wake up one morning in Givenchy, the Givenchy of twenty years ago, I think I should go there. Broken crucifixes, shattered walls, unmended roads, and splintered tree-trunks: ugliness everywhere, the ugliness of smashed new brick and new plaster—a terrible ugliness, inconceivable to anyone who has seen no ruins but those of aged walls mellowed by sun and wind and rain.

Givenchy the Accursed

For there was a curse on Givenchy village, a curse of blood and a curse of water. A mile to the north stood Festubert, where men fought more against water than against their fellowmen; and a mile or two to the south the trenches were dry; but in Givenchy there was no respite from fire or flood, nor from that devil's volcano, a sprung mine. In a sector where there is no mining, an absence of shell fire brings rest to the mind for a while, until one begins to wonder when the bombardment will start afresh; but mining puts an end to all repose.

If the enemy digs a mine, we must dig another, and if we can dig below him and blow our mine before he is ready to spring his, we have done well. There was one day on which a keen-eared sergeant reported suspicious sounds in a firebay midway along our sector. He was a South Wales miner, and he was convinced that the sound was that of a pick at work underground.

An Australian Tunnelling Company—real "diggers," these—sent an expert to listen. He agreed that the sound was suspicious, and came back with an instrument—I think he called it a "geophone." There was a faint noise, not unlike the sound of distant tapping, somewhat hollow and irregular in

Photo: A. J. Insall.

ON THE OUTSKIRTS OF MERRIS

The 1st Australians soon took over the line behind Merris (which had been abandoned before the evening of April 13th), and it was they who eventually achieved the recapture of the village, together with 169 prisoners, by a well-conceived attack on July 30th, 1918. Prior to this the "diggers" had taken 150 prisoners in a bold raid on the German lines hereabouts on July 11th. Our war-time view opposite shows some of the spoils of the final storming.

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rhythm. But the instrument could not locate it, nor did it magnify the noise.

One may chance a shell, but not a mine. We cleared some of the firebays, posted Lewis guns to cover the threatened section, and waited for the mine to explode. Two long days passed, with no cessation of the noise, and no explosion. Someone noticed a derelict rum jar on the firestep, and, bending down to make sure it was empty, heard the mysterious noise grow stronger.

He called one of the experts, who blew across the mouth of the jar, so that the noise swelled into a note. He moved the rum jar into another firebay, and the noise travelled with it as the wind blew across its mouth. The empty firebays were re-manned, and we laughed over the " rum-jar mine."

The Imprisoned Mind

But a touch of comedy does not kill suspense ; it merely gives a moment's rest. The agony of waiting springs up again in all its strength. And although I said that I would go back to the ugliness and the squalor, the mind keeps on trying to escape from it all, seizing upon some incident less unpleasant to memory. This, of course, is mere human weakness. If there be any profit in war, it can come only from suffering.

I must try again. From this orchard my mind travels to Mametz Wood, where heavy shelling had beaten down some of the young growth, and had thrown trees and large branches into a barricade. Equipment, ammunition, rolls of barbed wire, tins of food, gas-helmets, and rifles were lying about everywhere. There were more corpses than men, but there were worse sights than corpses—limbs and mutilated trunks, here and there a detached head, forming splashes of red against the green leaves.

One tree held in its branches a leg, with the torn flesh hanging down over a spray of leaf. A sickly smell of corruption, nourished by the strong sun, overtopped the scent of fresh earth and of crushed bark. Death had here become transmuted from a thing of sadness into a screaming horror, the horror of youth crucified.

Blue sky above, a band of green trees, and a ploughed graveyard in a forest in which living men moved worm-like in and out of sight. Two signallers crouched in a hole, waiting for a summons to move, but bearing in their tired and patient inactivity the look of dead men ready to rise at the trump of the Last Judgment. Shells were falling everywhere, the noise of the explosions doubled and redoubled within the wood. Night followed day and day followed night without measure of time. Fire and flame threatened us in front, behind, and on either side. We were men caught in a trap.

Nothing is there but death, and frightful evidences of the maiming of mind or body : nothing to see but carnage. There is no pillow upon which the mind can rest, no easy path for

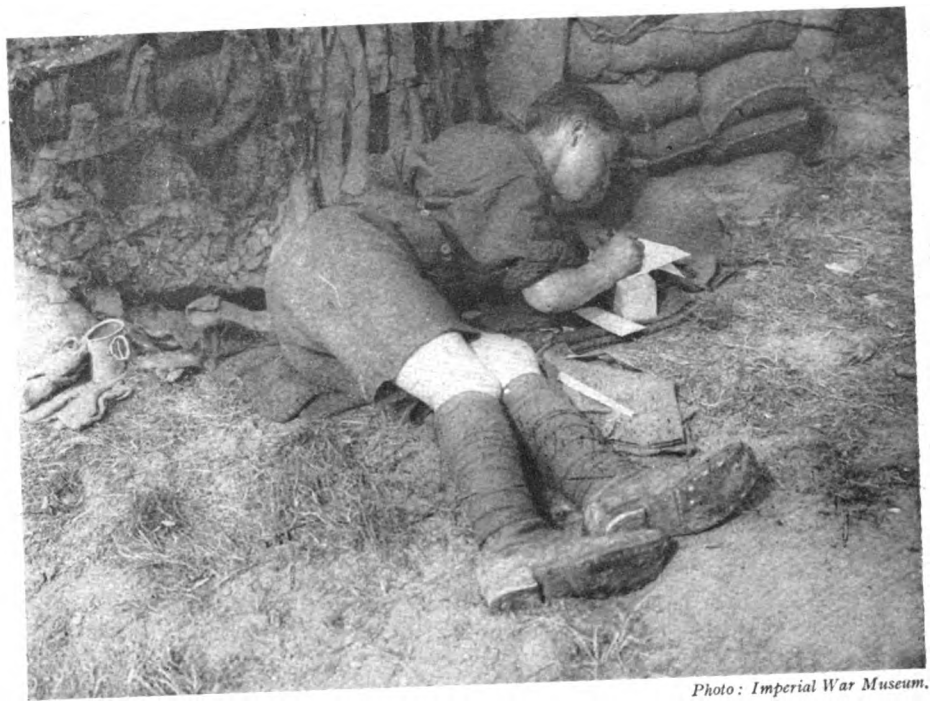

Photo : Imperial War Museum.

WRITING HOME

A likely lad in khaki writing home to his dear old silver-haired mother, or his precious morsel of golden honey-blossom, or maybe just his Uncle Fred, behind the lines at Oosttaverne Wood, June 11th, 1917. At this time the Battle of Messines was still in progress, Oosttaverne having been captured on the opening day (June 7th).

Photo : Imperial War Museum.

" SAY ' DA-DA,' THEN ! "

It probably didn't say " da-da "—not because it was too young to realise the incriminating implications of this simple dissyllable, but because it happened to be a French baby, which Tommy Atkins, the ever-obliging, was minding for " Madame " outside his billet. Date : August 6th, 1917. Place : Adinkirk, near Dunkirk.

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NORTH of POPERINGHE

Then and Now

Photo: A. P., Paris

A DEPLORABLE STATE OF AFFAIRS

The church of Woesten, both damaged and repaired, furnished the subject of two photogravure illustrations on page 163 of the section entitled "Around Elverdinghe." We open the present section with a "Then and Now" pair of pictures of Woesten village, the war-time view having been taken on July 12th, 1917. It will be recalled that this little back-area spot lies on the Ypres–Furnes route, 8 km. north-west of the former town.

Photo: A. J. Insall

VERY COMELY IN THE SUNSHINE

Many of the attractive villages of this part of Flanders owe not a little of their charm to the spaciousness of their roads. Here we have the Ypres–Furnes road passing majestically through modern Woesten, and taking with it the light railway, which bears the appearance of a tram-line. In the war-time view the rails run along the far side of the street, just in front of the houses. On the extreme right of the contemporary picture appear the base and surrounding greenery of the local War memorial.

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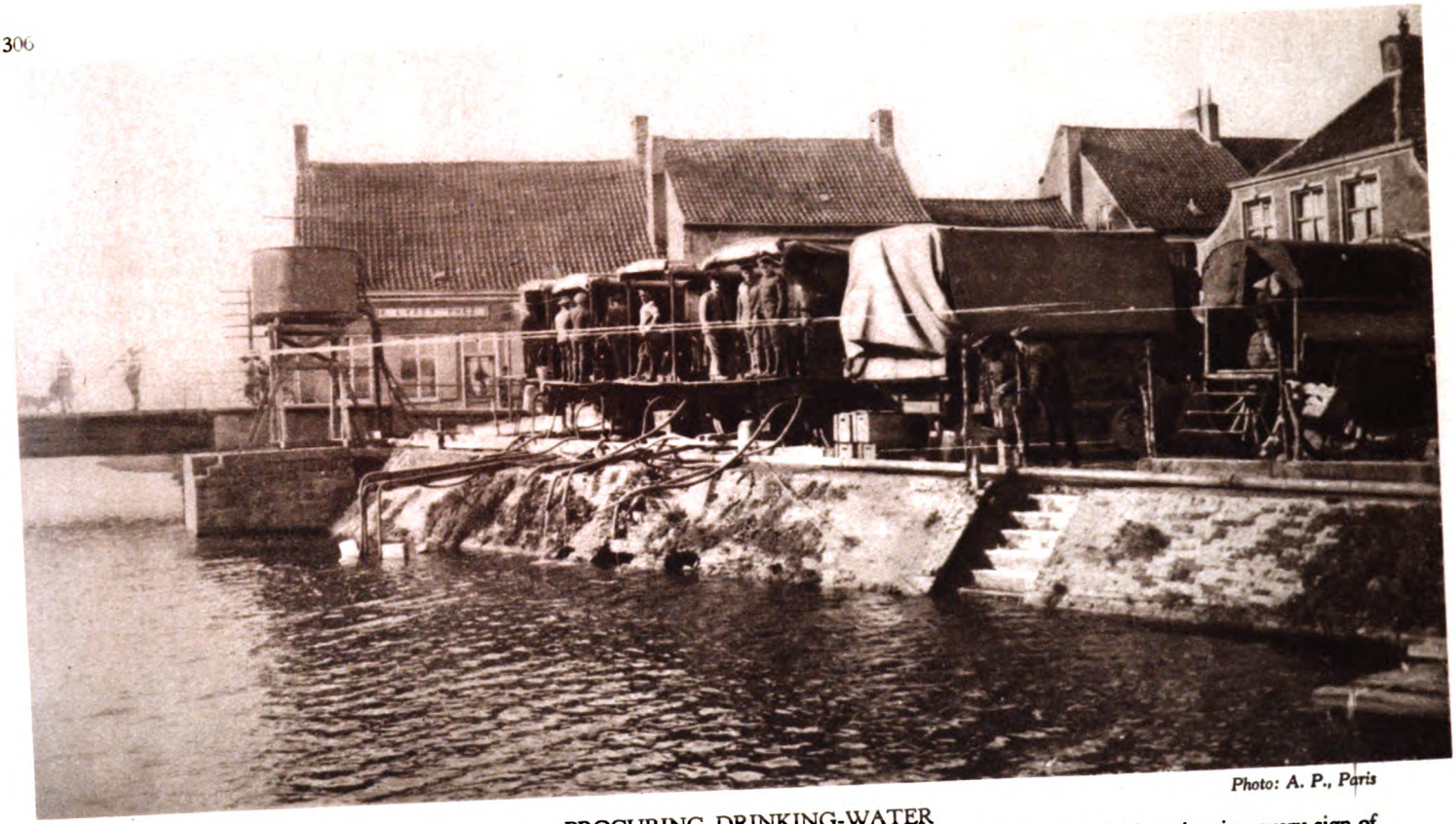

Photo: A. P., Paris

PROCURING DRINKING-WATER

Here is a curious instance of a "Then and Now" feature turned, as it were, back-to-front—the war-time view showing every sign of industrial prosperity, while the modern picture furnishes the note of weed-covered desertion. The village is Rousbrugge-Haringhe, which stands on the Yser, just inside the Belgian frontier, at the junction of the Poperinghe–Dunkirk and Poperinghe–Beveren–Furnes roads. This photograph of British lorries taking in drinking-water bears the date October 20th, 1917.

Photo: A. J. Insall

BY THE NEGLECTED YSER

Apart from its uses as a water-supply point—the water, by the way, was filtered by apparatus actually on board the lorries seen in the upper view—Rousbrugge-Haringhe was a convenient halting-place on the way up to the Ypres Salient from the base. There is, to-day, one British cemetery near the village, used by C.C.S.'s from July, 1917, to October, 1917. Herein lie 732 U.K., 31 Empire, 4 Chinese, 38 German, and 5 unidentified fallen.

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Photo : A. P., Paris

ON THE YPRES-FURNES ROAD

This photograph was taken at Oostvleteren, 12 km. north-west of Ypres, where the above-named road is joined by one from Westvleteren and Poperinghe. The waterway nearest to here, and the one whose flood-waters are so much in evidence, is the Poperinghe Canal, which joins—or rather used to join, for it is one of the many channels which have fallen into disuse—the Yser a few kilometres to the north. The date is December, 1917.

Photo: A. J. Insall

APPROACHING THE VILLAGE

Probably the most thrilling description of rising flood-waters ever penned is to be found in Dumas's novel *Les Quarante-Cinq*, which treats of an even more celebrated inundation of this part of the world by its inhabitants as a last defence against an enemy. There is a large British cemetery south-west of Oostvleteren, containing 3,021 U.K., 149 Empire, 65 German, 3 Chinese, and 1 unidentified fallen.

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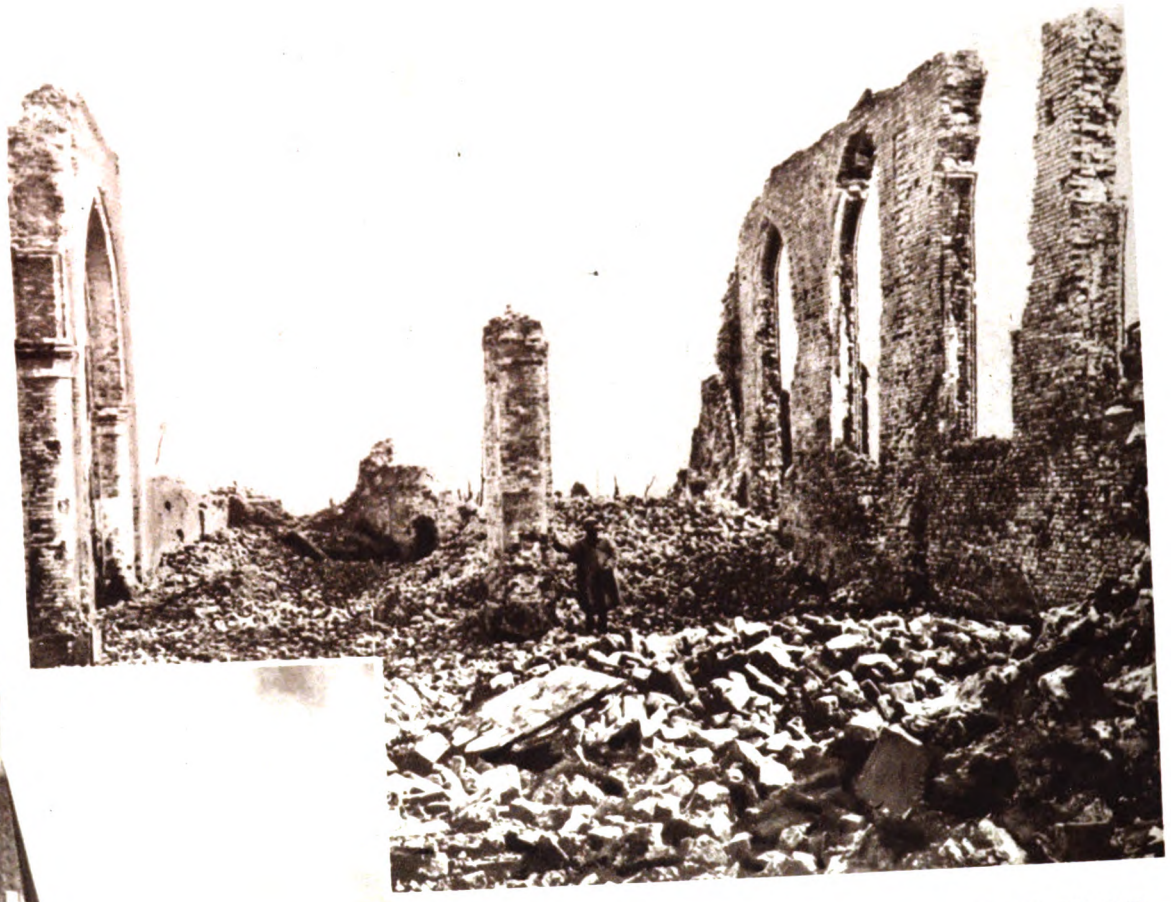
AT NOORDSCHOTE

On the eve of the Third Battle of Ypres, the French First Army, under General Anthoine, took over from the Belgians the sector between Boesinghe and Noordschote, in order to extend northward the left flank of Gough's Fifth Army. Rawlinson's Fourth Army meanwhile took over the coast sector, with the idea of turning the German right flank. As readers know, however, the premature Battle of Lombartzyde, and the subsequent indifferent progress in the main theatre, scotched this scheme. Here is Noordschote church in October, 1917.

Photo: Imperial War Museum



CHURCH AND CHICKENS

An unusually fine photograph of the modern church at Noordschote, with domestic fowls grubbing about outside the hedge, and the almost inevitable light railway passing gaily up the middle of the village street in the foreground. Noordschote lies some 6 km. east-north-east of Oostvleteren, at the crossing of two country roads; and the line is one which goes from Poperinghe to Merckem, 3 km. east of Noordschote on the other side of the Yperlee Canal. Although this waterway formed a defensive position from the earliest days, Noordschote felt the War only, as it were, at second-hand, and never fell to the enemy. There is no British cemetery located within several miles.

Photo: G. T. Watson

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Photo: Imperial War Museum.

FEEDING AGAIN

The two pictures on this page would very aptly have illustrated our recent chapter on "Minor Pleasures." The above photograph shows men of the 6th Battalion Queen's (Royal West Surrey) Regiment eating their dinner in the front line near Arras during March, 1917, while the sentry, with fixed bayonet, keeps watch across the snow.

memory to follow, no matter for comfort, twenty years after. There was a victory, as we called it then—we who survived; but victory is not enough.

A Penance, Not a Pilgrimage

If my strength were equal to my conviction, if mere reason could govern the mind and direct the will, my journey into Flanders would be a penance, not a pilgrimage. Here we suffered, and here I who survived feel impelled to stay, knowing that amid this devastation and destruction of house and field and forest I can humble myself in memory.

Where once I feared, let me be humble. Where I sheltered from death, let me remember the stricken. Let me visit again, chastened, that foul trench, that ramshackle dug-out, that pile of rubble which was once a house, at Quinque Rue, Hébuterne, Duck's Bill Crater, Pommiers Redoubt, Fort Erith, Canal Bank—does it matter where?

No, it does not matter, for all that is ended in Flanders. Twenty years have passed. Houses and villages have been rebuilt, and grass has grown. Men follow the plough where once we trod a duckboard path. They are buying and selling, and children go to school along the Menin Road. The trees are grown and crops are ripe. Life is quiet and dull in the villages, they say; nothing happens but birth and marriage and death and the struggle for bread.

Bread, did I write? Is there now a bakehouse where Sergeant Smith and I held a cookery class?

Such things as cookery classes materialise in a queer way. One night Battalion Orders contained a paragraph to say that I was to take charge of one. Argument was useless, and we know that ignorance never prevented anyone from taking charge of any class. Somewhere, in some manual, there was something about cooking—and there was always Sergeant Smith, the master-cook. I traced him down to an outhouse where he stood, knife in hand, a grimy figure, flanked by enormous sides of bacon, pieces of soapy cheese, and sackfuls of bread.

"Sergeant, you've got to start a cooking class with me to-morrow morning."

"Yes, sir," he said calmly.

"You'd better begin thinking hard what to do and say, for I'm blessed if I know anything about cooking. You'll have to do the talking. How can we keep them quiet for four solid days?"

"Don't you worry, sir . . . I've got'n idea. . . . I was on a class myself once. Teach 'em to make ovens and puddings."

Pudding—Made with Biscuits

Ovens . . . there were pictures in one of the books. I sat up far into one night fuddling my brain with technical terms until I knew something about the jargon of the craft. A little jargon goes a long way in the Army.

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

CANADIANS AT IT

Canadian cooks are here shown preparing a meal in a trench cookhouse during November, 1916. Some while after the start of the War a two-scale ration system was inaugurated, men behind the line receiving not quite the same quality as those at the front. The standard of nourishment was, however, universally high.

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"If you was to go to the quarter-master-sergeant and ask him to save some currants and a bit of flour, I could show them how to make a pudding," prompted Smith next morning. But there was no flour. "Biscuits will do, sir," Smith said.

It is a long time ago, but I think I am not maligning this cook when I say that powdered biscuits, bacon drip, and currants made up the agglomerate which we put into a clean sandbag to be boiled in a dixie. There was a certain amount of fluff, I remember, but it was a pudding, and the sandbag made a pretty pattern on the outside of the cylinder of dough. My helper then did something with two oil-drums and a hole in the ground. It was not a sink, so it must have been an oven.

It was Sergeant Smith—who did not come up to the line, being too valuable a person in those early days—who spoke so feelingly about rats.

"I tell you what, kid," he said to the new-comers, "the shells ain't so bad, nor the bullets ain't, nor the blarsted fatigues. It's the —— rats as does it. When you're standing on guard at night they runs abaht on the parapet and lashes out at yer with their —— 'ind legs, and if you ain't careful they knocks yer off the —— firestep back inter the trench.

"And it ain't only that. Look what they did to Sergeant Tracey. 'E was farst asleep in a dug-out, 'e was, and when 'e woke up, blowed if a rat 'adn't bitten off 'alf 'is blinkin' ear. Big fat things they are—big as dogs and fat as 'ell."

These pictures come and go, focused sharply on the mind for a few seconds, and then dissolving into nothing. There is no order in their appearance. The smell of burning coke in a night watchman's brazier, the sight of a muddy ditch, dawn breaking over the fields, a tune heard on the wireless . . . all these are prone to evoke them. Each man has his private gallery, and the day will come when they are put away for ever. If the world keeps what little wisdom it holds, they will have no successors, and an orchard on a summer evening will stand for peace. Any orchard, even in Flanders.

In the Orchard by the Lys

It began to grow dark, and lights appeared in cottage windows across the meadows. I stayed long in the orchard by the Lys, so many miles and years away from that green country upstream. I should not be able to find the old places, and I did not care to see the new.

Photo: A. J. Insall.

FISHING IN THE LYS

Although the Lys is canalised along most of its length, and is an important highway for barges, its sluggish waters are the home of many members of the piscine race. The Frenchman is not only an ardent angler, but a scientific one; he uses horse-hair lines, small hooks—manufactured, for the most part, in Worcestershire—and a bait consisting almost exclusively of maggots. The present view, a contemporary one, shows anglers at Armentières, where the Lys yields principally roach and gudgeon.

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CHAPTER XIX

THE CAMEROONS, 1914–16

Germany's lost colonies in Africa have, since the Peace Treaty of Versailles, been in the nature of a bone of contention. The colonies in question were widely scattered over the African continent, and each was garrisoned. It will be readily apparent that it would not have been possible for the Allies to leave those possessions unmolested. Each in turn was invaded, and, after small but exceedingly arduous campaigns, occupied. The territory known as the Cameroons lies in West Africa, and as soon as war broke out in 1914 joint action by British and French forces was decided upon, and a campaign initiated which dragged on for nearly two years.

When the Great War broke out in 1914, Germany had, on the Continent of Africa, four colonial possessions: Togoland and the Cameroons, both on the West Coast; German South-West Africa in the southern part of the continent, backing on to Cape Colony; and, on the eastern coast, what is now called Tanganyika, but was then known as German East Africa.

Why the Colonies Had to be Captured

The capture of all these colonies was obviously desirable. In the first place they would be useful as counters for bargaining when peace terms should ultimately come to be discussed; and there were more immediate and pressing reasons why they should be wrested from Germany as quickly as possible. They were all colonies with a coast-line, and supplied in every case with a harbour or harbours.

Such harbours would be of great service to the few German warships which, cut off from any chance of returning to Germany, might—and actually did—do an immensity of damage while allowed to remain at large. Their value, too, was immensely increased by the potentialities of submarine warfare, then in its infancy; and lastly, they offered valuable bolt-holes to the numerous fine steamers of the German mercantile marine then afloat in various parts of the Seven Seas.

Over and above these considerations which invested Germany's African colonies with importance was one which was new in war—wireless telegraphy. With characteristic thoroughness, the Fatherland had foreseen the importance of this new invention. Her foresight was justified, for although German-owned submarine cables were severed within a few hours of the outbreak of war, German wireless stations were able to keep the home country in touch with her scattered and isolated—but, to our trade, exceedingly dangerous—warships overseas. In her African colonies Germany possessed more than one very powerful wireless station, and it was imperative that these should be put out of action as quickly as possible.

The trouble, however, was that, although it might be possible for ships of our Navy, by utilising the Marine contingents which many of them carried, to wreck and destroy all the appliances that made a harbour really useful, it would be impossible to hold such ports until the military resistance of the particular colony was totally destroyed. Further, the wireless station of the colony might be many miles inland, and therefore far beyond the Navy's range.

In other words, in addition to the naval force, a strong military contingent would be required. But here, again, further trouble arose. The situation in Europe rendered it imperative for every Regular soldier that England possessed to be employed in that theatre. It was even found necessary to summon from India, not only white troops of the garrison, but native Regular troops as well. Before the War had been in progress ten weeks, soldiers from India—Britons, Punjabis, Gurkhas, and Sikhs—were fighting in France. Not a man could be spared for operations against Germany's African colonies, however important it might be to seize them as rapidly as possible.

West and South-West

So far as German South-West Africa was concerned, the problem was solved by the action of the Government of the Union of South Africa, which undertook—provided that sea transport and protection for it should be furnished by the British Navy—to carry out all the military operations required. The story of that campaign, and of its successful issue, has been told in an earlier chapter: within a few months Germany had been forced to surrender her colony, and to forfeit several useful harbours and the most powerful wireless station—with one exception—in the whole world.

Upon the West Coast of Africa there was, however, no great contiguous Dominion to take upon its shoulders the task of military operations. And even had there been one, conditions would still have been vastly different; for, unlike "German South-West," where a "white man's war" was possible, Equatorial Africa experienced conditions of climate which rendered such a war out of the question.

Any campaign in such territories must necessarily be waged—on both sides—by black soldiers, led by white officers, and with a few Europeans in the higher non-commissioned ranks. Local forces, of the kind required, were available for such work, but were dispersed over the wide area often loosely referred to as "The Coast."

The British possessions in West Africa which could supply these forces were four in number, varying immensely in size from the tiny *enclave* of Gambia to the great region of Nigeria. No two of the territories adjoined. Gambia was a mere insertion in the rim of an enormous French area; Sierra Leone had French territory on two sides of it, and the negro republic of Liberia on another. The Gold Coast also had French territory on two of its sides, with the German colony of Togoland on the remaining land side, the west. All the land frontiers of the vast colony of Nigeria marched with foreign territory: mostly with French West Africa, but to the south and west with the German possession which we call the Cameroons.

To understand the campaign which is now to be related, it is necessary to remember that these British possessions were by no means set in a restricted area. A traveller from Bathurst—the port of Gambia—to the mouth of the River Niger, which gives its name to "Nigeria," must needs make a sea voyage of nearly 2,000 miles.

Our West African Forces

In August, 1914, the troops (other than French and Belgian native forces,

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which will be mentioned later) from which an Expeditionary Force on the West Coast of Africa could be drawn, consisted of two classes, under the War Office and the Colonial Office respectively. In the former category was the normal peace-time garrison of Sierra Leone, the bulk of which was made up of two infantry units, namely a battalion of the West India Regiment, and the West African Regiment.

Both these units formed part of the Regular Army. The West India Regiment, the headquarters of which were at Jamaica, drew its recruits from negroes in the West Indian Islands and was a corps with a long and distinguished record extending over more than a century and a half. Normally, in peace-time, one battalion would be serving at Sierra Leone, and another at Jamaica, with detachments at St. Lucia and Barbados.

The West African Regiment was a comparatively new unit, recruited in West Africa and serving entirely on the west coast. It had a twelve-company organisation, and normally the headquarters and seven companies were stationed at Freetown, in Sierra Leone, with the remaining five companies at posts stretching northwards toward the frontier of French Guinea.

The West African Frontier Force—invariably known, from its initial letters, as the "Waffs"—owed its origin to a series of French encroachments upon the territory of the Niger Company between 1894 and 1897. The bulk of the Waffs were stationed in Nigeria, but included in the force was the Gambia Company, the Sierra Leone Battalion, and the Gold Coast Regiment, all permanently stationed in the territories indicated by their names.

All the units already mentioned had a black rank-and-file, with white officers. The officers of the West India Regiment were permanently posted to that corps; but with the West African Regiment and the Waffs, officers were seconded from British units for merely a spell of West African service.

In addition to the military, in each colony and protectorate there were a number of Europeans employed by trading firms, shipping companies, mines, banks, and business houses. Some of these enrolled as volunteers with the Expeditionary Force, and performed yeoman service. There were also police, and administrative medical and marine officers of the Colonial Civil Service, many of whom served with distinction throughout the War.

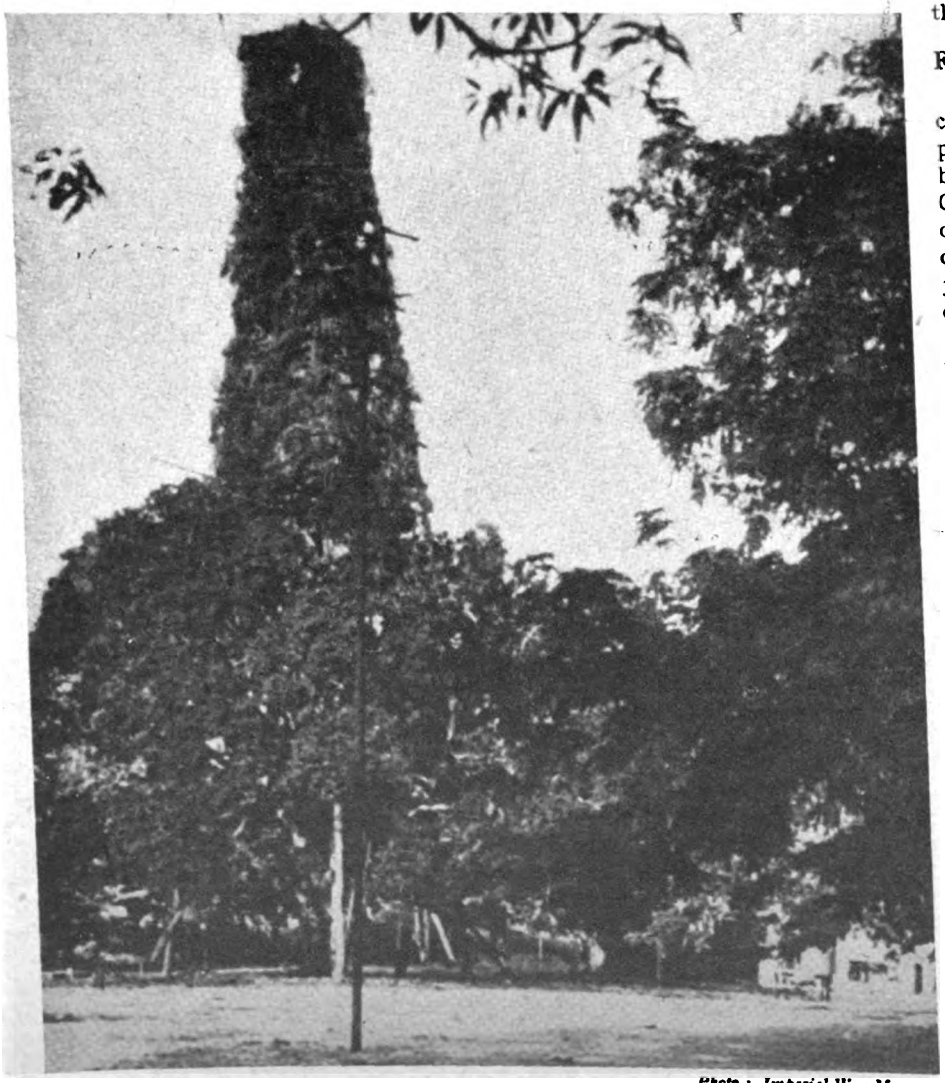

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

IN DARKEST AFRICA

Is Africa so dark that they had to build an observation post as high as this one before they could see anything? How long would this tremendous column, like a factory chimney about to bear young, have lasted against the artillery of the Western Front? The photograph is an eloquent indication of the very subordinate part played by guns—and aeroplanes—in the tropical African campaigns.

French and Belgian Troops

The French could similarly furnish contingents from their West African possessions, while some assistance could be expected from the Belgians in the Congo. At the commencement of operations, the British and French could put into the field, all told, about 3,000 native troops apiece for overseas operations.[1]

Very early in the course of the War, the two Allied Governments had decided upon the seizure of Germany's West African colonies, Togoland and the Cameroons. Togoland gave little trouble, surrendering unconditionally on the night of the 24th/25th August. The importance of the colony to Germany was confined chiefly to the existence of a powerful wireless station at Kamina, which was eventually blown up by the Germans.

The campaign was a very short one—so short that it has failed perhaps to attract the attention it deserves. But it is remarkable for the effective co-operation between the French and British local forces on the spot; for a smart engagement in which the casualties of the Allies amounted to 17 per cent. of their strength; for a magnificent march by a French column from Upper Senegal of 310 miles in 20 days during the height of the rainy season; and for the very proper refusal of the senior British officer—Lieut.-Colonel Bryant, of the Gold Coast Regiment—to have the movements of his troops dictated by telegram from the Colonial Office in London.

The conquest of the Cameroons

[1] Brig.-General E. H. Gorges, *The Great War in West Africa*, pp. 93–4.

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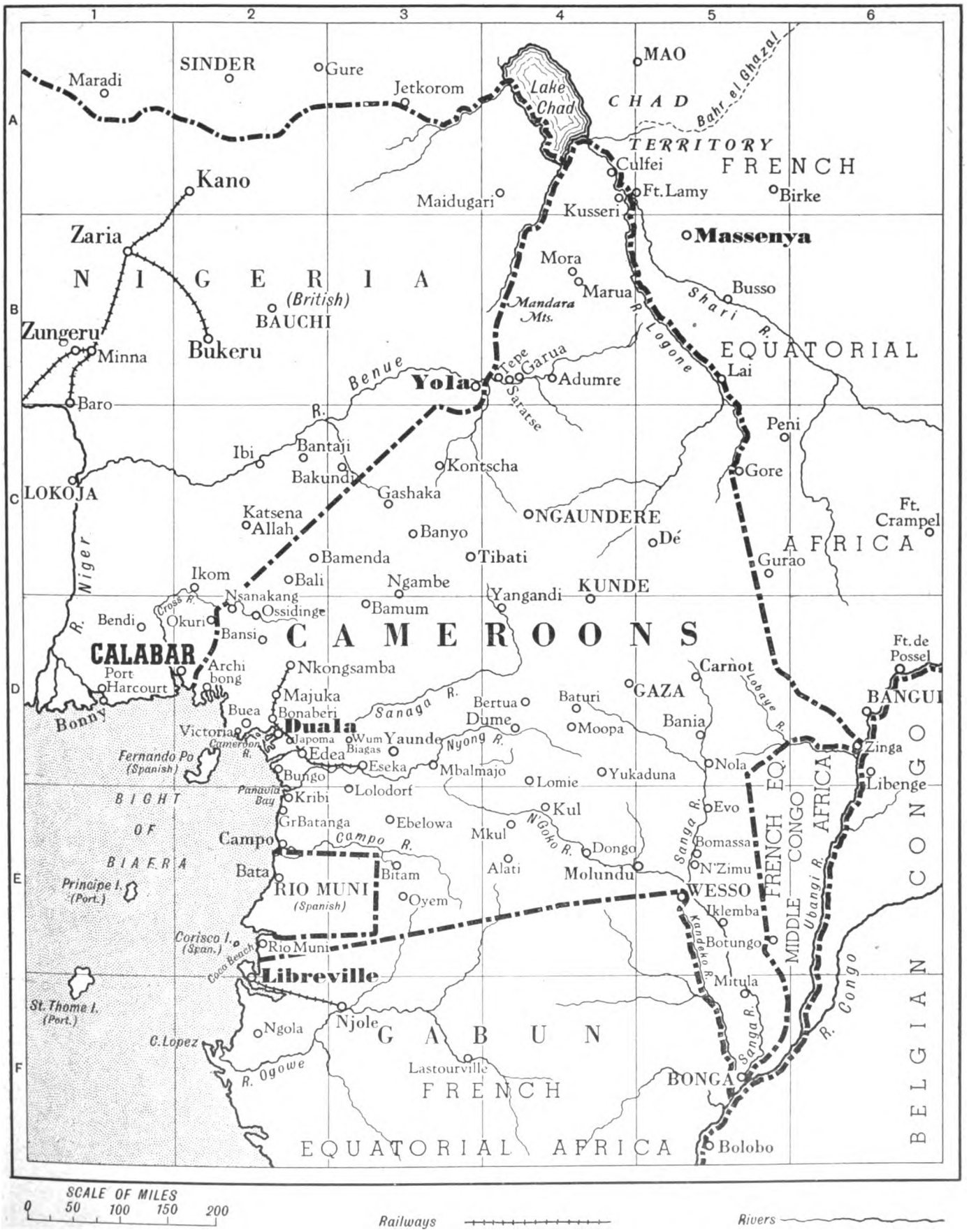

THE GERMAN CAMEROONS AND SURROUNDING TERRITORIES AT THE OUTSET OF THE GREAT WAR

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Photo: A. P., Paris.

DISINTEGRATION AT YTRES

Ytres is another village on the Péronne—Bertincourt road, 5 km. north of Manancourt. Bertincourt itself lies 3 km. to the north, and Bapaume 11 km. to the north-west. First entered by German troops during the latter days of September, 1914, Ytres remained in hostile keeping until the 1917 withdrawal. The above illustration shows its condition during the months following the enemy's departure.

would obviously be a much bigger affair, for the territory to be annexed was by no means small. Its greatest length extended to 1,000 miles, and in its widest part it was about 600 miles broad. Furthermore, most of the country was very difficult for an invader. From the coast inland for about 150 miles stretched a belt of the typical monotonous and almost impenetrable West African forest, fringed on the seaward side by an area of mangrove swamps containing hundreds—indeed, thousands—of creeks.

In a country of this kind communications were naturally poor; and although inland, in the region of higher ground, conditions were healthy enough, the low-lying belt was a region where dysentery and malaria were certain to be experienced.

Cameroons Railways

There were two lines of railway, the Midland and the Northern, the former running from the capital Duala in a direction slightly south of east to Eseka. The Northern Railway started from Bonaberi, on the bank of the River Wuri opposite to Duala, and led mainly northward to the neighbourhood of Bare. In the case of either railroad the distance from terminus to railhead was about 75 miles. In addition to these two main lines there was a shorter light railway, running from the coast at Victoria, on Amban Bay, to Mpundu.

Although the British and French Governments had quickly reached agreement as regards the desirability of seizing the colonies, there was deadlock for a moment over the question of the military command of the Expeditionary Force to be employed in the Cameroons. The operations were to be both naval and military. For the naval part the British were alone able to spare ships (although very few of them), and the naval command would therefore naturally fall to a British naval officer. In these circumstances the French not unnaturally desired that the command of the military portion of the operations should be invested in a French soldier.

On the other hand, the British Government was particularly anxious to make use of the services of General Dobell, an experienced officer with a fine record. For some years Dobell had been Inspector-General of the West African Frontier Force, and in that capacity had gained a knowledge of West African conditions which was certain to be of great use in a campaign in the Cameroons. After some discussion the French Government gave way with a good grace—influenced in their decision, perhaps, by the fact that General Dobell was a member of a well-known French-Canadian family.

The General was in England at the time, and the conferences with the Committee of Imperial Defence, and the preparations necessary for the expedition, delayed his departure until the end

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of August. Meanwhile, military and naval operations of a preliminary character had been set in motion. Hostilities opened on August 6th with the successful entrance of small French forces into the south-east corner of the Cameroons. Simultaneously in the north—some 1,000 miles away—a small combined Franco-British effort was being made against the German fort at Mora. The fort, however, held out—and was indeed to remain untaken until the end of the campaign.

A German Victory

Elsewhere along the Nigerian frontier two invading columns of Waffs met with ill-success, one of them being surprised and very roughly handled on September 6th by a German force, which inflicted 168 casualties. These operations were, however, but a mere overture to the combined invasion of the Cameroons upon which the curtain was soon to rise.

The main idea at the time was that General Dobell, with his staff, should sail from England in a large vessel suitable for use as a transport, hospital ship, and headquarters. Meanwhile, the various British colonies and protectorates on the West Coast would be preparing their contingents for embarkation, and the general would stop at each territory—Gambia, Sierra Leone, Gold Coast, Togoland, and Nigeria—in turn, picking up the troops and stores which were to be embarked. The Colonial Office had ordered the Nigerian authorities to arrange specially for the provision of a plentiful supply of surf-boats suitable for landing troops on open beaches.

It may here be noted that the peculiar conditions of West African warfare, which render any form of animal transport in the coast zone absolutely out of the question, involve the use of a small army of native carriers. These carriers exceed the number of fighting men, approximately three being required for every two combatants ; and as porters, no less than soldiers, require food, water, and medical attention, the transport problem is obviously a peculiarly serious one.

On August 31st, 1914, General Dobell left Liverpool in the Elder-Dempster liner *Appam*, escorted by a British cruiser. Meanwhile, the Navy had not been idle. On August 29th the cruiser *Cumberland* and the little gunboat *Dwarf* were at Lagos, and there Captain Fuller of the former vessel was informed of the General's imminent departure from Liverpool.

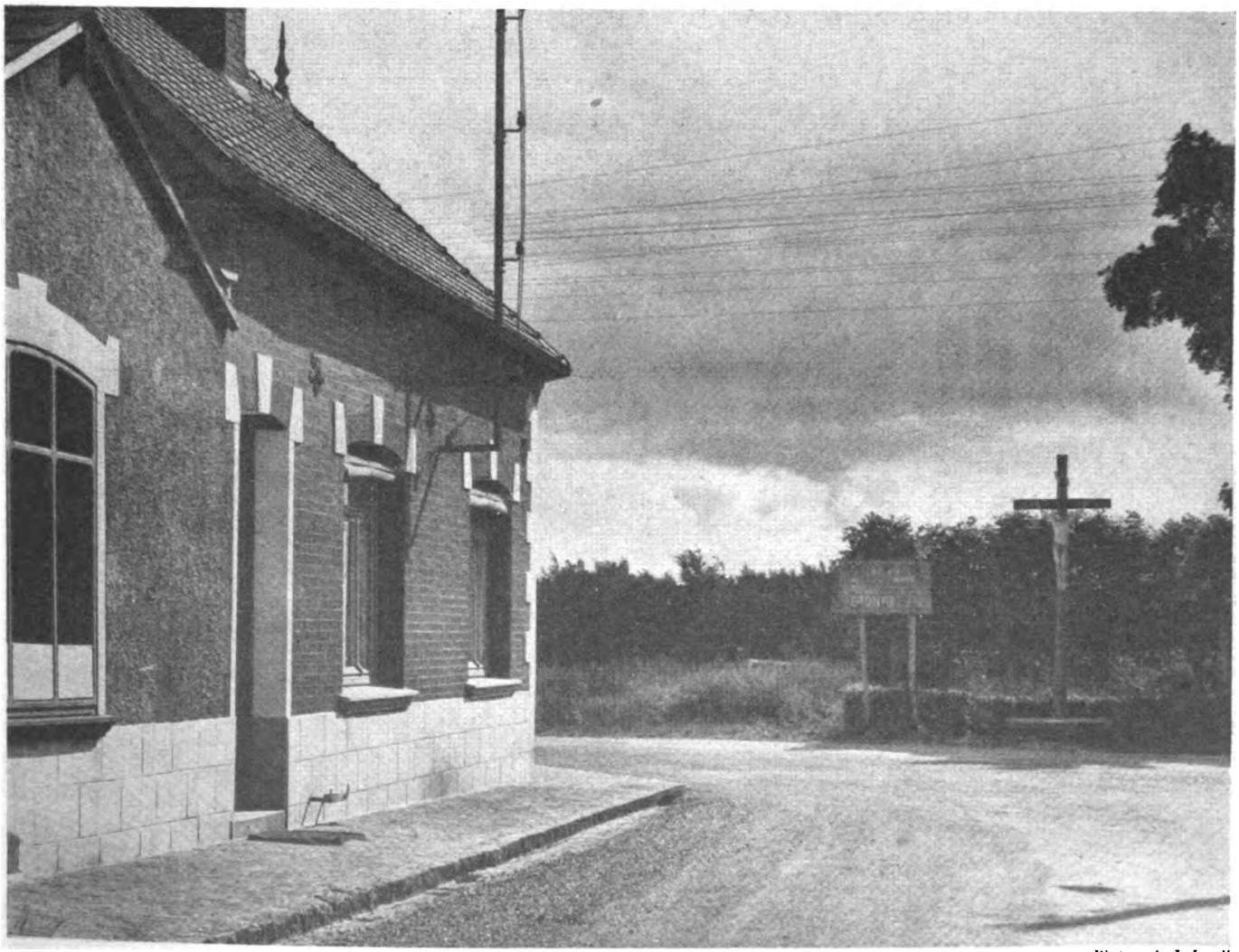

Photo : A. J. Insall.

THE CALVARY AT THE CORNER

On March 23rd, 1918, Ytres lay just within the very pronounced bulge in our line introduced by the bunching of the divisions of the V Corps brought about by German pinching movements as they retired from the former Flesquières Salient. On the 24th, however, this dangerous convexity was successfully eliminated with little loss, although for a time the 63rd Division troops covering Ytres, where there were large R.E. and ammunition dumps, found themselves sandwiched between the oncoming enemy and a mass of blazing stores and exploding shells.

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He was also requested to co-operate with Dobell on his arrival, and, until then, to gain as much intelligence as possible, and to make preparations for a direct attack on Duala with light-draught vessels, for which a flotilla of small craft belonging to the Nigerian Marine would be at his disposal.

The Cameroon Estuary

The town of Duala lies at the head of the Cameroon Estuary, which is entered between Cape Cameroon and Suelaba Point, two headlands some five miles apart, and with a bar some seven miles out to sea. Navigation from the entrance to the town was a difficult matter, owing to the shoals and sand-banks among which the navigable channel had to be carefully buoyed; for naturally the Germans had removed all buoys and marks as soon as British naval units were known to be likely to approach. Another feature of the Cameroon Estuary is the maze of creeks and rivers on both sides of it—and particularly to the west—the use of which by small craft demands a thorough local knowledge.

To Captain Fuller it seemed advisable to endeavour to form a preliminary naval base at Victoria, on Ambas Bay, some 25 miles west of the Cameroon Estuary. On the 3rd September the *Dwarf* was sent in to deliver an ultimatum to the effect that if any opposition were made to the occupation of Victoria, the town would be bombarded. A reply was received stating that, as no troops were available for the defence of the place, no opposition could be made.

Consequently a naval contingent was landed; but next morning there was a surprise. The Germans, during the night, had managed to bring up, through the maze of creeks on the west side of the Cameroon Estuary, some native soldiers from Duala; and now another ultimatum was delivered—this time by the Germans. It was found necessary to withdraw the blue-jackets; and a valuable lesson had been learnt as to the importance of remembering that, with local pilots, the creeks might be utilised for the conveyance of troops of *both* sides.

The sailors, however, got some of their own back by demolishing store sheds with shell-fire, and later by cutting adrift some enemy lighters. The *Cumberland* and *Dwarf* were now reinforced by the first contingent of the Nigerian flotilla of small craft, and pre-

THIS PLACE MUST HAVE BEEN SHELLED *Photo: Imperial War Museum.*

Someone evidently dropped more than a brick to cause so much disaster to this brickworks at Montauban, between Mametz and Guillemont. Situated 9 km. due east of Albert, Montauban until July, 1916, lay within the German lines at the south-eastern end of the Fricourt Salient, and was among the objectives for the attack of July 1st. It was then successfully captured by the 30th Division: the brickworks themselves, which lie some 500 yards beyond the village, being cleverly taken in a separate and subsequent operation by No. 4 Coy. of the 20th King's Liverpool Regt.

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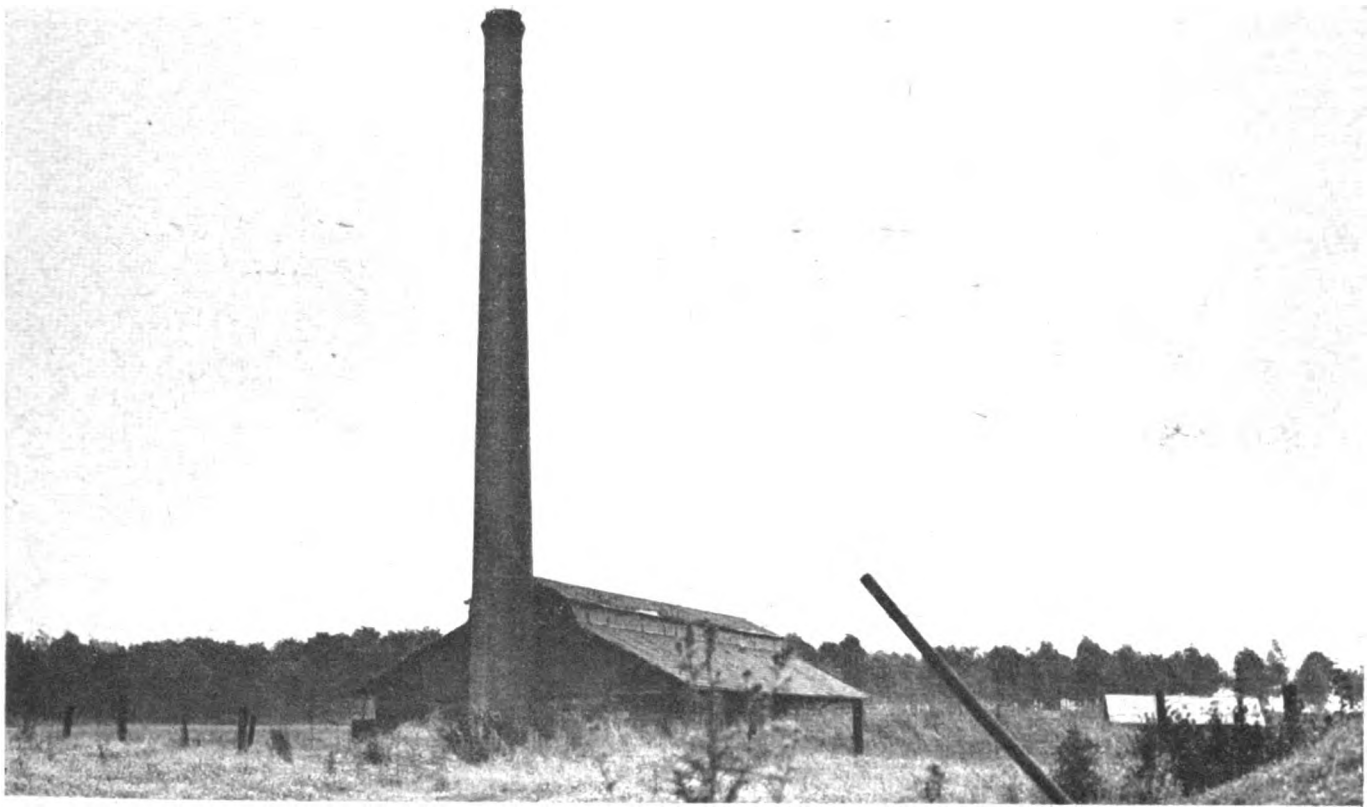

Photo: A. J. Insall.

NO LONGER AN O.P.

The main reason for pushing on from Montauban to the brickworks thereof on July 1st, 1916, was to deprive the enemy of the important O.P. which he had established in the chimney stack. Nine months later the stack had vanished into history, and on March 24th, 1918, when Brigadier-General Legard endeavoured to fill the gap between the VII and V Corps by forming round Montauban a defensive flank with his composite cavalry force, the brickworks were just one heap of ruins among many. The left wing of the VII Corps remained on the line Curlu—Montauban until the following day.

parations were at once made for sweeping the Cameroon Estuary clear of mines and other obstructions. So expeditiously was the work carried out that, early in the morning of the 10th September, the *Cumberland* was able to enter the estuary, and thus the first step in establishing a secure base had been achieved.

Dobell Collects his Men

Meanwhile, General Dobell, who with his staff had sailed from Liverpool on August 31st, had arrived at his first port of call, Bathurst, in Gambia. Here he embarked a company of Waffs, and then proceeded to Sierra Leone, taking on board a further draft of British West African troops, and meeting the French contingent from Dakar in five transports, escorted by a French cruiser.

So he continued along the coastline, first to the Gold Coast, which was reached on September 16th, and thence to Lagos on the Nigerian shore. The British portion of the expedition left for Duala on September 20th, while the French, which had proceeded independently from Sierra Leone, called at Lagos on the 18th and from there proceeded to the Calabar River to take in supplies of food and water.

The Anglo-French Expeditionary Force, which was now about to undertake the task of wresting the Cameroons from Germany, possessed a total combatant strength of some 4,250 rifles and 16 guns, of which the British contingent furnished rather more than half. The carriers exceeded the number of fighting men, a feature of West African warfare to which reference has already been made.

The British rank-and-file were entirely African, but the French had a company of white men, more than 150 strong. The British native companies were much weaker in strength than the French, and included a lower proportion of European ranks, the higher number of French N.C.O.'s being especially noticeable. There was, too, a certain difference in transport, in that the French guns and ammunition were carried on mules; but in the frequent embarkations and landings during the early stages of the operations this system proved inferior to the British one of gun and ammunition carriers.[1]

The officer commanding the British contingent in this Allied force was Colonel E. H. Gorges, D.S.O., of the Manchester Regiment, and at the time commandant of the West African Regiment.

[1] *Official History: Togoland and the Cameroons*, p. 122.

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Photo : Imperial War Museum.

THE PORT OF DUALA

Duala, capital of the German Cameroons, military H.Q., and principal place of residence of merchants and missionaries, consists in reality of a group of native towns at the head of the Cameroon Estuary. In 1914 the population was about 30,000 natives and 300 Europeans, the latter mostly Germans. The European quarter is well planned and far from primitive, with fine streets and buildings, and such amenities as modern sanitation.

On his way out General Dobell had been informed of the set-backs, both British and French, already referred to in this chapter. It was advisable, therefore, to bring about a quick and decisive action ; and immediately on his arrival at the base, now established at the mouth of the Cameroon Estuary, he received the reports of Captain Fuller, of the *Cumberland*, as to the work done by the Navy in clearing a passage up the estuary towards Duala.

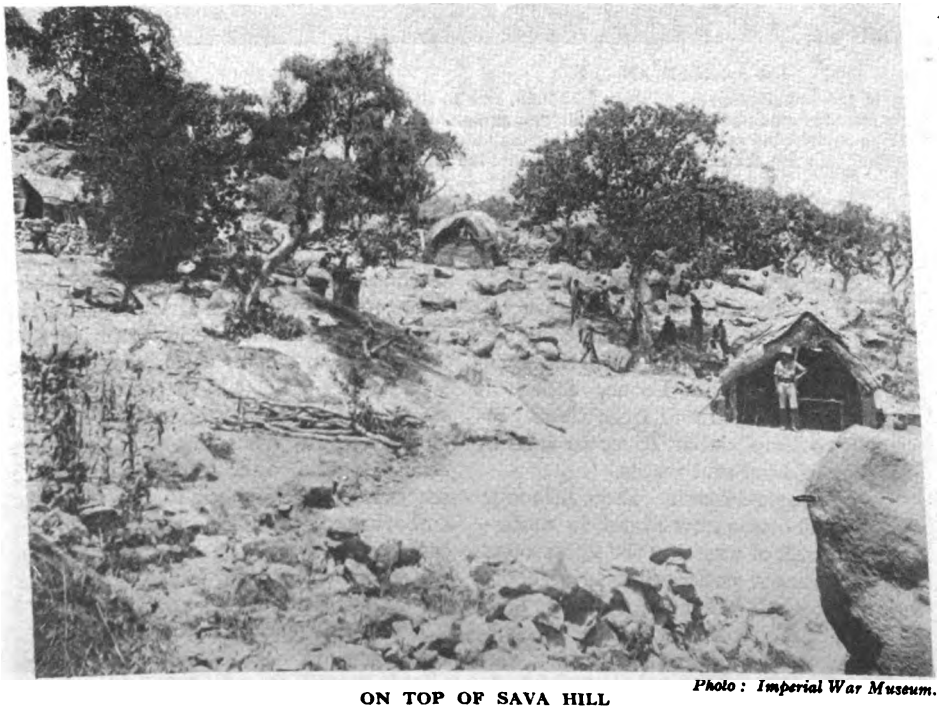

Photo : Imperial War Museum.

ON TOP OF SAVA HILL

Sava is four miles from Mora—a negligible distance in Africa—at the extreme north of the colony, and during the campaign formed the base of Brigadier-General Cunliffe's force, with which he hoped to reduce the German stronghold. In point of fact Mora, perched on an impregnable height, proved too much for him, its tiny garrison of 11 Germans and 145 natives holding out for a time even after the whole of the rest of the colony had fallen.

Call to Surrender

It was then arranged that on the 25th the *Challenger*[1] should pass through the wreck barrage which the Germans had made, and endeavour to reach a point about 5,000 yards from the town. General Dobell had decided to call upon the Germans to surrender their capital ; and, if they did not do so, to threaten their line of retreat up the Midland Railway by landing a force in one of the creeks on the east side of the estuary. This threat, and the certainty of bombardment from the *Challenger's* guns, would, it was believed, compel the Germans to bow to the inevitable.

It was possible for General Dobell to act thus swiftly owing to the sterling work that had been carried out by the Navy prior to his arrival. By the evening of the 22nd September, the result of the naval operations, conducted under the orders of Captain Fuller, was that the whole system of inland waterways had been thoroughly reconnoitred, and surveys made of those channels likely to be useful in the forthcoming landing of troops ; the only armed vessel of any importance had been destroyed ; numerous armed launches had been sunk or captured with their crews ; a secure base had been established for the flotilla, transport, and ships-of-war ; a nineteen-foot channel had been cleared and buoyed to within 5,000 yards of Duala ; direct communication had been established by cable with London ; all available ships' guns had been mounted on the flotilla ; and a thorough appreciation of the situation had been made and despatched to Lagos to the General Officer Commanding the Expeditionary Force.[2]

The formal ultimatum was sent to the German Governor, informing him of the intention of the Allies to bombard Duala unless he should surrender the town. To this message a " totally irrelevant reply " was received. Consequently the *Challenger* was ordered to bombard Duala at dawn on the 26th, and preparations were at once made for the turning movement by the Dibamba River.

[1] The *Challenger* had taken over the escorting of the *Appam* at the Canaries.

[2] *Official History : Naval Operations*, Chapter XX. *Official History : Military Operations*, Chapter III *passim*. *Blackwood's Magazine*, March, 1915 : " Doing her Bit." Gorges, *op. cit.*, p. 130.

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Germans Destroy the Radio

This latter operation proved unsuccessful owing to the opposition encountered, and to the fact that the landing-place proved entirely unsuitable. In accordance with orders issued at 3.30 p.m., the force detailed had to be withdrawn. The *Challenger*, however, had put some shells into Duala early in the morning, but, not wishing to damage the town unnecessarily, had ceased firing until the result of the Dibamba River diversion should become known.

Further operations were planned for the 27th, but at half-past nine in the morning loud explosions were heard. The great wireless mast was seen to fall. A white flag was hoisted over Government House. Shortly afterwards a German representative came off to surrender Duala and the surrounding area.

General Dobell at once ordered up some of his transports from the mouth of the estuary, but there was not time for them to arrive before dark. He himself, therefore, with Captain Fuller and the French commander, landed at the capital with an escort of 50 marines, at three o'clock.

The Germans had blown up the magazine and wireless station; they had destroyed all the telegraph and telephone instruments and cut all the wires; and they had removed most of the armament and considerable quantities of stores and provisions. On the other hand, the booty was considerable, 9 large liners; 40 or 50 lighters; numerous motor-boats; steam-launches; a floating dock; a shallow-draught stern-wheel gunboat; a battery of field guns; a large quantity of railway and dock-yard material; as well as the Governor's steam yacht, which was found stuck in the mud.

Just as had been the case with the campaign in "German South-West," the capture of a port did not imply any reduction in the enemy's armed forces—which simply withdrew into the interior to fight on a later day—and demanded from the victors a number of operations to gain more elbow-room. General Dobell's first tasks were the clearance of the swampy, creek-intersected areas surrounding the Cameroon Estuary; the capture of the railway bridge at Yapoma, some ten miles east of Duala on the Midland Railway; a reconnaissance to the north up the Wuri River; and the making good of the town of Maka, a few miles out of Duala on the Northern Railway.

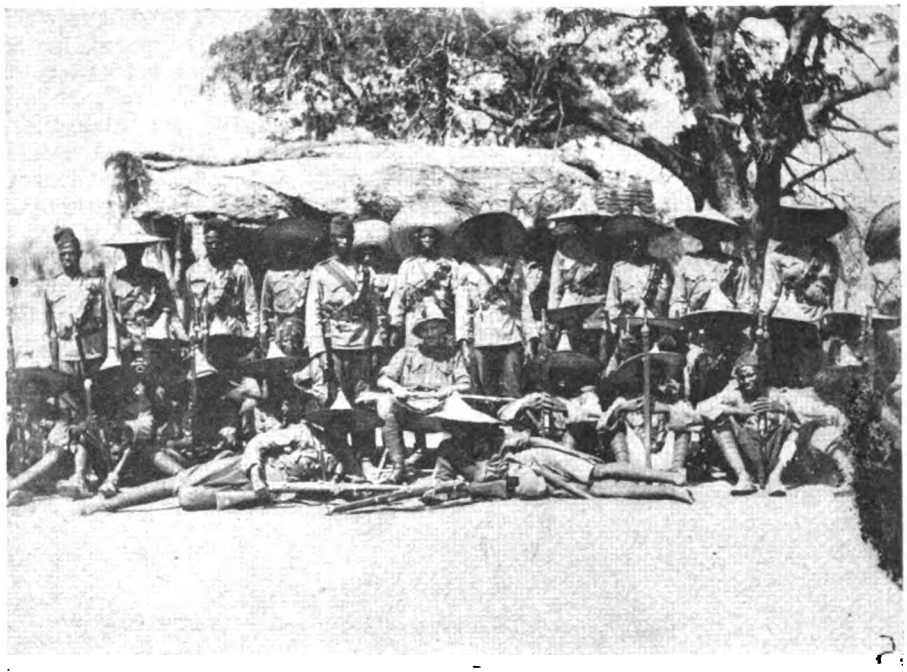

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

AT SAVA IN 1914

Native soldiers under their British officer, Lieutenant Lane, at Sava during 1914. Lieutenant Lane was at this time serving with the Mounted Infantry Battalion of the Nigeria Regiment. The troops which made the several extremely gallant, if unsuccessful, assaults on Mora, consisted of four infantry companies, one mounted infantry company, and two mountain guns—British; and two infantry companies and one heavy gun—French.

Half the Battle Won

When these objectives had been secured, then the conquered zone might be further extended, and a decision arrived at as to what the next step should be. The actual possession of the whole of the Cameroons, although important, was on the whole secondary

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

ON THE NORTHERN RAILWAY

This line, as a reference to the map will show, ran in a northerly direction from Bonaberi to a settlement named Nkongsamba. Bonaberi is a suburb of Duala on the northern side of the River Wuri, one of several streams which enter the Estuary. There has been relatively little railway development since the Armistice, but the northern line has been nearly doubled, and the midland extended to 30 miles beyond Yaunde.

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to the seizure of the port of Duala, and the destruction of the wireless station, both of which aims had now been achieved.

Even in mere local operations the difficulties would be very great. The denseness of the forest was the dominating factor. It absolutely restricted movement to difficult waterways or narrow paths. Off the paths numerous quagmires and hidden trunks of fallen trees added to the slowness of progress, which was possible at all only with the constant use of axe or machete.

The forest limited the strength of an advancing column, and rendered the enemy invisible until the last moment, or until, as usually happened, he disclosed his presence by a sudden burst of heavy fire at a few yards' range. Even then it concealed his dispositions, accentuated the difficulty of turning movements, and made the maintenance of intercommunication and proper direction extraordinarily hard.

The usual result was that, after groping forward in search of the enemy, an advancing force would suddenly find itself under fire at point-blank range in a situation which was extremely difficult and afforded little opportunity of ascertaining the hostile strength. In this blind warfare officers and men had consequently to maintain an attitude of constant watchfulness and self-control which imposed a heavy strain on nerves already weakened by the trying climate.[1]

The attack upon the railway bridge at Yapome—which had been broken by the Germans—was entrusted to the French contingent, but our Allies were unable to force the passage of the wide and deep river. General Dobell therefore despatched two naval guns, in trucks, along the railway, and also sent a detachment of Marines and sappers up the Dibamba River to Pitti, hoping to outflank the Germans and to cut the railway behind them. This effort, however, failed, the bush being so dense and swampy and the enemy so well concealed that no progress could be made.

"NEPTUNE'S FOUNTAIN" *Photo: G. T. Watson.*

This ornate fountain on the south-eastern side of Arras must be remembered by many a War veteran. It is somewhat surprising that such a relic of the Austro-Spanish Netherlands has survived, for in the opinion of qualified observers Arras was, at the end of the War, second only to Rheims in tragic dilapidation.

A French Triumph

Another attempt from Pitti three days later, on October 5th—this time by French native troops—again resulted in failure. But success was to crown the next effort. At 5 a.m. on October 6th, under cover of fire from French and British guns, the French native infantry started climbing across the bridge, moving with great coolness and courage in face of a heavy fusillade. By six o'clock the bridge had been won. In one place the attackers had to cross by means of a single rope-ladder. In this gallant piece of work the attackers incurred only 14 casualties—a surprisingly small total in the circumstances.

Elsewhere, General Dobell increased his elbow-room without much difficulty. Naval reconnaissance work was pushed vigorously, and the River Wuri was explored up to the vicinity of Yabasi, where German entrenchments—which were to give a good deal of trouble—were located. Simultaneously, a military force working up the Northern Railway gained possession of Susa. These operations were carried out in heavy rain which, falling continuously day and night, not only rendered many of the tracks impassable, but kept all ranks permanently wet through.

The information received by the Allies showed that there were now two main concentrations of enemy strength in the coastal region near Duala: one at Yabasi, up the Wuri River to the north, and the other at Edea, to the east—both about 35 miles from the capital. It was considered advisable to drive back or destroy both these forces. A

[1] *Official History*, p. 137.

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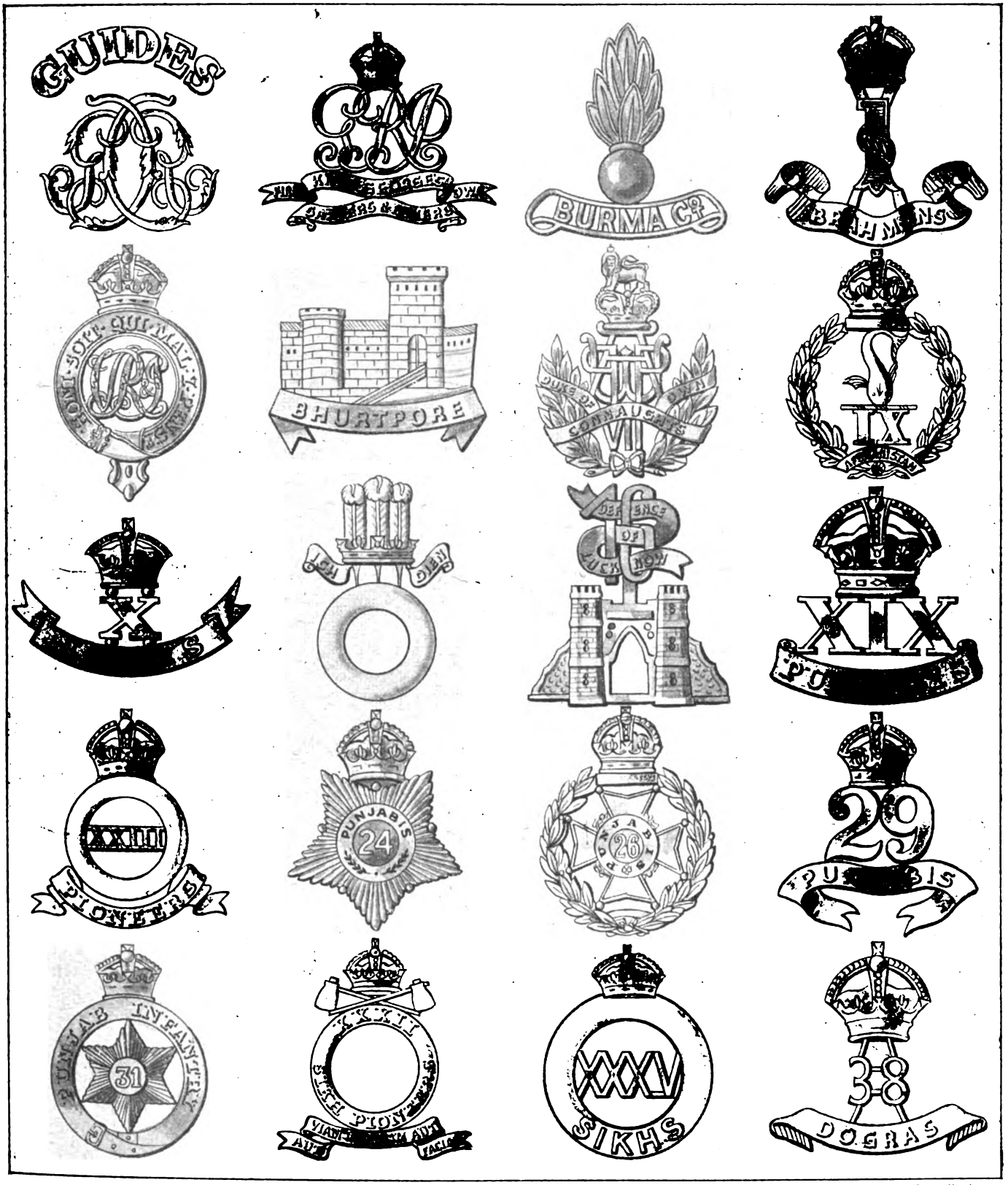

Specially drawn.

OVERSEAS BADGES—TENTH SERIES

Indian badges once more fill the bill—as, indeed, they will continue to do until the close, now approaching, of this extensive series. In the usual order the above badges represent: 1—Queen Victoria's Own Corps of Guides (Frontier Force). 2—1st King George's Own Sappers and Miners. 3—Burma Company, 2nd Queen Victoria's Own Sappers and Miners. 4—1st Brahmans. 5—2nd Queen Victoria's Own Rajput Light Infantry. 6—3rd Brahmans. 7—7th (Duke of Connaught's Own Rajput) Bengal Infantry. 8—9th Bhopal Infantry. 9—10th Jats. 10—14th King's Own Ferozepore Sikhs. 11—16th Rajputs (The Lucknow Regiment). 12—19th Punjabis. 13—23rd Sikh Pioneers. 14—24th Punjabis. 15—26th Punjabis. 16—29th Punjabis. 17—31st Punjabis. 18—32nd Sikh Pioneers. 19—35th Sikhs. 20—38th Dogras.

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Photo: A. J. Insall.

A GLIMPSE OF LOUVERVAL CEMETERY

Louverval Cemetery and Memorial are situated at Doignies, 12 km. east-north-east of Bapaume, and just south of the Bapaume—Cambrai road. The cemetery is small, containing only 118 United Kingdom, 4 Australian, and 2 New Zealand dead; but the memorial commemorates 7,048 missing who fell during the Battle of Cambrai, November—December, 1917, in the tank attack, the capture of Bourlon Wood, and the German counter-attack.

small mixed naval and military detachment was sent up the Wuri, the flotilla consisting of launches, tugs, lighters, and even a dredger. The latter and one of the lighters carried a 6-inch gun apiece, and were promptly christened *Iron Duke* and *Dreadnought*.

A landing was effected on the right bank about 9 a.m. on October 7th, and an advance, protected by the armed flotilla, made through dense elephant grass. The German position proved, however, to be very strong, and when Colonel Gorges—who was in command—went forward about two o'clock, he found the troops suffering from the terrific heat and in some cases hesitating to follow their officers against the constant bursts of German machine-gun fire. Even the sailors, who formed the reserve, were completely exhausted after dragging a 12-pounder gun over a mud-track and uphill into position.

Gorges had no option but to call off the attack, and the expedition returned to Duala. But a second venture, a few days later, in which the experience gained in the first effort was put to good account, proved successful, and on October 16th the force returned to Duala, leaving a Nigerian battalion as a garrison in Yabasi.[1]

Occupation of Edea

The scheme of operations against Edea provided for two water-borne forces to attack the town from the south, gaining touch as they did so. The rivers up which the two wings of the expedition would move were the Nyong and the Sanaga, and the main military force was to be supplied by the French. This operation was a brilliant success, Edea being occupied by October 26th. It was marred by a tragic incident—the drowning of two British naval officers and a French staff officer[2] by the capsizing of a boat in the surf at the entrance to the Nyong. The Senior Naval Officer, Captain Fuller, was also in the boat, and was rescued in an exhausted condition. He was awarded the Royal Humane Society's medal for his gallant attempt to save his brother officers, and for saving two of the native crew.

The gaining of elbow-room was also proceeding on the western side of the Cameroon Estuary. By the middle of November the hill station of Buea, a dozen miles north of Victoria, was occupied, and by the end of 1914 the whole of the Northern Railway was in the Allies' hands. An advance had even been made to Chang, which was some 150 miles from the coast; but it was not considered advisable for the moment to maintain an isolated post, 60 miles from the railhead, and so this column was withdrawn to Bare.

German headquarters were now at Yaunde. The position was well chosen, for it was on the high—and healthy—tableland clear of the coastal forest zone, and from it the German commander could maintain communication with the German posts in the north and east of the colony.

Hitherto the narrative of the Cameroons campaign has been confined to operations in the immediate vicinity of Duala, and it has therefore been possible to deal with the fighting in some detail. From now onwards such procedure will be inadvisable—and, indeed, impossible within the necessarily limited space now available for the remainder of the campaign.

1 Gorges, *op. cit.*, Chapter VIII.

2 Captain Child (Director of the Nigeria Marine), Commdr. Gray, R.N.R., and Captain Franqueville. The steamboat in which these officers were travelling broke down outside the bar, and the party transhipped to a whaler, in tow. But the whaler was unsuitable for the work in such a sea and was soon capsized by a heavy roller.

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Tiny Forces in a Huge Area

The total forces of both sides were microscopic in comparison with the millions of armed men battling in Europe; immense distances divided them; nothing approaching a real battle—as the term had come to be known in the major theatres of the War—was ever fought. It is consequently expedient to look at the wood as a whole, and not to try to distinguish the myriad of trees of which it was composed.

A general view of the state of affairs at the opening of the year 1915 is the first essential, and it will help a great deal if cumbrous, and hitherto unknown, West African place-names be omitted as much as possible. The reader will by now be familiar with Duala and its position on the map, and with other points in the coastal zone.

The three most important enemy strongholds, from now onward, will be Yaunde, some 160 miles inland, almost due east of Duala; Mora, far up in the apex of the triangle in the north; and Garua, some 150 miles lower down, near the Cameroons-Nigeria frontier (with Yola, in Nigeria, opposite it, 70 miles off). The reader is strongly advised to locate these four places on the map before reading farther. And, while he is about it, let him just glance at Dume and Lomie, each roughly between 140 and 150 miles from Yaunde, north-east and south-east respectively.

By the beginning of 1915 it was fairly obvious that the capture of Yaunde would be the next step; and, theoretically at least, the attempt was facilitated by the fact that the attack could be carried out by the convergence of columns from the west, north, and south. The first (western) assault could be made by the troops under General Dobell's own command in the coastal zone round Duala; the advance from the north could be made by units from Nigeria under Colonel Cunliffe, who, towards the end of 1914, had been sent from Duala by sea and river to Yola, to conduct the operations in that quarter; and from the extreme south-east of the colony a French force from French Equatorial Africa, uniting with a small column from the Belgian Congo, might take Yaunde in reverse.

Difficulties of Co-operation

All this looks easy enough on paper. But if the scale of the map be consulted, the nature of the terrain be borne in mind, and such climatic obstacles as tropical rain be remembered, it will be realised that accurate co-operation would, to say the least of it, be extremely difficult.

Photo: L. W. Dawson.

TO THE 41ST DIVISION

A memorial to those men of the 41st Division who fell during the course of the Four Years. The monument stands at Flers, 13 km. east-north-east of Albert, and commemorates soldiers from Durham, Hampshire, Surrey, Kent, Middlesex, and other parts of England. This New Army division went to France in the early summer of 1916, and was later among the formations sent to Italy. It afterwards returned to the Western Front, remaining there until the end.

However, before we deal with this attempt against Yaunde, which did not begin until the end of April, let us briefly survey some of the outstanding incidents which took place in the first three months of 1915.

Casualties and sickness had taken their toll of General Dobell's forces, and the West African authorities stated that they were unable to supply further reinforcements. (It should be mentioned here that the campaign was still an affair of the Colonial Office, the War Office not yet having assumed control.) Further, the necessary posts on the lines of communication in the occupied zone made a further inroad upon Dobell's resources.

In these circumstances, he was for the moment not able to undertake any serious offensive. On the Midland Railway the French contingent was heavily attacked, the garrison of Edea bearing the brunt of a determined effort by the Germans. The French native troops, excellently commanded by their European officer, put up a fine fight, and, with very small loss to themselves, drove off the attackers, who left on the field 23 dead Europeans and 190 native soldiers

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killed or wounded. This was hot fighting, and it is significant that it was the first and last occasion on which the Germans attempted an operation of this nature on so comparatively large a scale.

The early days of February were marked by great enemy activity in the neighbourhood of the railhead of the Northern Railway. The balance of success was with the enemy. On the 3rd of the month nearly 120 native soldiers on the British side were killed, wounded, or reported missing; and on March 4th an attack made by our troops resulted in failure, and the O.C. Sierra Leone Battalion and a staff officer were killed. The losses in these engagements were, however, in some sense offset by the arrival of useful reinforcements from the French and British West African colonies.

Extreme North and Extreme South

Up in the north things were getting under way. Towards the end of January Colonel Cunliffe arrived at Duala for a conference, and, as a result, a naval field gun was sent by sea and up the Niger and Benni rivers to Yola. Cunliffe arrived back there on March 15th, and decided to concentrate as large a force as he could collect for an advance across the frontier, with the German fort at Garua as his first objective.

As for the south, from the end of December, 1914, the French under General Aymerich, together with the Belgians, had begun to make their presence felt, but were still some 400 miles away from Dobell at Duala. Such was, in general terms, the state of affairs in the Cameroons when on March 12th, 1915, a mission from French Equatorial Africa arrived at Duala.

At the head of this mission was Monsieur Fourneau, the Lieutenant-Governor of Middle Congo; and the object was to invite the co-operation of General Dobell in an immediate advance, in conjunction with the troops under General Aymerich from the south-east and east, against Yaunde. Since the occupation of Duala, the temporary seat of the administration of the Cameroons had been transferred to that place. General Dobell fully realised the political and strategic importance of Yaunde, but demurred against embarking on such an operation at that moment.

It was late in the season, and the rains were already beginning; further, the troops at Dobell's disposal were really insufficient to secure success unless General Aymerich could afford co-operation in the immediate vicinity of Yaunde; and, owing to the difficulties of communication, he (Dobell) feared that such co-operation would be difficult to achieve.

However, realising the great advantages that would ensue from the occupation of Yaunde, he consented to co-operate with all his available strength, and April 20th was fixed as the date for the advance, which was subsequently postponed until May 1st.

This advance to Yaunde was to be made in the first place by two columns—a British and a French—in position on the perimeter of the occupied zone: these columns to move forward and unite at a selected spot rather more than half-way between Duala and the objective. The British contingent, under Lieutenant-Colonel Heywood, moved off on May 1st, and arrived at the rendezvous [1] on May 4th—not without having experienced some sharp fighting, which had caused serious losses amongst the European officers.

[1] Wum Biagas, on the River Kele, about 50 miles due west of Yaunde.

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

BLOCKHOUSE AND TRENCHES

A typical temporary blockhouse, with defensive trenches round it, protecting one of the lengthy lines of communication which were an unavoidable feature of Cameroons warfare. Note the strands of wire, hung with tin cans, in the foreground, the defensive trenches beyond, and the ugly-looking palisade below the actual walls. Apropos of communications, the Cameroon natives are experts in the uncanny art of the "talking drum," by means of which long messages are transmitted in code from village to village over enormous distances, with an accuracy which equals, and a speed which sometimes surpasses, that of our telegraph system.

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A Frenchman in Command

The French column, which was farther south and had likewise some opposition to contend with, duly joined up at the rendezvous, and the command of the united force was now assumed by Colonel Mayer, the officer in charge of the French contingent.

Before General Dobell could congratulate himself on the concentration of the two wings of his attack, he had cause to regret having yielded to the facile optimism of the French Military Mission in March. On May 11th a despatch was received from the Governor-General of French Equatorial Africa. In it the sender regretted that the advance of General Aymerich had not been "as rapid as expected" and that, as neither Dume or Lomie had as yet been captured, no definite date could be given for the advance from those places.

Put in plain soldier talk, the promised co-operation from the south-east of the colony was just a "wash-out." General Dobell was now in a position of grave difficulty. To stand fast until General Aymerich should make further progress would mean that the Allied force under Colonel Mayer would be exposed to the heavy rains; and the sickness among Europeans and natives, which was already causing Dobell much anxiety, would be increased.

On the other hand, to push on at once would be to forfeit altogether the assistance expected from Aymerich's column. From the north no help could be reckoned on from Cunliffe's small force. It was a difficult problem with which the commander-in-chief was confronted.

He decided upon sending a message to Mayer ordering him to push on from the rendezvous with the utmost vigour; and accordingly the French commander led out his combined force on May 25th for the advance to Yaunde. At once it became clear that quite apart from any question of co-operation, the obstacles in the path of the undertaking had been gravely underestimated.

Hard Going and Irregular Supplies

Supply difficulties soon made themselves evident. The country was barren, and even by using all the available carriers and the few motor vehicles in his possession—there were only three of these last—Dobell found it impossible to send up sufficient supplies of food and stores. Then, the going for Mayer's column became extremely difficult. The bush was almost impenetrable. Every yard, almost, afforded a defensive position to the enemy; and at every turn of the path the advance was met by bursts of machine-gun fire.

In these circumstances progress was naturally slow. During the first two days only five miles were covered. The enemy had evidently received reinforcements, and had begun to interfere with the line of communications, which were peculiarly susceptible to attack, while the long convoys of carriers were singularly prone to panic. Dysentery began to take its toll, and before the end of the month Colonel Mayer was appealing for reinforcements.

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

THE ADVANCE TO YAUNDE

Men of the Nigerian Regiment crossing a bridge over the Mbila river, a tributary of the Sanaga, on the road to Yaunde. Situated approximately forty miles east of Edea, this thickly forested area was the scene of much hard fighting in the early days of May, 1915. The operations toward Yaunde, however, did not meet with immediate success, and it was not until January 1st, 1916, that the British force entered the town.

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Photo: A. P., Paris.

TRENCH-DIGGING IN A BACK AREA

To most British soldiers, in whatever branch of the Army they served, this scene will bring back memories of the flat, wind-swept Flanders which is dominated by the hill of Cassel. The photograph was taken at Oudezeele, a mere hamlet; and, to our troops, the precise image of many other hamlets. Here reserve, back-area trenches are being dug as a measure of "safety first." The date was June, 1918, when assurance had to be made doubly sure against Jerry breaking through west of Kemmel, which he had taken in April after his terrific push on the Lys.

Dobell scraped together what troops he could and sent them forward, besides arranging for a further reinforcement of carriers from the West African colonies. But the end came soon. By June 5th the force was still only 12 miles from its jumping-off place—12 miles' progress in 11 days! Mayer reported that any further advance was impracticable; and, as there was no further news of the column under General Aymerich, there was nothing to be done but to order the withdrawal of Mayer's column.

Even then the retirement was hardly a voluntary one, for an enemy attack upon a convoy of 500 carriers had resulted in the loss of a quantity of supplies, and the Colonel had to get away as quickly as he could. The withdrawal was continually harassed by the enemy, the rearguard being incessantly engaged.

Dobell now deemed it advisable to send forward a reinforcement of the last troops at his disposal, two companies of Waffs. These companies, after a splendid exhibition of marching in torrential rain, arrived at a most opportune moment during a heavy attack on the rearguard of the retreating force. Not till June 28th did the hostile activity cease, when the British contingent withdrew to Edea, a French garrison being left some 20 miles east of that place.[1]

Hopes Unfulfilled

In these abortive operations towards Yaunde, the Allied force had incurred in the last two months a total of 301 battle casualties (of which number 96, including 13 Europeans, were killed) and at least 600 deaths from sickness. The hopes that pressure by General Aymerich's troops would prevent the enemy reinforcing his Edea front had not been fulfilled. It was afterwards proved from captured documents that the Germans had managed to concentrate at least 1,200 rifles; and with these they had managed to offer a resistance as stubborn as it was unexpected.

The area traversed had also proved to be less practicable and more affected by the heavy rain than had been anticipated; and the enemy, realising the advantages conferred on him by the physical difficulties and the fact that the Allied advance was confined to one road, had concentrated his position, while at the same time striking at the Allied communications.[1]

The rather unpleasant and unexpected set-back in the centre of the colony had to some extent been retrieved by success in the north, some 400 miles away. As has been related, Colonel Cunliffe, on his return from conferring with General Dobell at Duala, had decided to concentrate as large a force as possible for the reduction of the German fort of

[1] At Ngwe, on the Kele River. *Official History*, pp. 284, 285.

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Photo: A. J. Insall.

OUDEZEELE ON A PERFECT SUMMER'S DAY

Here, at a much later date, is the exact spot illustrated in the previous photograph. Where there were defensive trenches and barbed wire, one now finds hedgeless plots of ripening corn parted by a well-worn cart-track. Electric energy for light and power travels along overhead cables, and larks trill in the sky. War-time bivvies are changed to peaceful homesteads, and the black earth is stirred only by plough-shares. When divisions were on the move the road between Steenvoorde and Wormhoudt, pot-holed and narrow, had sometimes to be traversed; and Oudezeele lies just off this dyke-fringed highway.

Garua. On April 18th he moved his headquarters to the vicinity of that place, and with a mixed column of British and French native troops was able to invest it.

During the night of June 9th/10th two sorties were made by the enemy, but without success, and on the 10th, while preparations were being made to carry the fort by assault, the white flag was displayed. Garua surrendered unconditionally, 37 Europeans and 220 native ranks becoming prisoners-of-war. Five guns and ten machine guns, together with a quantity of rifles, ammunition, equipment, and stores, fell into the victors' hands.

Shortly afterwards, detachments from Cunliffe's force advanced to the beginning of the high ground, nearly 150 miles south of Garua, and thence pushed reconnaissances far to the south and south-east. In the extreme north, up in the apex of the colony, the fort of Mora still held out; and, as the rains in the north were very much lighter than in the south, Cunliffe determined during the period of enforced inactivity in the south to make an attempt on it.

Mora Holds Out

Mora was indeed a tough nut to crack, rising precipitously as it did from the plain, and being accessible only in a few places to men scrambling on hands and knees between huge boulders. Cunliffe arrived near it, on August 23rd, with a Franco-British force of six companies, one company M.I., and three guns.

Three assaults were made, and gallantly made; but they all failed—although, in the last one, bayonets were very nearly crossed. The attack lasted eight days (September 1st–8th), until, realising that his services were urgently required for a sweep southwards, Cunliffe withdrew, leaving an investing force to watch the fortress.

To go back now to General Dobell at Duala. There was in that portion of the colony an unavoidable lull in operations, caused by the rains. Dobell seized the opportunity to send as many officers and white N.C.O.'s as possible to the United Kingdom for a few weeks' rest, and arranged also that most of the native troops should visit their own colonies.

Very welcome reinforcements, both French and British, arrived at the port in August, the British including a battalion of the Indian Army, the 5th Light Infantry. This battalion had achieved notoriety through a mutiny in its ranks at Singapore, after the suppression of which the officers, and those soldiers who had been true to their salt, pleaded that the battalion might

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Photo: Imperial War Museum.

THE SORT OF TRAIL WAR LEAVES BEHIND

Once this place of wreckage and utter desolation represented a village, by name Martinpuich, a comely place near the rolling Somme, laid waste even before the British reached it on September 15th, 1916. Hereabouts was waged the Battle of Flers-Courcelette, a whole week of tense struggle. The main road between Bapaume and Albert runs through this area, with the Martinpuich—Courcelette highway crossing it at right angles. Martinpuich is scarcely one kilometre from the main road, and was taken by the 15th (Scottish) Division, Courcelette falling to the 2nd Canadians after very heavy fighting. There is a British Cemetery at Martinpuich.

be sent on active service to prove its loyalty.

On August 25th and 26th, an important conference took place at Duala. There were present at it General Dobell; the Governor-General of French Equatorial Africa; General Aymerich; and Colonel Mayer. The absence of Colonel Cunliffe was due to the fact that he was at the moment engaged in the operations at Mora which have just been described.

At this conference it was decided that all the available troops at the disposal of Aymerich and Dobell should advance against Yaunde from the east and west respectively. Cunliffe's force would continue its movement down from the north. Further, a French column in the south near Rio Muni (Spanish Guinea) would make such effort towards the general scheme as its strength permitted.

Spanish Thorn in Allied Side

This block of neutral Spanish territory, wedged into the Cameroons, had become a real nuisance to the Allies, for the Germans had been receiving supplies through it, and its existence had led to the diversion of Allied naval and military units for blockading and preventive duties.

The new offensive against Yaunde would depend upon the progress made by General Aymerich's troops. The situation in that quarter had greatly improved, for one of the columns, which had been reinforced, had on June 25th, after much fighting, occupied Lomie, some 150 miles south-south-east of Yaunde; and a month later the other, under General Morrison, had, after some stiff engagements, in the course of which it had more than once been compelled to fall back, taken possession of Dume, 140 miles north-north-east of Yaunde.

Briefly, then, the opening stages of the final operations may be summarised as follows. Dobell renewed his offensive on September 22nd. Early in October Cunliffe began coming down from the north. From the east Aymerich's two columns were steadily pressing on. Reinforcements had brought—or were soon to bring—Dobell's strength to over 9,000. Cunliffe had from 3,000 to 4,000, and Aymerich about the same number.

To deal first with Dobell's operations, the advance through the forest was to be made with two columns, one British and one French: the former, under Colonel Gorges, to start from the old jumping-off place 60 miles from Yaunde, with the French column on the Midland

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Railway, 15 miles to the south. Reinforcements in both fighting men and carriers, and the addition even of a few light cars and ambulances, made success seem much more likely than before. Gorges's column actually possessed a 4·5-inch howitzer, recently brought out from England, and nicknamed "Henry."

"Henry caused us no little anxiety, requiring as he did a host of carriers to haul him over the rough road and steep hills, and a permanent escort to guard him night and day. And though in that vast primeval forest he rarely if ever found a target, he was nevertheless cherished and admired by our black soldiers, who, so long as they knew that Henry was in the bivouac, slept peacefully." [1]

1 Gorges, *op. cit.*, p. 232.

Heavy Going and Severe Fighting

The method of advance was to move a strong column along the forest road, with two flank detachments, on as wide a front as the difficult nature of the country permitted. By November 30th, after seven days' strenuous skirmishing, the German resistance had been pushed back a dozen miles on a 12–15-mile front. The fighting in many cases was severe, and off the roads the troops had to work their way through very thick undergrowth covering precipitous hills.

In forcing the passage of the Kele River, and in the operations generally on the right flank, the casualties in a battalion of the Nigerian Regiment were over 100, including seven British officers, of whom three were killed. Such figures show that the advance was being stubbornly contested.

Finally, the eastern end of the dark forest region was reached, and Gorges's column halted on December 17th to rest and re-organise, and to build the last strong-point before the final dash for Yaunde, now only 25 miles away. Colonel Gorges, in his admirable work, tells of the general relief at being out of the grim forest area.

"We were thankful to emerge again into the more open country and to drink the cool and clear waters of the many streamlings trickling down the fertile valleys . . . and above all to receive friendly greeting from the natives who, no sooner had the Germans retired, crept from their hiding places to re-occupy their villages in which they hoped to dwell again in peace." [1]

Meanwhile, the French column, far

1 Gorges, *op. cit.*, pp. 236, 237.

Photo: A. J. Insall.

PEACE COMES AGAIN TO UNLOVELY MARTINPUICH

War's diabolical wreckage has now been cleared, and a new Martinpuich has arisen from the waste—not, perhaps, a lovely village as yet, but one providing homes and shelter for those whose lot it is to till the fertile Somme soil. British forces took the place in 1916, and ours it remained until the great offensive of the spring of 1918. Then, in the August of that fateful year, troops of the V Corps swung the pendulum our way again and gave us back Martinpuich, which now stands far more for utility than as an artists' rendezvous.

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out to the right, had been fighting its way through the same kind of country, and meeting with the same bitter opposition. On December 21st it assaulted and captured a German position, halting then to rest and refit some 22 miles to the south of Gorges and his men.

British Push on Alone

The British column had arrived at its first objective, clear of the forest, five days earlier than its French comrades had reached their halting-place. In these circumstances Dobell thought it advisable to order the British column to push on alone. From a political point of view the occupation of Yaunde at the earliest possible moment was clearly advisable, and "the mind of the native does not understand the meaning nor necessity of delay." [1]

Accordingly, on December 23rd, Gorges's column was again in motion. Stubbornly opposed, it made little progress at first. On Christmas Eve there was found on the main road a message from the German commander conveying "Greetings to our gallantly fighting enemies," suggesting a temporary truce, and concluding: "We *will* have our *Christmas*, and don't you forget it." [2]

1 Despatches of General Dobell.
2 Gorges, *op. cit.*, p. 254.

Colonel Gorges, however, preferred to push on. Resistance now perceptibly weakened, several positions being abandoned without a fight. It was thought that the enemy might make a stand at Yaunde itself, but the supposition proved to be false, so that on New Year's Day, 1916, the column entered the town without a shot being fired. It proved a disappointing place, far different from the Promised Land which had been expected. It was, in fact, exceedingly dismal, being made up of isolated settlements which included mission stations, hospitals, official residences, barracks, fort, etc., perched on hillsides dotted with the lonely elephantine baobab and ridges clothed in high grass and bush, with wide clearings for gardens and cultivation. All the same, it must have been a pleasant change from the belt of tropical forest-land but five-and-twenty miles away.

The German commander had been wise to evacuate Yaunde when he did, for, during the first week of January, Allied troops from the north and contingents from French Equatorial Africa and the Belgian Congo (these were General Aymerich's soldiers) began to arrive at Yaunde. General Dobell, in his despatch, rightly called it a remarkable fact that bodies which had fought and marched quite separately for a period of seventeen months should have converged upon their common objective within a few days of one another.

Cunliffe Despairs of Mora

On January 8th, Colonel Cunliffe, whose advanced troops were on the River Sanaga, about 40 miles from Yaunde, heard of the fall of that place. It will be remembered that, after the capture of Garua, the Colonel had decided to crack the nut of Mora, but had had to call off the attempt. In his own words, "I now realised that to take Mora two things were indispensable, more artillery ammunition and more time." [1] Leaving an investing force behind as stated, he had marched with the rest of his column to Yola, to take part in the general converging movement upon Yaunde, and had arrived at his destination on September 26th.

The chief feature of his advance was the enormous front covered by his column. By the beginning of November this front measured over 200 miles,[2] and the European settlement of Banyo

1 Despatch from Brigadier-General F. J. Cunliffe, March 16th, 1916.
2 Tibati—Banyo—Bamenda—Chang. These positions are on an arc, but even the chord from Chang to Tibati is over 200 miles. The country here was, however, very open when compared with the forest belt along the coast.

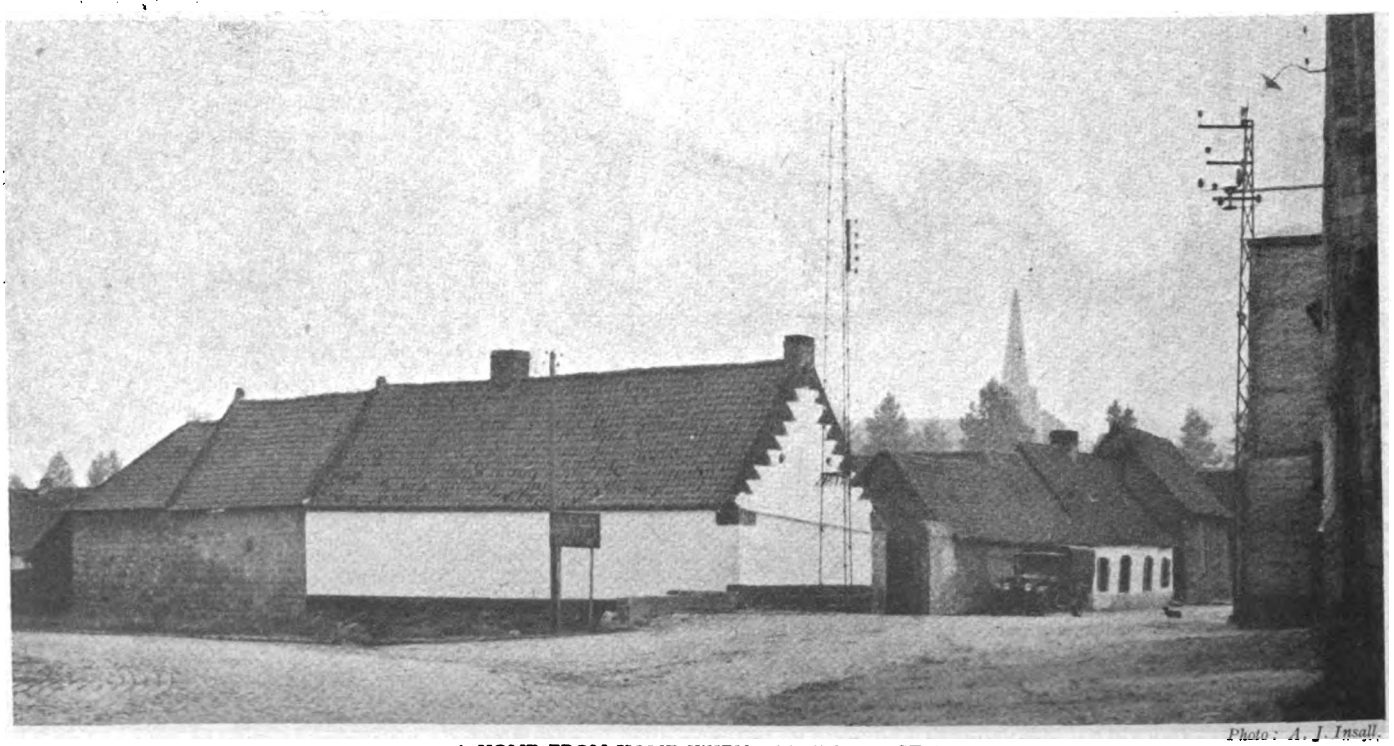

Photo: A. J. Insall.

A HOME FROM HOME WHEN OUT "ON REST"

Many an "old sweat" of the Great War, by which is meant a campaigner any time between 1914 and 1918, has good cause to remember back-area villages to which the jaded troops went, nominally "on rest," after taking a tough packet up the line. One such cushy spot was Camblain-l'Abbé, here depicted, on the long, straight road running north-west from Arras, and some 12 km. from this town. Apart from occasional shelling and very intermittent bombing, the War scarcely touched Camblain and many of the other villages dotted round Aubigny, which was quite a shopping centre.

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Specially drawn.

OVERSEAS BADGES—ELEVENTH SERIES

From left to right, beginning at the top row, the Indian badges here illustrated represent the following units: 1—39th Garhwal Rifles. 2—42nd Deolali Regt. (Cavalry and Infantry). 3—44th Merwara Infantry. 4—45th Rattray's Sikhs. 5—48th Pioneers. 6—49th Bengal Infantry. 7—54th Sikhs (Frontier Force). 8—57th Wilde's Rifles (Frontier Force). 9—66th Punjabis. 10—74th Punjabis. 11—81st Pioneers. 12—83rd Wallajahbad Light Infantry. 13—84th Punjabis. 14—88th Carnatic Infantry. 15—90th Punjabis. 16—91st Punjabis (Light Infantry). 17—95th Russell's Infantry. 18—97th Deccan Infantry. 19—101st Grenadiers. 20—102nd King Edward's Own Grenadiers.

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had been captured. Actually, however, there was also a mountain position—not unlike Mora—held by the Germans, and until this was secured further progress was impossible.

A very stiff fight ensued—Colonel Cunliffe described it as " one of the most arduous ever fought by native African troops "—which lasted for two days, the attackers having to fight their way upwards from sangar to sangar, until by dusk on November 5th they were within 100 yards of the top.

The task of supplying the troops with food and water was one of no little difficulty and danger, and great credit is due to the transport carriers who performed this service. At daybreak on the 6th the summit was carried, and it was found that, under cover of a violent thunderstorm during the night, the enemy had slipped away—the majority, nevertheless, only to be captured later.

After this exploit the advance was more-or-less plain sailing. Two of the advanced columns entered Yaunde, but with the remainder Cunliffe withdrew to await developments. So widespread was his front that he had gained touch on the left with General Aymerich, and on the right with a column moving up from the railhead of the Northern Railway.

Germans Make for Rio Muni

The occupation of Yaunde did not mean the cessation of hostilities. The German force, which had been occupying the town, cleared out while the going was good, and headed south-west for Spanish Guinea. Although Dobell sent a column in chase, and although the German rearguard was engaged, the retreating enemy could not be headed off, and the Germans safely reached the neutral territory.

Here Herr Ebarmaier, the Governor of the Cameroons, and Colonel Zimmerman, the Military Commander, with a large number of Germans and natives, surrendered to the Spanish authorities. A little later the Germans were sent to Spain, and there interned. Many of the native soldiers had melted away during the retreat from Yaunde.

The Cameroons were now entirely clear of German troops, with the exception of the garrison of Mora, far up in the north, which was still holding out. Cunliffe had gone down to Duala to confer with General Dobell, arriving there on February 5th. In view of the possibility of having to force Mora's surrender, the commander-in-chief placed at his subordinate's disposal the howitzer " Henry," and its detachment of R.A.

" Henry " was, however, not called upon to prove his mettle, for a message was sent in to the German officer in command, informing him of the retreat of all the other German forces into neutral territory, and offering generous terms. He and his officers would be allowed to retain their swords, though they would be sent to England as prisoners-of-war ; the native troops would be set free and given safe passage to their homes.

The terms were accepted, and the garrison, consisting of 11 Germans and 145 native ranks, surrendered on February 18th, 1916. The conquest of the Cameroons was now complete.

During the period covered by the Cameroons campaign, tremendous events had taken place in Europe. The Germans had over-run Belgium and invaded France. The " Old Contemptibles " had been almost swept away. There had been fought the Battles of Mons, Le Cateau, the Marne, the Aisne, First and Second Ypres, Neuve-Chapelle, and Loos. Territorial units had long since had their baptism of fire ; and at Loos soldiers of the New Armies had fought and died. Further, within the dates marking the inception and finish of the war in the Cameroons, the tragedy of the Gallipoli campaign had been played, and the curtain rung down upon its ending.

A " Side-show," but no Sinecure

In these circumstances, and in such stirring days, it was natural that not much attention should have been paid by the public at home to the " side-show " of the Cameroons. It is a campaign, however, which should not be forgotten. The hardships were severe. The climate was unhealthy and enervating. In most parts the going was bad. The enemy was determined, resourceful, and well armed. It was a war in which initiative, prompt action, and a soldierly example were daily called for from the regimental officers to whom the black soldiers looked for leadership and guidance.

Of that tropical struggle at least this can be said : the native soldier on both sides, and in every case, saw that his white officers—French, German, Belgian, or British—were leaders who shared with him to the full the difficulties and hardships of the contest, and set him, in every engagement, a striking example of fortitude and resolution. Nor did he, for his part, fail his masters.

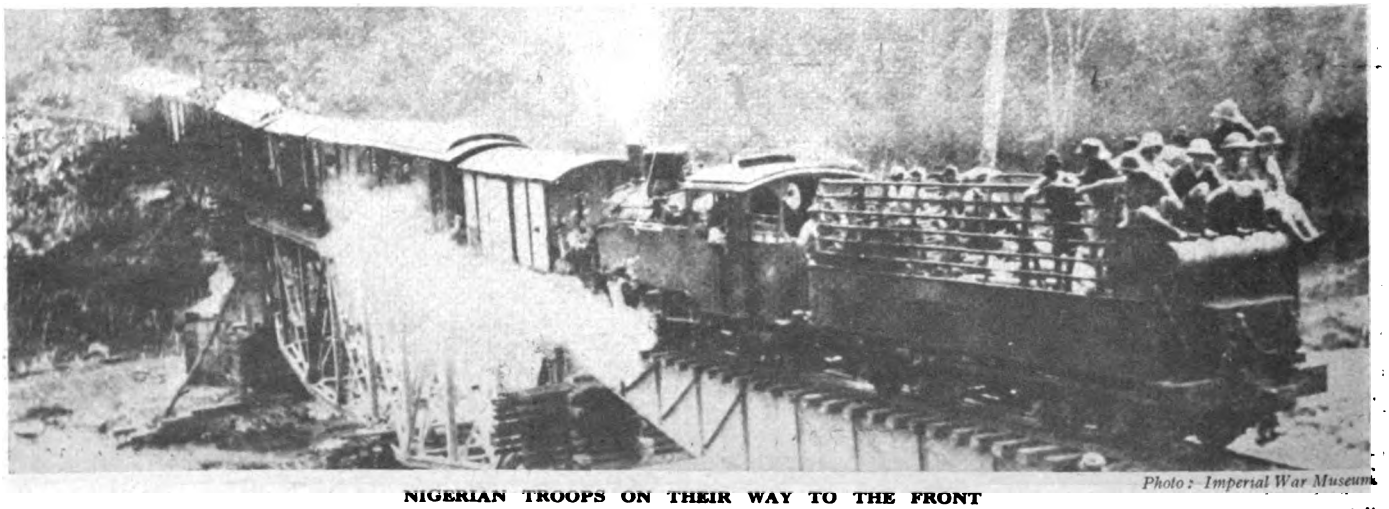

Photo : Imperial War Museum

NIGERIAN TROOPS ON THEIR WAY TO THE FRONT

The campaign in the Cameroons was one waged under almost overwhelming natural difficulties. The territory extended for 1,000 miles, and it was at one point some 600 miles in breadth. Stretching far inland from the coast were mangrove swamps interlaced with myriads of creeks, and there was the general unhealthiness of this area with which to reckon. Moreover, there were but two lines of railway, and the Nigerian troops seen entrained in this photograph were on the northern system running from Duala, the capital, to Nkongsamba. From the terminus of the Northern Railway right up to the railhead the distance was only 75 miles.

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CHAPTER XX

BEHIND THE LINES WITH THE SAPPERS

Earlier in this work, in Chapter IV, we discussed the functions of the Sappers in the forward areas of the battlefields. Here we turn our attention to their work in the back areas. In the vicinity of the trenches the activities of the Royal Engineers, although varied, were directed along certain lines. Farther back the range of their duties was wide indeed. Bridge-building, railways, pile-driving, demolitions, diving—all were taken as part of the day's work. A full catalogue of the things for which the Sappers were responsible would fill this page to overflowing, and the Army owed much to them for their tireless work and boundless ingenuity in overcoming difficulties.

THE multifarious and highly-skilled work performed by the Corps of Royal Engineers in the back areas of the Western Front is even less well known to most people than that carried out in the forward zone, already described in a previous chapter. A brief account of this work, devoid as far as possible of technicalities, seems therefore a suitable pendant to what has already been written.

The Extent of the Back Areas

These back areas of the B.E.F. were very extensive—far more so than is generally realised. At the close of the War they covered the whole of north-western France between the Channel coast, the lower Seine, and a line drawn from Dunkirk west of St. Omer, St. Pol, Amiens, and Beauvais to well east of Rouen. But in addition there were, or had been at various times, many British establishments outside this large region.

In Paris there had been a general hospital. At Marseilles in 1914 and 1915 the Indian contingent had had its base; there also in 1917 and 1918 was the base for the British contingent sent to Italy; and all troops travelling between France and the Near and Middle Eastern theatres during the War passed through Marseilles.

There had been an Indian concentration camp at Orléans; and in late August, 1914, all the B.E.F. base installations had had to be moved from the Channel ports and the Seine valley to the Loire area, and then back again when the tide of the War turned at the Marne in September. The moves to and from these widely-scattered districts threw a heavy responsibility on the Works Department of the R.E., and on all the units under its direction.

All these bases meant for the R.E. the task of erecting buildings, arranging for lighting, sanitation, incineration, and transport facilities, constructing plant and machinery, and installing water supply. In the B.E.F. rear zone proper there were large bases at Calais, Boulogne, Dieppe, Étaples, Abbeville, Havre, and Rouen, as well as G.H.Q., first at St. Omer and then at Montreuil.

At Calais, for example, the base establishments included four base depôt camps, a remount depôt, a veterinary hospital, an M.T. spare parts depôt, three tented hospitals, a rest camp, a bakery, and a supply depôt. Étaples was mainly occupied by hospitals and the big reinforcement camp; but there was also a large ammunition depôt there, and others at Audruicq, Abancourt, Calais, and Dieppe.

All these were completed by 1916. At the other base depôts the works were equally varied and extensive. The increase in the Royal Flying Corps, and the inception of the Tank Corps later in the War, necessitated the provision of special facilities for these Arms.

Ammunition Depôts

Taking some of the installations in alphabetical order, the ammunition depôts required the building of numerous medium-sized sheds, spaced well apart, with separate blocks for each category of ammunition, as well as for cartridges, fuses, and small-arms ammunition. Traverses between blocks had to be erected of sandbags and corrugated iron; and an overhead cover of sandbags was also provided. In addition, special arrangements had to be made for shed surfaces, fire and lighting protection, lighting, and camouflage.

Depôts and workshops which were designed for specific purposes always involved much heavy work in adapting existing buildings, and in constructing new sheds and hutments near by. The A.S.C. had base supply depôts at nine different ports or forward bases; the A.O.C. had ordnance depôts at Calais, Abbeville, Havre, and Rouen; and there were M.T. depôts at Rouen, Calais, Mautort, St. Omer, and Bergues.

Both A.S.C. and A.O.C. required large sheds, 600–1,200 feet long and 25 feet high, with special fire protection, and extra roads and rail facilities to expedite rapid loading and despatch. The M.T. depôts needed sheds for stores, receipts, packing, and garage purposes, as well as workshops, offices, repair sheds and petrol stores. Accommodation here, as at all base installations, had also to be erected for the personnel of the depôt.

During the War there were in France and Flanders no fewer than 80 hospitals, with 88,000 beds, formed in the back areas; and of these three-quarters were accommodated in specially-erected hutments. Good access by rail and good water supply and drainage facilities were the chief requirements. Special lay-outs had to be designed and erected for each hospital, and all entailed much work in the construction of hutments. Venereal hospitals, isolation hospitals, and convalescent depôts were also erected as required.

Seven base and three advanced remount depôts, with accommodation for 20,000 horses and 6,000 men, were in existence on the Western Front at the date of the Armistice. Stables, water troughs, and forage and shoeing sheds were the principal requirements at these establishments. Veterinary hospitals also needed special accommodation, as did convalescent horse depôts.

Aerodromes and Bakeries

These were the largest and most important of the many types of base installations found by experience to be necessary for a modern million-strong army in war-time; but there were many others. Aerodromes and other Royal Flying Corps requirements were a

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Photo: Imperial War Museum.

OBTAINING WATER FROM THE SOMME CHALK

Though an adequate supply of water, both for men and animals, was a desperate problem on the Eastern Fronts, it was equally important in France, and the task of obtaining the precious fluid was one left to the Royal Engineers. Here a detachment is seen boring in the chalk of the Somme district at Contay. The heavy cylinder known as a "baller" has just been raised from the bore-hole and is being emptied.

growing factor. By the end of the War there were six bakeries established in the B.E.F. back areas, with a maximum capacity of over two million bread rations a day.

At the great base hospitals and reinforcement depôts at Trouville and Étaples plants were erected for the extraction of fat from the kitchen refuse; and these were later extended to all the other bases where there was opportunity for their profitable use. Power laundries were set up at Étaples, Boulogne, and St. Omer, to deal with the washing sent out by the hospitals and other establishments. French women, Chinese, and prisoners of war were at various times and places employed as labour to run them.

There were twelve military prisons at various points on the lines of communication, including two at Dieppe and Marseilles for native personnel, and one at Noyelles for Chinese. Orders were issued early in 1918, as the result of a successful experiment at Étaples, for pig farms to be built in all suitable camps, with sites and slaughter-houses as required. These were highly successful, but an outbreak of swine-fever soon after the Armistice put an untimely end to the experiment—and to the pigs.

An unfortunate incident attended the installation of the goat farm set up at Rouen to provide meat for the Indian troops. In default of better accommodation, the animals were collected, by permission of the mayor, in the city Corn Exchange; all doors and windows were kept strictly shut, as it was erroneously believed that goats require little light and no air, owing to their delicate constitutions.

Some days later, a knowledgeable R.E. officer having pointed out that this was a delusion, the Corn Exchange doors and windows were opened, with the result that the whole neighbourhood was subjected to a particularly noxious form of gas attack. There was general consternation and something approaching a local riot; and an irate mayor arrived to order the instant removal of the offending and offensive goats to less populous surroundings. In the end a special farm, with sheds and runs, was built for the animals outside the city.

There was a goat farm also at Marseilles, but this seems to have been set up and carried on without any similar *contretemps* arising to imperil the *entente cordiale*.

Living Quarters for Personnel

At all the bases the Royal Engineers' first task was, of course, to provide not only the special accommodation required for the work being carried on, but also the living quarters for the personnel engaged in it. As regards such quarters, the scales of accommodation laid down in peace-time for housing troops in England were at first accepted as a standard, but new and special scales were soon devised.

In September, 1916, three were laid down: for tented camps in summer, for hutted camps in summer, and for hutted camps in winter. In 1917 these were reduced to two, "temporary" and "permanent," but special provision had often to be made, as occasion arose, for various forms of personnel other than military. When the W.A.A.C. arrived in France, something had to be devised for them. Coloured labour offered its peculiar problems. Indian and Egyptian labour was not employed for long, and Chinese and Kaffirs had to be hutted almost from the first to maintain their efficiency and minimise wastage through sickness.

Prisoners of war, too, required special arrangements in their camps. Barbed

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wire for an all-round fence had to be provided and erected, and about four tons of wire for each camp were thus utilised. Extra lighting and sentry-boxes were other peculiar features, and the British escorts had also to be accommodated apart from their charges.

Much more than mere roofs and walls had to be provided at all these establishments. Electric lighting was installed whenever possible. It was laid down as a principle that hospitals *must* be lit; that ammunition, supply, and ordnance depôts *should* be lit; and that camps, remount depôts, and veterinary hospitals *might* be lit, if a reasonably cheap and handy source of current existed. Recourse was usually had to civil sources of supply, which were widely available throughout the rear areas; only when additional power was necessary, or there was danger that the normal supply might fail, was extra generating plant installed by the Sappers.

Electricity and Searchlights

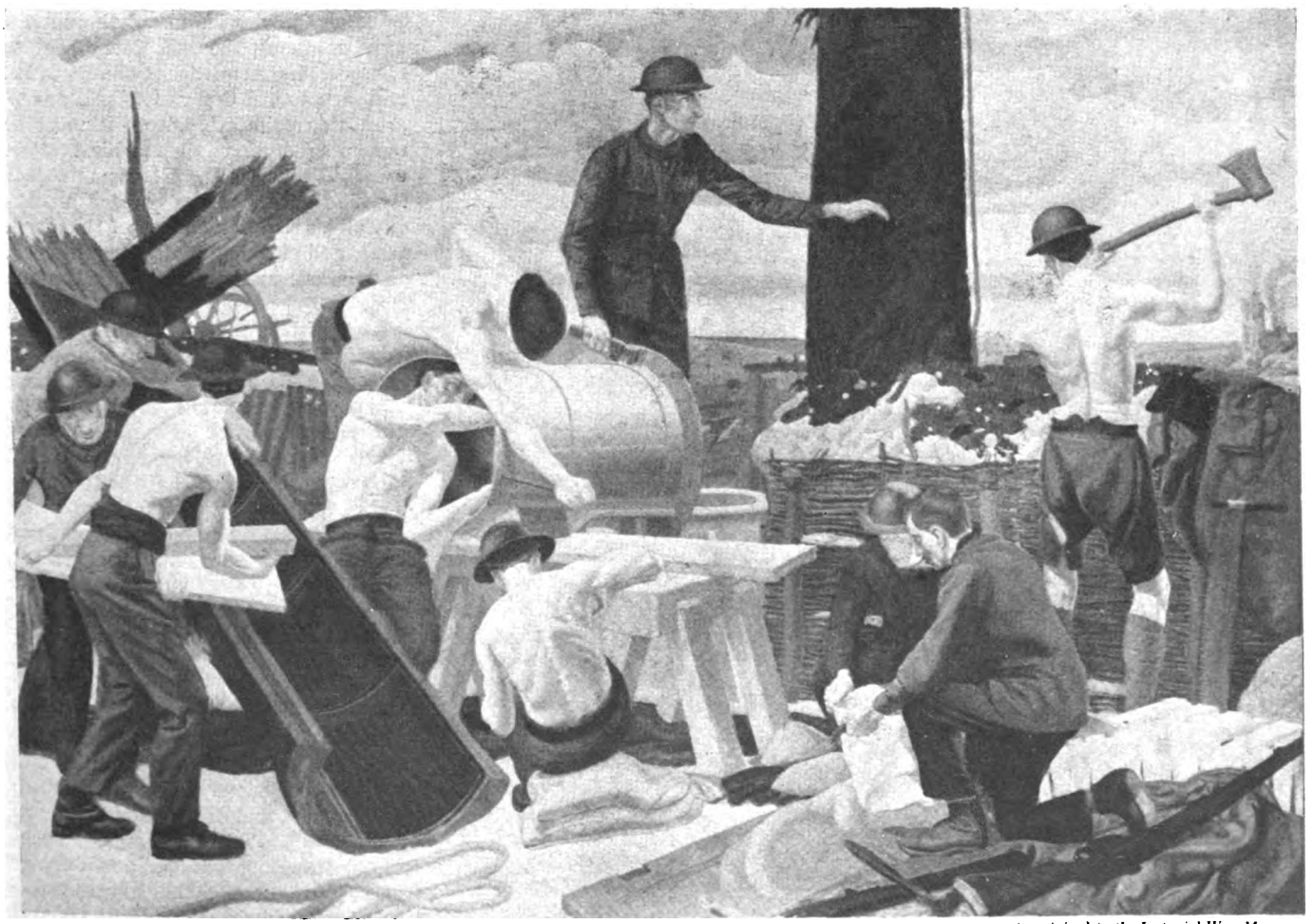
Special arrangements had to be made for anti-aircraft searchlight units, in case current should be cut off at the main source of supply in order to black out the raided areas. The personnel for electric-lighting purposes was found by the R.E. Electrical and Mechanical Companies, but not without difficulty, for the supply of qualified men never equalled the demand for them.

Incineration was another necessity at all camps and establishments, and the erections and machinery for this were all installed and run by the Sappers. Sanitation was primarily an R.A.M.C. responsibility, but drainage was an R.E. service, and the installation of, and repairs to, the latrines and ablution fittings in camps and billets were also carried out by R.E. Works personnel.

Something has already been said in our earlier chapter concerning water supply in the forward areas. In the rear areas the problem was of course a less acute one, and for the most part reliance could be placed on the existing civil sources of supply. However, the mains had to be tapped, and other mains or branch-pipes laid to the camps. In the latter a special distribution system was usually installed by the R.E. to feed cookhouses, bathhouses, ablution rooms, and stand-pipes; and such things as storage tanks, taps, shower-baths, and hot-water apparatus were added as required.

Occasionally, when the pressure from local mains was insufficient to carry the water up to the camps sited on high ground, special pumping installations had to be erected; and much water was obtained in various localities from wells and springs, or from rivers, with the aid of power-pumping plants. All these were Sappers' jobs.

From the beginning of the War until within nine months of its end, all the



From the original in the Imperial War Museum.

ASSEMBLING A CAMOUFLAGE TREE

At points of vantage or necessity along our lines of defence the Royal Engineers were at times called upon to erect camouflage trees made of steel to serve as observation posts. The first such tree was designed and erected by Colonel Solomon J. Solomon, R.E., on the embankment of the Yser Canal; and, in this spirited picture, a working party is shown assembling such a tree. Dawn is just breaking, and the sergeant in charge is contemplating the chances before deciding whether to complete and haul up the tree or wait for the covering darkness of the succeeding night.

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hiring of land and buildings in the B.E.F. rear areas, and the custody of the leases drawn up in this connection, devolved on lands officers, who came under the R.E. Director of Works. These officers reconnoitred and inspected the sites and buildings required, and negotiated and drew up terms with the owners; they were also responsible for periodical supervision, and for assessment of dilapidations when the property was vacated.

After the stress and strain of the first few months, it was rarely found necessary to resort to requisition; and all that was needed thenceforward was obtained by amicable negotiation with the owners of the land or buildings in question. In March, 1918, a new Lands Directorate was instituted to take over this work from the R.E.

Labour Questions

Labour questions bulked large in all R.E. work in the back areas. By 1916 all local labour resources were fully employed. There was a serious shortage of skilled British personnel, and little had been done to supply the large demand for unskilled labour. Fortress, Siege, and Electric Light Companies from home had to be called on for men and eventually new Non-combatant Companies, Artisan Works Companies, and Area Employment Companies were formed and sent to France, most of the men being drawn from categories unfit for service in fighting units.

Later in 1916 a certain number of labour battalions already in France were sent back from the forward areas to assist in road-making and forestry. Early in 1917 the R.E. were relieved of responsibility for labour questions, which passed to a newly-formed Directorate of Labour.

Machinery for the various rear-area base installations, once it had been provided, was registered and taken charge of by the Electrical and Mechanical Company situated in the area where it was set up; and this unit was also responsible for spare parts and for repairs. Such items as pumping plants, electric-light plants, X-ray machines, saw-mills, horse-fodder, baling, and pressing plants, and chaff cutters, appear among the machinery held on charge at the Armistice in one Electrical and Mechanical Company's area alone.

In this connection, too, it must be remembered that all technical stores usually known as "R.E. stores" (which for the fighting soldier covered practically all his requirements other than food, arms, and clothing) had to be provided, distributed, and accounted for by the R.E.

At first there was no organised system for their supply, but before the end of 1916 R.E. base depôt stores had been set up at Havre, Calais, and Abancourt, and these forwarded all requirements to the armies through advanced R.E. parks. Supply from home was often supplemented by local purchase. Base workshops for bridging-material and machinery, timber work, and hut construction, were also in operation by this date; and other workshops came into existence at important centres in the back areas from time to time.

Amazing Statistics

The tables of issues of these R.E. stores make impressive reading. In 1917 662,000 tons of timber were issued to the armies, and 615,000 tons of stores of all kinds. Trench boards, trench frames, revetting hurdles, and mining frames were among the largest categories, and among the odder items are notice boards, Jewish memorials, crosses for graves, and a mysterious contrivance known as an "Indian Snake."

An R.E. activity in the rear areas

Photo: G. T. Watson.

IN LOVING MEMORY OF A BARONIAL STRONGHOLD

War memorials have been set up to many subjects, such as the white mice and canaries in the Scottish National Memorial at Edinburgh, but here is a stout column erected to commemorate a proud and mellowed château which was destroyed at Chaulnes during the conflict. Chaulnes was captured by the 61st Division in March, 1917, lost to us twelve months later, and regained at the end of August, 1918. At one period a German "Big Bertha" gun was installed in the vicinity.

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which to-day has a somewhat special interest for us all was the work of the anti-aircraft searchlight units. Throughout 1915 there were only two sections, each with three lights, for the whole of the B.E.F., and these were employed for the protection of G.H.Q. at St. Omer. But before the First Battle of the Somme opened, these had been reinforced by seven additional sections, some of which, however, had soon to be sent up to the forward areas, where hostile night bombing was becoming an increasing nuisance.

Early in 1917 fifteen new sections became available, and these were sited for the protection of the ammunition base depôts and dumps in the rear areas. Other new sections came into being as the War went on, until by the time of the Armistice there was a total of some 3,000 persons employed on anti-aircraft searchlight work, and that work was being carried out, considering the primitive nature of the material in use, with a high degree of skill and efficiency.

Had the War continued, the provision of efficient sound-locators and more powerful lights, and the greater experience and training of the personnel, would have rendered the units capable of even better service than was actually rendered.

It may be noted in passing that the increase of our air forces, and of air activity on the part of the enemy, involved considerable demands on the R.E. in the way of extra aerodromes, aircraft supply depôts, and engine repair shops; while special precautions against the effects of intensive hostile air bombing had to be devised, not only in all base depôts, workshops, and camps, but in the hospitals as well. This meant the provision of dug-outs, cellars, trenches, and traverses, much of which had to be undertaken at short notice as an urgent emergency measure.

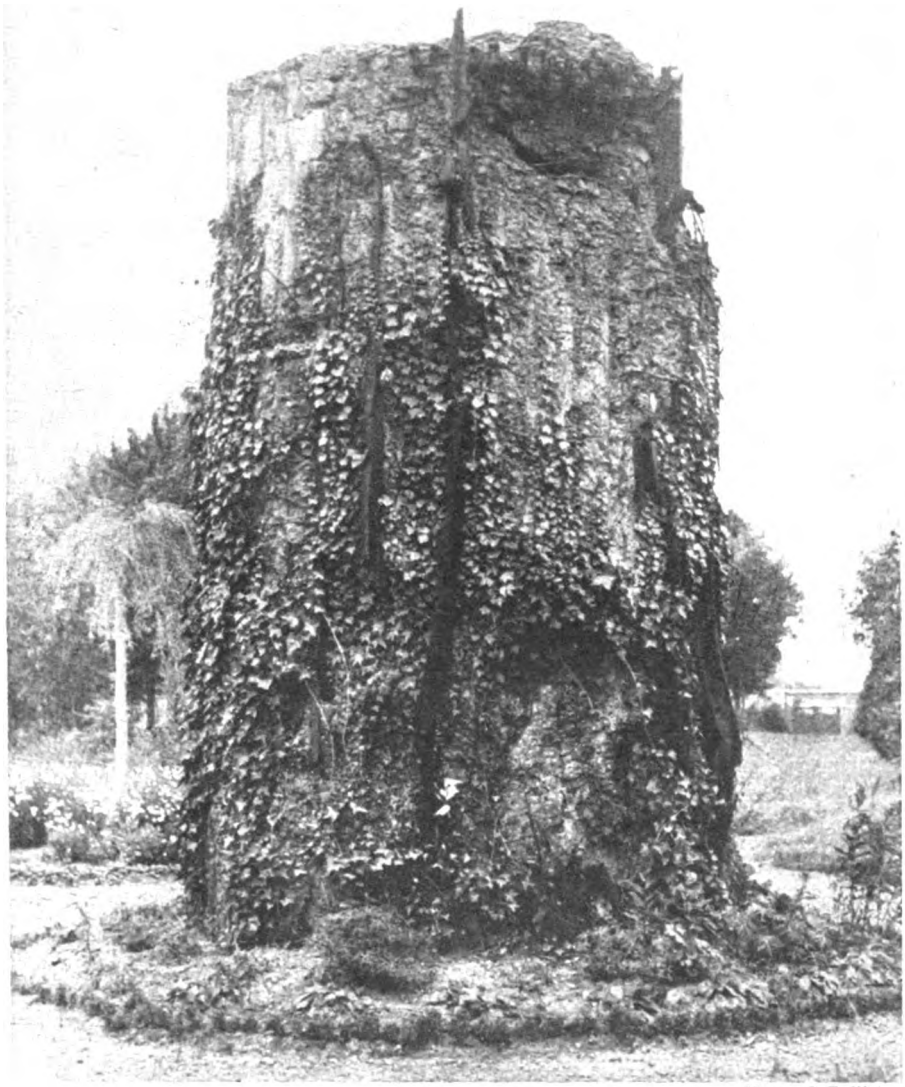

Photo: G. T. Watson.

WHERE A NEW CHATEAU HAS NOW RISEN

Upon the remains of the old château a new homestead has now been erected, but this curious pillar, much like the stump of some derelict tree at first glance, still remains as a reminder of the World War. Once the stump formed part of a British observation post. The pillar itself is hollow, and from its base a tunnel runs underground to another and similar pillar in a distant part of the garden. Chaulnes comes well to the east of Amiens, and S.S.W. of Péronne.

In Distant Theatres Also

We have said enough to give the reader an idea of the variety of the work done by the R.E. in the back areas of the B.E.F. in France—or at any rate enough, it is to be hoped, to enable him fully to appreciate its great value.

We have not space enough here to deal fully with the work of the Sappers in the back areas of the theatres of war other than France, though the difficulties there encountered were as great as on the Western Front—in many cases even greater—and the problems to be solved no less complicated and vital.

But a few words must be devoted to the best-known of R.E. achievements in these outlying theatres—the supply of water to the Egyptian Expeditionary Force during its campaign in the desert and waterless land of Syria and Palestine.

This was from the first a most complicated question. It began to become urgent quite early in the War, when large forces were concentrated on the banks of the Suez Canal to ensure the security of that vital Imperial link against Turkish attack from Syria. On either side of the Canal lie wide stretches of bare, dry desert, and the only source of fresh-water supply is the so-called Sweet Water Canal, which brings fresh water from the Nile at Cairo to Ismailia, to be distributed thence to Port Said in the north and Suez in the south. This supply had not only to be increased, but to be extended to serve the garrisons of the small posts pushed out east of the Canal into the desert beyond; and this was the first task the R.E. had to undertake.

It meant the construction in many places of mechanical filters, settling tanks, purifying plant, and reservoirs; and as the garrison of Egypt could spare only one Sapper and Miner company for the work, much of it had to be carried

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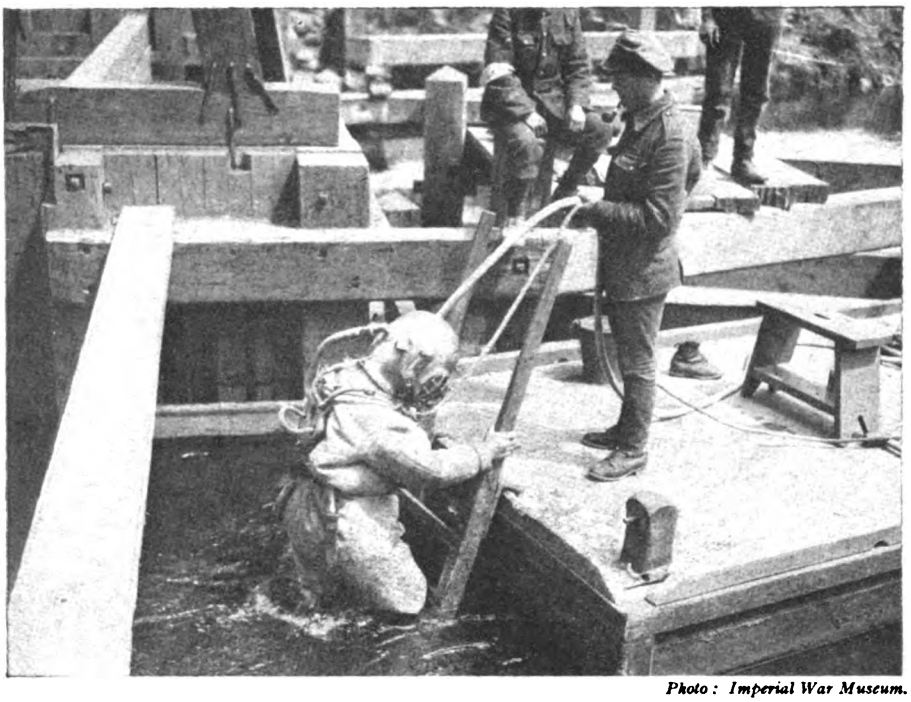

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

R.E.'S ATTEND UPON A DIVER AT WATTEN

Few British soldiers serving in France did not at some time or other pass near Watten, where the canal divided the Nord department from the southern Flanders plateau, the canal locks being so often an enemy objective. Above is shown a diver descending to repair the foundations of a bridge over the canal in June, 1918, the time when a new German offensive was launched between Soissons and Noyon.

out under the directions of specially enlisted staff, provided by the Egyptian Public Works Department.

By July, 1916, the water-supply system had been completed to the full extent designed. Filtering facilities had been erected to deal with a million gallons of water a day. Twenty-eight power-driven pumps had been installed, and reservoirs had been made to store one-and-a-quarter-million gallons. One hundred and sixty-four miles of piping had been installed, and storage tanks had been erected everywhere throughout the defence works as considered necessary for the needs of the garrison.

In view of the great difficulties under which the work had been done, this was a fine feat of construction and adaptation. Labour and transport had always been hard to come by. There was a railway along the west bank of the Canal, and this was supplemented by a supply of lighters and boats on the Canal itself; east of it, however, everything had to be sent up on camels, and there were far from enough camels and drivers for all the Army's manifold needs.

Carrying Coal to Newcastle

All sorts of things had to be carried forward from Egypt; even the desert sand was not of the right sort for engineer works, and the odd spectacle was seen of long strings of camels winding their way across the sand of the desert, carrying yet more sand—but of a different nature, of course—for use in the filter plant of the water-supply system!

Local labour had to be employed, and the frequent changes of troops and staffs in the Canal area up to the summer of 1916 rendered difficult the continuity of work and control necessary if the best value was to be got out of it.

Despite all these obstacles and hindrances, the work was done, and well done, as is the habit of the Sappers, whatever the job, and whatever the difficulties met with in carrying it out.

No sooner, however, was it done than the Egyptian Expeditionary Force was ordered to advance from the Canal Line into the Syrian desert. Automatically, much of the water-supply system became useless, and almost as much labour as had been put into its erection had now to be put into dismantling it, and salving the machinery and piping for other purposes. The engine-houses and reservoirs of the system, being semi-permanent structures, had to be left standing, and some of them exist to this day, though other uses have, of course, been found for them.

When the advance across the Sinai desert began, it perforce followed the route which has been the traditional path of invasion, whether going to or coming from Egypt, ever since the first dawn of history—that by Katia and El Arish. Water of limited quantity and poor quality was available at

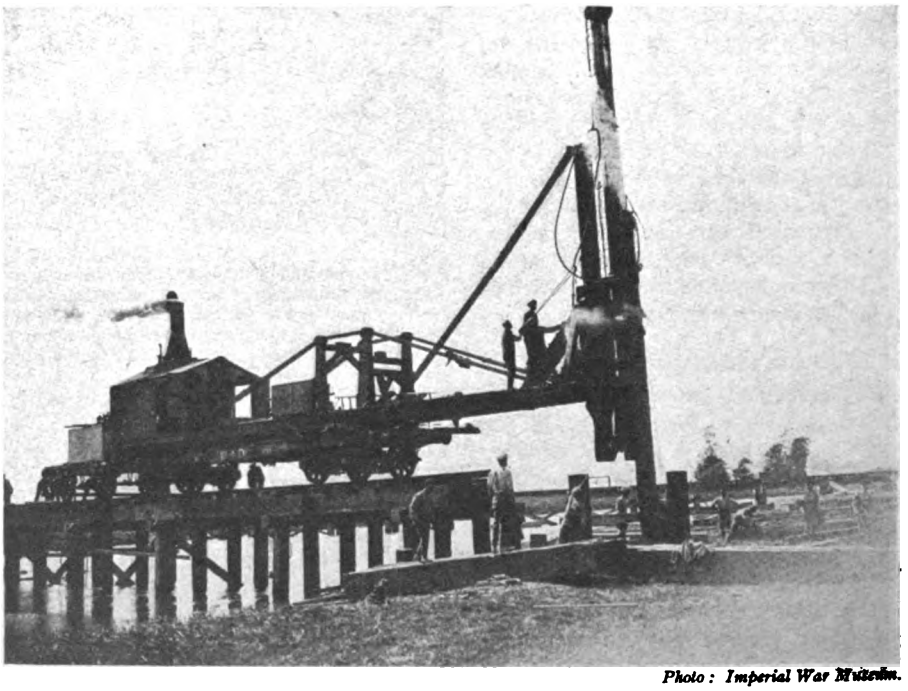

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

PILE-DRIVING FOR A NEW RAILWAY BRIDGE

Probably no place in the B.E.F. rear zone was more a home from home to the British soldier than Étaples, at the mouth of the River Canche; for here was one of our largest bases, a hive of tremendous industry for almost every branch of the service. In this illustration the ubiquitous Sappers are pile-driving amidst the sand dunes, preparing the way for another railway bridge across the Canche, in May, 1918

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certain oases along this route, at Katia, for instance, and at El Arish itself. But for the needs of a great army these sources were, of course, totally inadequate. It was clear that the bulk of the water required would have to be brought up from Egypt across the Suez Canal—a stupendous task. Nothing like it had ever been undertaken or accomplished in any of the many previous wars of which this land had been the scene.

It was reckoned that for the advance from Romani to El Arish 300,000 gallons would have to be supplied daily, and arrangements made to provide double this quantity in any one day if necessary in case of emergency. The distance from Qantara to El Arish was 90 miles; 10-in. and 12-in. piping, and engines capable of developing 55 h.p., were ordered from home, and were delivered direct by sea to Qantara. The work was done by Egyptian labour and local Europeans under R.E. supervision.

The organisation for pipe-laying was as follows: first, a reconnoitring party of 50 men went on ahead to locate and mark the line to be followed; then came a formation party of 1,500 men to make banks and cuttings and prepare the surface of the track for the pipe. Next came labour gangs, which travelled up and down the railway in trains carrying the pipes, and rolled them out as the trains proceeded—a work which the childlike natives performed with much laughter, cheering, and queer singing, as is their wont.

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

SAFE FROM THE ENEMY'S HANDS

The Royal Engineers energetically tackled any constructive or destructive job that happened to come their way, and in this instance they have received orders to destroy. The dump of timber fast disappearing in flames and smoke stood at Merville, once a "cushy" and over-prosperous back area township, which was given over to the Germans on April 11th, 1918.

Other gangs along the permanent way rolled or carried the pipes to the exact spots where they were to be laid. Two hundred men were utilised in these tasks. A screwing party of 250 men, divided into gangs of 20, then screwed up the pipes, the gangs working simultaneously over a length of line of over 10 miles from end to end. A fifth gang of 500 men followed hard on their heels, covering the pipe-line with sand to prevent its joints breaking by expansion or contraction of the metal due to sharp changes of temperature; and finally, a last party of 30 men inserted special expansion joints at two-mile intervals to prevent leakage.

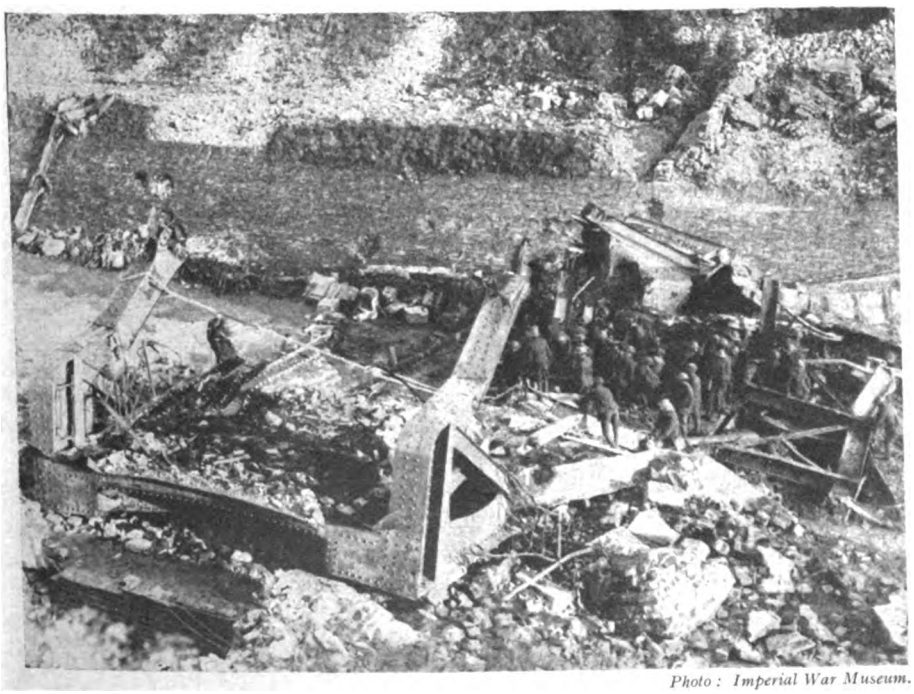

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

AT THE 1917 ATTEMPT ON CAMBRAI

Some of the most perilous tasks of the War were carried out by Royal Engineers, such as blowing up bridges as the last of our men had passed, and in the very teeth of the enemy. In this scene the bridge spanning the Canal du Nord near Mœuvres has been destroyed and Sappers are clearing away the débris. The photo was taken on November 28th, 1917, a week after the launching of the Battle of Cambrai, in which the tank was so fully justified.

Bringing the Nile waters to Palestine

The whole line was laid complete from Qantara to El Arish in 125 days from its commencement—an average rate of 1,200 yards a day. Later it was further extended another 60 miles to the Wadi Ghuzze, west of Gaza, whence branches were laid forward to the various areas of concentration occupied by the troops. Over all this long distance the waters of the Nile were brought to Palestine, thus fulfilling one of the many prophecies of old which foretold the coming of a new conqueror of Syria westward from Egypt, bringing the Nile waters with him.

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CHAPTER XXI

ON PILGRIMAGE TO THE NEAR EAST

Since the end of the Great War very many pilgrimages have been made to the Western Front, but in the case of the battlefields of Gallipoli, Salonica, Sinai, and Palestine, the number of people who have found themselves able to revisit the scenes once so familiar has been comparatively small. But from time to time such pilgrimages have been made, and here an ex-Serviceman gives his impressions of two such journeys, in the course of which he was able to trudge again over the hills and plains which once were the silent witnesses of so much valour and self-sacrifice.

I SHALL remember the St. Barnabas pilgrimages to the Near East Fronts, organised by the Rev. M. Mullineux, M.C., nearly a decade after the close of the War, as the most impressive journeys of my life. The first, in the autumn of 1926, was to Salonica and Gallipoli; the second, the following spring, to Egypt and Palestine.

The Pilgrim Ship Sails

We were 270 strong when the *Stella d'Italia*, an Italian ship specially commissioned for the voyage, put out from Marseilles on the first of these expeditions: relatives bound for the graves of their fallen, old campaigners eager to see again the fronts where they had lived the epic of their younger years.

Day and night the latter talked khaki "shop"—especially at night, when old sector-maps were spread out in the smoke-room aft, the steward went to and fro with the "night-caps," the women had long retired to their cabins, and the dark Mediterranean crooned about the silent ship beneath the stars.

Said a lean Gallipoli Anzac, then superintendent of a London hospital, on his honeymoon with an Australian wife: "When we land at Anzac, do you know what I'm going to do? Sleep a night at Fisherman's Hut, our old post. My wife's game, and we're going to take grub with us and camp there—after all these years! I'll never forget the night we evacuated—after all the scrapping and losing one's pals. We just sat in the lighters looking at the old beach, and no one saying a word. I tell you, man, we wanted to cry! And some of us did. . . ."

Said another Gallipoli man: "I want to stand on Achi Baba and feel as Johnny Turk must have felt when he was perched on top there, blasting us all to hell." And a Salonica 22nd Divisioner: "I just want to see Grand Couronné again, and Petit and the Pips and Lake Doiran as you used to see it lying below you. . . . I want to see Jackson's Ravine again, and Doldzeli. . . ." Fateful names to men who fought there, and to the relatives of those who fell, though to others they mean nothing. . . .

Among the women was a Scottish Women's Hospital sister who had spent three years mainly on the Serbian front, and was now the wife of a hotel-keeper in a Midland town; a dowager countess bound for her husband's grave at Suvla; a mother and daughter who had lost both husband and betrothed in the same Gallipoli attack; a spirited little lady of seventy-five with a son's grave at Helles; and a working woman from the Midlands who had lost three sons, one of them at Gallipoli, and had volunteered to look after the old lady so that she might make the journey.

Discoveries on Board

The pilgrims soon made discoveries. An ex-Gallipoli sergeant, for example, saw in the passenger-list a name he knew, from Donaghmore, and sought the owner, widow of a Gallipoli man. "I was with your husband all through," he told her. "When we get to Gallipoli I'll show you some of the places we were in together."

We found Salonica a greatly changed city. A big new hotel, the Mediterranean Palace, had replaced the old Splendide, burnt in the Fire. Floca's, near by, where officers would take nurses to tea, was just a quiet, demure café opposite an imposing new Post Office.

The White Tower, famous for its wartime cabaret, now staged instead a placid open-air cinema-show in the restaurant garden. The once-crowded water-front was comparatively deserted by nine at night. Modern shops had replaced most of the soldiers' *estaminets* in the Rue Egnatia; with its new big stores, the Rue Venizelos aped Oxford Street.

But our concern, during two days' stay, was with the old fronts and cemeteries up-country. I joined a car taking an Inverness girl to the Struma cemetery at Kilo 71 on the historic Seres road, where her brother, a Cameron Highlander, lay buried; she carried a wreath of heather from their homeland hills.

As we passed old trenches, limber tracks, horse-lines, camp sites, I tried to tell her something of the life of which these were the melancholy mementoes; but her thoughts were far away as she gazed with dim eyes at those great bare Struma hills.

Where the 40th Clearing Station had been, and the road wound down to the wide plain of isolated outposts and desperate attacks, we took a track through a resurrected village, and found beyond it a peaceful and beautiful cemetery of 900 headstones within a low sandstone wall, dominated by a cross of sacrifice and stone of remembrance. Scots boys lay closely companioned here beside Munsters, Dublins, Gloucesters, Hampshires, Suffolks, Cheshires, and others of the 10th, 27th, and 28th Divisions.

A Service in the Balkans

A Macedonian peasant humbly opened the gate for us; a patriarchal Greek priest in straight black cassock and tall black hat brimmed at the top joined us; other peasants and children stood watching while one of our padres conducted a simple service and a bugler sounded Last Post and Reveille, stirring ghosts and wakening poignant memories over those fateful hills. As the last echo died, one of us placed a wreath "from old comrades of the Inniskillings"—a tribute to men he had known.

The Inverness girl knelt a long time by her brother's grave; other pilgrims found a stone bearing their own name, and stood reverently by it; one woman stooped and kissed it, oblivious to everything but the fulfilment of a craving nurtured for many years.

It was deeply affecting in that quiet cemetery, under the hot sun. One turned aside to wander alone into a sandy, twisting ravine nearby where

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Around HERBÉCOURT
Then and Now

Photo: Imperial War Museum

THE WILDERNESS THAT WAS HERBÉCOURT

A photograph, taken on July 29th, 1917, of a village with which the British Tommy had first made acquaintance upon the extension southward of our line. Herbécourt is situated 3 km. north-east of Dompierre, at the junction of the Amiens–Péronne road with that leading to Péronne from Bray. It is also directly connected, *via* the bridge at Feuillères, with Combles. Readers may recall that two photographs of the church were reproduced on the central pages of the photogravure section entitled " From Dompierre to Flaucourt."

Photo: G. T. Watson

SIGNS OF PROSPERITY

Prior to the First Battle of the Somme, Herbécourt lay in the German second line. Despite their good progress, it was not reached by the French on the opening day's fighting, but fell to them on July 2nd, 1916. The modern hamlet, of less than 200 inhabitants, is thriving enough, if somewhat primitive. Its nearest railway station is 5 km. away, and its nearest post office 8 km. ! The Somme north and west of Herbécourt is broad, sinuous, and marshy, but the countryside is an agricultural paradise, the growing of sugar-beet being predominant.

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Photo: A. P., Paris

ASPECT OF LA MAISONNETTE, JULY 26TH, 1917

The tiny hamlet of La Maisonnette, little larger than a single farm, played an unusually prominent part in the War. Its situation was important, for it stands on high ground opposite Mt. St. Quentin, the " bodyguard " of Péronne, with scarcely more than the width of the Somme between them. By heavy fighting the French gained a footing on the La Maisonnette heights on July 9th, 1916, and on the 10th, after a desperate struggle, captured the summit and the farm.

Photo: A. J. Insall

LA MAISONNETTE FARM IN THE CURRENT YEAR OF GRACE

Scarcely had our Allies won La Maisonnette when, on July 15th, 1916, the Germans retook it in a counter-attack, but again lost it the same day. Nothing daunted, they made a further fierce but abortive assault on the 17th, another on August 11th, and yet another on October 29th—and this time were successful. Vacating the hamlet during the spring retirement of the following year, they retook it from the 66th Division (XIX Corps) on March 25th, 1918. Thus, counting the first German entry and the final recapture, La Maisonnette changed hands eight times.

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Photo: A. P., Paris

ON THE LEFT BANK OF THE SOMME

A photograph of the approach to the tiny village of Éclusier-Vaux, with a glimpse of the poplar-fringed Somme beyond the bend of the road. Éclusier-Vaux stands on the south bank of the river 6 km. east of Bray, and 3 km. south of Vaux-sur-Somme, from whose lock on the canal it derives its name. The lane shown in the picture affords access to the Bray–Péronne road south of the river, and to Suzanne north of it.

Photo: A. J. Insall

A VERY SMALL COMMUNITY

Modern Éclusier-Vaux can hardly lay claim to much importance, for at the last census its inhabitants were found to reach the exceedingly modest total of 67. The large and fine church, of which two nearer views will be found overleaf, is a characteristic example of the redundancy in this class of building which, despite the annihilating effect of the War, is still just as marked a feature of the former Western Front as of any other part of France. The date of the war-time picture on this page is October 5th, 1916, and the troops in it are French.

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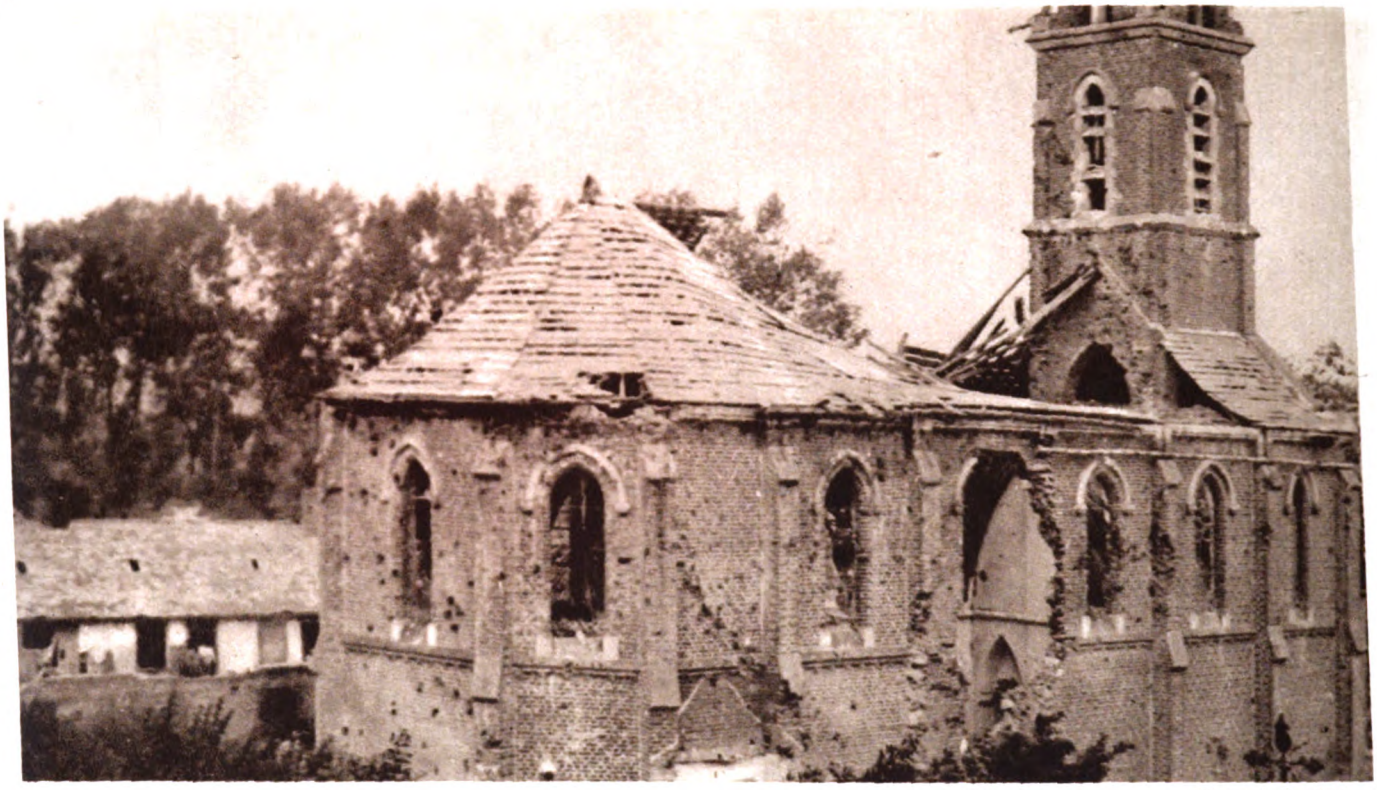

Photo: A. P., Paris

STRUCK BY A BOLT FROM THE BLUE

Somebody, presumably aiming at the tower, managed to score a direct hit on the roof of the nave of Éclusier-Vaux's church, with the result here apparent. The little place lay just inside the Allied line prior to the First Battle of the Somme, troops of the French 2nd Colonial Regiment forming the garrison. On March 25th, 1918, owing to the fact that the Third Army north of the river had retired about five miles further than the Fifth Army south of it, General Gough ordered the Somme crossings between Frise and Bray to be guarded by the 16th (Irish) Division, previously in reserve.

Photo: A J. Insall

ROUNDING THE CORNER

Éclusier-Vaux actually made its first acquaintance with the enemy early on March 26th, when the XIX Corps received orders to fall back from the line Hattencourt–Frise to a new line Rouvroy–Froissy. Our village being among those between Frise and Froissy, the 16th Division relinquished its watch over the crossing, the 39th, on the right, also touched the outskirts of Éclusier-Vaux in retiring, and the enemy were at liberty to take possession of another stretch of the Somme. Notice the sign indicating the tip-bridge over the canal.

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old "bivvy" and cook-house "cut-outs" could still be traced in the bank. . . .

The journey "up the line" to Doiran, on the second day, was by train, past one or two new townships—for repatriated Greeks from Asia Minor—such as Sarigol, built where hitherto there had been empty plain; and past Kilindir, now reconstructed and agog with Greek troops.

The ten years might have been a day as our party wound along the shore of Lake Doiran to climb the gaunt, grim hill-positions which had resounded with the battles of the spring of 1917 and autumn of 1918. They had changed but little; one could still see the crumbled trenches and belts of rusty wire, dug-out sites, and litter of scrap iron from shells, mortars, and bombs.

We stood on the old front line of "A" Sector, Swindon Hill, gazing across sinister Jumeaux Ravine, that hated death-trap, to the Bulgar positions we had so bloodily attacked: Petit and Grand Couronné, the "Pip" ridge, and all the intervening strong-posts.

Now a shining peace of heaven rested over those hills which had reverberated with the thunder of barrage and counter-barrage. A Serbian peasant-boy was pasturing herds in what had been No Man's Land; in the uncanny stillness we heard him playing a pipe; heard, too, the drowsy tinkle of cow-bells, and the cheeping of ground-larks among the prickly scrub.

"One hardly knows the old place, seeing it like this, out in the open," remarked another ex-Doiran man to me. "Squinting at it through an O-Pip, as we used to, it seemed different. Queer, isn't it? That Serbian kid over there with the cows doesn't look real. It's all a—a damned weird dream."

There were tears in the eyes of some of the women pilgrims. "It's a terrible, terrible place," observed one quietly; another: "I could never imagine what it was really like." One from near Sittingbourne, Kent, hurried up to us bearing a wreath of palm, immortelles, and Flanders poppies which she had brought from England.

Looking at Petit Couronné

"I must go on to Petit Couronné," she said pitifully. "My husband has no grave. He was last seen lying over a Bulgar trench on Petit Couronné. I must go! I want to leave this wreath there. Isn't there time?"

To console her, we forged on for another five minutes until we were looking that scarred mortuary of a hill plumb in the face. "Leave your wreath here," we begged her. "We haven't time to reach the top." An old comrade muttered in my ear: "I suppose we're seeing this God-forsaken place for the last time in our lives. Do you think you'll ever forget it?"

Striving to hide her disappointment, the widow of the man who, like so many good fellows, had died on Petit, turned away. "Don't worry about me. I'll find my way all right. I'm going to put my wreath on the memorial, by my husband's name." And, weeping, she hurried back over the crest in the direction of that lion-guarded stone cenotaph, two miles away on Colonial Hill, erected to the 11,500 British dead of the Salonica Force, there to find one name among the two thousand and more "missing."

In the cemetery nearby a brief service was held, as at Kilo 71; these hills, too, echoed the Last Post and the Reveille; relatives placed their wreaths among the graves, so many of which bore the names of the Lancashire, Welsh, and Scots units concerned in the brunt of the attacks.

"I found the graves of eighteen men of my parish, mostly Oxford and Bucks Light Infantry," a grey-haired padre from Cuddington, Bucks, told me. "I took a note of them for the mothers and wives of the boys when I get back. I even had the luck to stumble on the grave of the brother of our maid, who has never known where he was actually buried. And here's a sprig from a tree growing there. I'm taking that back, too."

And so "down the line" again to Salonica, with memories every inch of the way. We Doiran men had no eyes, this time, for the raw townships of a new Macedonia. Peering through the train window as dusk veiled hill and plain, we saw, down the years, mules and limbers bumping along the glimmering track beside the line, heard the plod of heavy feet, and a dogged British voice exclaim in the gloom: "'Ow much further? Ain't we gettin' near 'Ome Sweet 'Ome yet? Fer gawd's sake let's take a tram. We ain't marchin' to *Ber*lin, are we. . . .?"

Good-bye to Salonica

At last, Salonica harbour; the *Stella* with its welcoming lights; a bath, change, and dinner for which we would have bartered our very souls in the damnable Doiran days of long ago.

En route to the Dardanelles we put in at the island of Lemnos, where the Gallipoli expedition fitted out, and visited the War cemeteries, mostly containing Royal Naval Division men, at Mudros and Portianos. At the latter a Tasmanian woman who had nursed there during the War deposited a wreath in memory of her young countrymen, cadets of Launceston College, who had died serving with the landing parties as signallers. "Wonderful boys, they were," she told me. "John Masefield called them young gods. Out of twenty-two, I believe, only two survived."

On the headstones she found the names of seventeen, and copied the inscriptions to send home to relatives. The village priest handed her a bunch of wild flowers, which she took away to press and distribute among the lads' families in Tasmania, for remembrance.

As we wandered among the graves, the chairman of the commune, a Greek who spoke excellent English, remarked sympathetically: "We never have war in our island. Our people have lived at peace for centuries. You must come here again and stay."

Lemnos, indeed, impressed us as an island of peace set in a sapphire sea, where our kin lie as kindly tended as they would in an English village churchyard.

Gallipoli was another story. The cemeteries here, as everywhere in the Near East—thanks to the good work of the Imperial War Graves Commission—were beautiful in their austere simplicity, and well kept, but situated in a harsh, arid, bitter land, amid all the tragic mementoes of war.

We landed on V Beach, Cape Helles, which the 29th Division had stormed in that April dawn of 1915. Labourers were dismantling the rusty hulk of a French man-o'-war; Sedd-el-Bahr fort and village, on the bluff, were still in ruins. Nearby was the first of our cemeteries, with nearly 1,000 graves, half of them unidentified; and on the headland, the Helles Memorial—a great pillar rising a hundred feet from low-walled terrace and steps, commemorating all units and ships which took part in the campaign, and the names of nearly 21,000 "missing."

The Rustle of the Thistles

Admiral Sir Roger Keyes, with his staff, and 150 bluejackets from the *Warspite*, which happened to be cruising in Ægean waters, joined us for the service on that wide terrace swept by a sea-wind. We sang *O valiant hearts*; a Scots padre who had ministered on the Peninsula to the men we mourned spoke of victory in defeat: "O Death, where is thy sting?" 'Twixt the bugler's

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Photo: Central Press.

ON A BRIDGE ACROSS THE STRUMA

The Struma Front of the Salonica forces was pitched in mountainous country, across which in a north-east to south-west direction ran the short but important River Struma. A bridge which spans this river is here illustrated—the men and women seen on it being pilgrims of St. Barnabas got together by the Rev. M. Mullineux, M.C., to visit the fronts of the Near East. The first of these pilgrimages took place in 1926, but the party seen above made the trip in 1928. Veterans and relatives bound for the graves of their fallen joined in these journeys.

Last Post and Reveille one heard only repressed weeping and the rustle of parched thistles on that barren hilltop.

Wreaths were laid in memory of the 7th and 8th Scottish Rifles; and a tablet dedicated to the King's Own Scottish Borderers was placed by the widow of a colonel who commanded the 4th Batt. Then the pilgrims dispersed to the various cemeteries, passing old trenches and dismantled gun-emplacements, trudging along ravines, which their men had trodden, such as Krithia nullah.

An Edinburgh woman told me of her brother, a B.A. and tutor at Ayr Academy, who was studying for his doctor's degree when war came. An ex-officer indicated the site of an old lighthouse which he had used as a signal-post, under incessant fire, for two days and nights during the landing operations. Mother and daughter found the graves of husband and betrothed at Lancashire Landing; and near here some of the pilgrims had eerie experiences.

"I had to turn back—a sort of panic seized me—the utter desolation overwhelmed me—I felt I should collapse," said one, "and my friend had the same uncanny feeling, too."

Said another: "We dropped into a ravine, away from the others, and started to go along it. When we came to a corner I suddenly felt I didn't want to see what was beyond it. Something was pulling one back. We retraced our steps, and afterwards I discovered that the others felt just the same." Such a place was Helles in these after-years; a place of ghosts.

The cemeteries at Pink Farm, Redoubt, Twelve Tree Copse, Skew Bridge, planted with cypress, euonymus, and rosemary, were oases of peace in a wilderness of withered thistle and prickly oak scrub. At Pink Farm, hard by a maze of crumbled trenches under Achi Baba, the Turks' commanding hill, our eldest woman pilgrim found the grave of her officer son of the 5th Gurkhas, and placed there a sprig of lavender from the garden he had loved, and a laurel wreath of bronze encircling the badge of his regiment.

"Believed to be Buried Here"

On stone after stone one read "Believed to be buried here," for the horrors of the hill-fighting on Gallipoli were such that often the dead had to be left lying where they fell, and the scrub which took fire became their pyre.

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Out of more than 40,000 British dead here, 27,000 with no known graves are commemorated on the memorials of Helles, Lone Pine, Chunuk Bair, Twelve Tree Copse, and Hill 60. These 27,000 were but dust under the wooden plough of the Turkish peasants whom we saw, here and there, tilling a few lonely acres in a haunted solitude—as at one post called the Vineyard.

At Lone Pine, of grim repute, where the Anzacs' trenches and saps almost touched the Turks' in a harsh ruin of earth, most of our mourners could find only a name carven on tablets inscribed with 5,000 other "missing"; and I have seldom seen anything more affecting than their patient search for it, in the blazing sun. One woman took a lead-pencil tracing of her son's name to carry back to England.

Two others trudged over the outposts of death—Johnson's Jolly, Courtney's and Steele's, Quinn's, Baby 700, the Nek, the Farm—to the other sentinel pillar at Chunuk Bair, because the son of one of them, aged wife of a rector at Hambridge, Somerset, had fallen there. At Quinn's the cemetery had actually been built over old tunnels and saps. Chunuk Bair could show only 11 graves bearing names, as against 666 unidentified; and the panels of the memorial recorded over 850 New Zealand "missing." Of the New Zealanders, Gloucesters, Welsh, Lancashires, and Wilts, who had reached that shambles against superhuman odds, never to return, only a few were buried, and those by the Turks.

Permission was refused us to land at Suvla, so lorries brought specially from Constantinople had to jolt us pilgrims through storms of dust along the coast-track from Anzac, by the dried Salt Lake over which our troops had advanced in blinding heat which made them mad with thirst, to the cemeteries at Green Hill, Azmac, and Hill 10, the furthermost of all, which had marked the extreme flank of our attack.

A Tsarist Ex-General

At Fisherman's Hut our Australian honeymooner and his party encountered a War Graves worker—ex-general of the Tsar's army, who had drifted to Constantinople after the revolution—and

Photo: Central Press.

THE "LAST POST" RINGS OUT ONCE MORE

The photograph above was taken at Struma Cemetery in 1926 during the St. Barnabas Pilgrimage to the Salonica and Dardanelles Fronts, the women seen in the group being mostly relatives of the fallen. In the British cemeteries of the Near East the headstones are of a flat type in deference to Moslem sentiment. At Struma rest men of the Munsters, Dublins, Gloucesters, Hampshires, Suffolks, Cheshires, and various Scottish regiments which fought in the 10th, 27th, 28th, and other divisions. The poignant notes of the "Last Post" re-echo round the hills as the visit ends.

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took tea with him in his solitary shack. A lonely life these War Graves workers had lived on the Peninsula, raking over the battle-areas, disinterring and re-burying, searching for identification marks, helping to lay out the cemeteries. Our padres were called upon to christen the two-year-old infant of one of them, who had lived there with his wife for many years, remote from any church.

My last impression, as we jolted back to Kelia and the ship at the end of the second day, was of one of our younger ex-Gallipoli men, haversack on back, trudging alone over the plain with no other human being visible in all those desolate miles. What was he thinking, with only memories for companionship? What hell-spots of the campaigning days had he revisited? Did he recall now the horrors, or rather the adventure, the comradeship? He seemed lost to us, marching down the years, a man possessed. . . .

As the *Stella* turned homeward again, leaving that Helles pillar far astern, our bugler sounded the Retreat over the blue Ægean. Still some Gallipoli men, and the bereaved, lingered aft, gazing mutely into the distance, communing yet with the dead. But I think there was peace in the hearts of most, for they had fulfilled a mission. Palm, immortelle, and Flanders poppies rested now by the grey headstones—a message from home.

. . . .

The second pilgrimage, in the spring, was to Alexandria first, for Egypt and the Suez Canal, then to Jaffa, for the Palestine cemeteries. One day, on the way out, I found a middle-aged padre and his wife, from Hull; overhauling some primrose-roots in a dank box on the boat-deck. "They are from our garden," he said casually. "We're going to plant them on our son's grave at Ramleh. Do you think they'll keep?" During the springs to come he would turn to his wife and say: "I wonder if those primroses are out yet, my dear?" Small things. . . . But they matter when the big things have hurt.

From Palestine to Australia

The Australian medico was with us again. In the smoke-room one evening he showed me an Egyptian scarab. "That belonged to my brother, who was with the Australian Light Horse in Palestine," he said. "When he was there he sent home to Australia some acacia seeds, and trees have been grown from them which now form one of the avenues of remembrance in Sassafras, his home-town."

Most of our pilgrims went direct to Cairo to visit the War cemeteries there; a few of us to El Qantara, on the Suez Canal, by way of Ismailia, the base of the Canal operations against the Turks, and over the desert by the salt lakes where our troops had camped.

I remember that journey, not so much for the bizarre scenery, the colourful

Photo: E.N.A.

ON THE ISLAND OF LEMNOS

The town of Mudros, with its bay, stands on the Island of Lemnos in the Ægean Sea, and formed the best base from which to fit out our Gallipoli expedition away back in the springtime of 1915. The British cemetery at Mudros, depicted above, with its tall War Memorial as sentinel, is a permanent reminder of the days of strife; yet it was in the Bay, on board H.M.S. *Agamemnon*, that the Armistice with Turkey was signed. To us, this sacred corner of a Grecian island will be "for ever England." Those who rest here are for the most part men of the Royal Naval Division.

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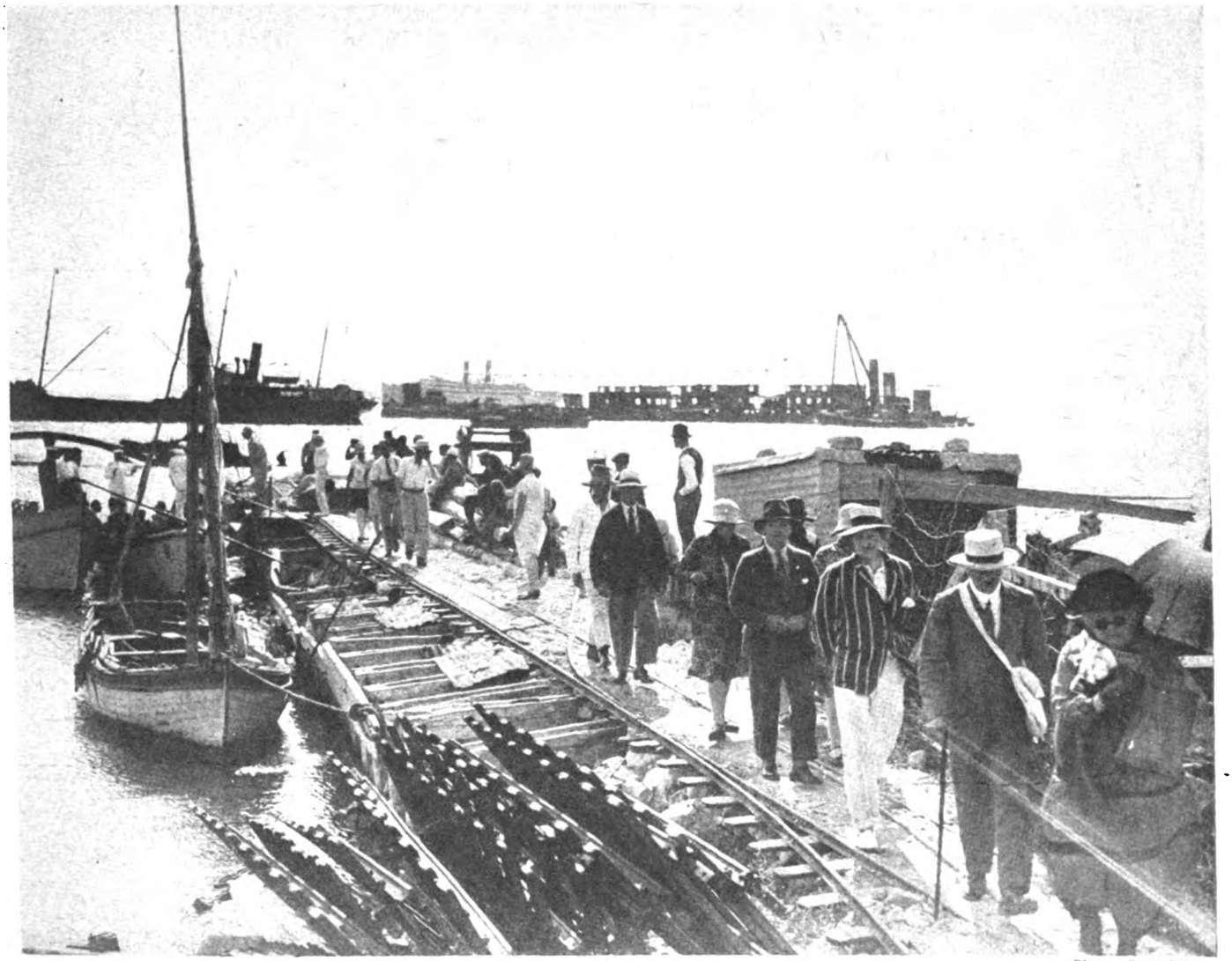

Photo: Central Press.

ANOTHER LANDING ON GALLIPOLI

The British tourists here seen landing upon the Gallipoli coast, old campaigners many of them, and others come to linger at the last resting-places of their loved ones, formed the St. Barnabas Pilgrimage to the fronts of the Near East in 1928. They trudged over most of the battlefields, past what had been dreary outposts, and stood amidst the rows of headstones in the cemeteries at Pink Farm, Redoubt, Twelve Tree Copse, Skew Bridge, and so forth. They must also have seen the memorials at Helles, Lone Pine, Chunuk Bair, Hill 60, and other places of immortal memory, to-day standing like grim guardians of the fallen in a land of haunted solitude.

crowds at stations *en route*, and the thrill of being for the first time in the land of the Pharaohs, as because it was shared by a humble railway worker and his wife from Leyton, in north-east London, who had saved frugally for years to be able to afford this visit to their son's grave over 2,000 miles from home.

Beyond the chain-ferry, a straggling village of timber and earth shacks, natives lounging in booths and cafés, a tethered camel or two, a laden donkey. . . . Then a shadeless road crossing what was formerly an immense war dump and base camp, but is now a sandy terrain, almost bare, leading to the desert.

One of our party recalled the Qantara of the War years. Here was the M.T. lorry-park, there the 35th Field Hospital, there the 24th. Native railway workers and officials now occupied the officers' messes and other buildings which survived. The rest was—history.

Half a mile farther on, in a sandy solitude, we found a cemetery containing the graves of 1,500 British soldiers, enclosed within stout stone walls with an arched gateway. It was the barest "God's Acre" I had seen on any front—almost devoid of tree or flower, for little would grow in that barren soil; yet an apt memorial to desert fighting-men.

A Grim and Barren Land

The little woman from Leyton, standing with her man by a 1st City of London Yeomanry grave, remarked wistfully: "I never imagined it was like this, but I wouldn't have missed coming for worlds." And a young widow from Seaford, Sussex, whose husband, a major in the 123rd Outram's Rifles, had been mortally wounded on Nebi Samwil in the Jerusalem attack, said: "I have always told the children that their father lies in a garden, and that is the way they have grown up to think of him. We never thought of it as a desert place like this, but as something like an English churchyard."

Three mourners from Hyndland, Glasgow, stood by a Royal Scots Fusilier's grave—mother, sister and a brother, who himself had fought in the campaign as far as Gaza, though in another unit. When we others took the

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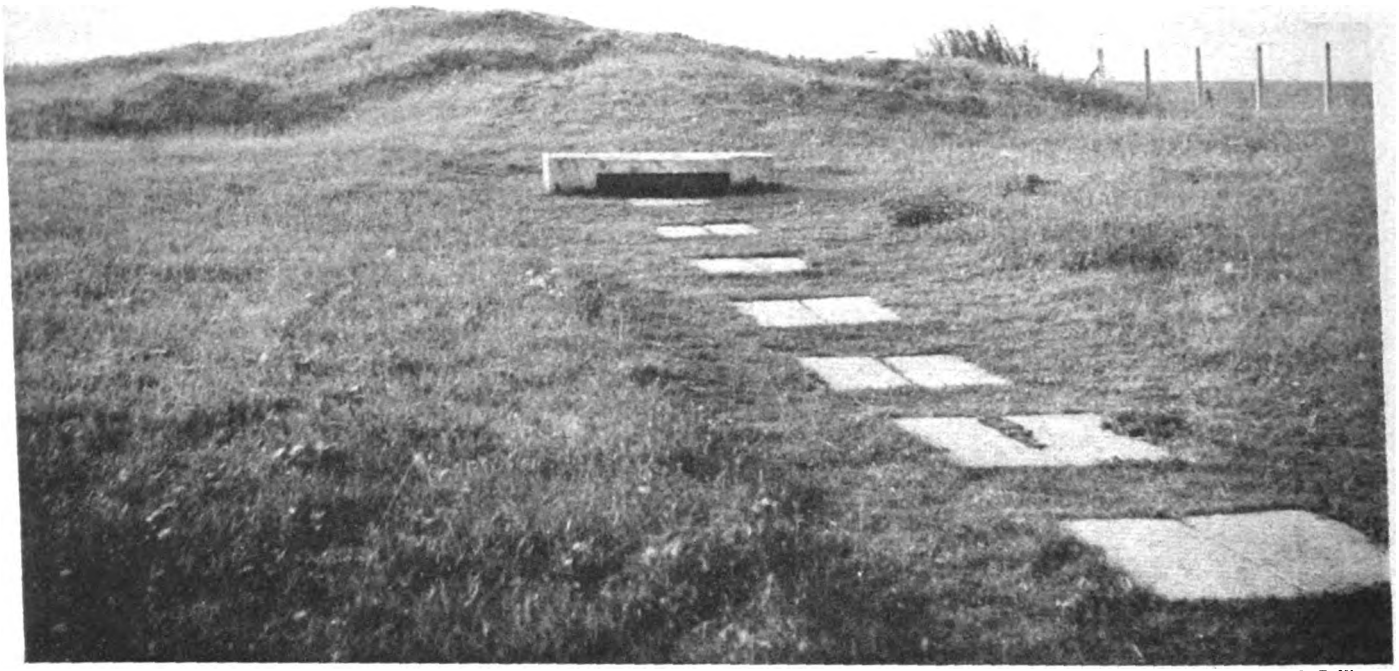

Photo: G. T. Watson.

WHERE ONCE STOOD A WINDMILL

One of the most famous of war-time landmarks was the windmill at Pozières, but to-day all that remains to indicate the site is the few flat stones and débris here illustrated. As one might expect, the windmill in its placid days of usefulness thrust up its tower and sails to command the Pozières Ridge, hard by Thiepval and Contalmaison, and a few kilometres forward of Albert in a north-easterly direction. It was along the historic ridge that the 1st Australian Division attacked by day and night in July and August 1916. These gallant troops won the windmill site on August 4th.

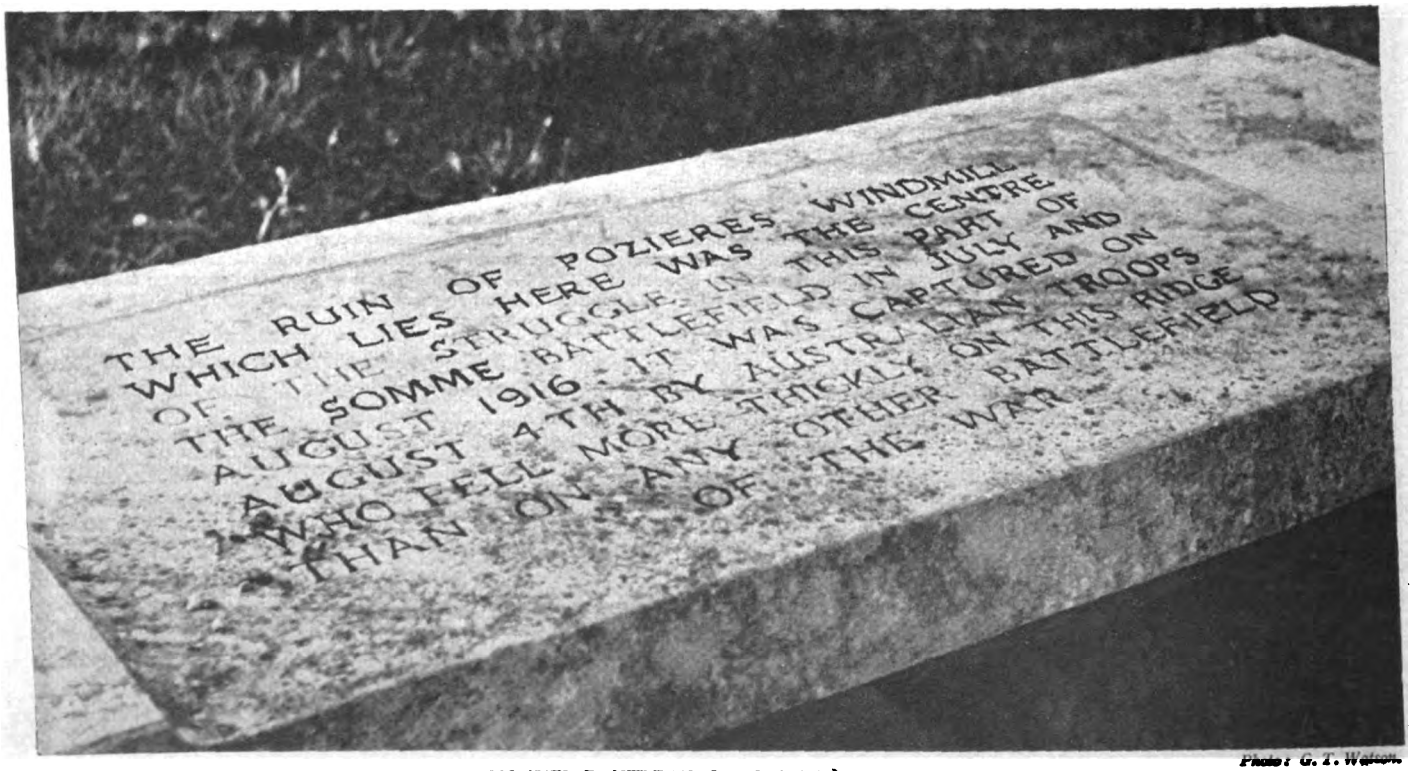
THE RUIN OF POZIERES WINDMILL
WHICH LIES HERE WAS THE CENTRE
OF THE STRUGGLE IN THIS PART OF
THE SOMME BATTLEFIELD IN JULY AND
AUGUST 1916 IT WAS CAPTURED ON
AUGUST 4TH BY AUSTRALIAN TROOPS
WHO FELL MORE THICKLY ON THIS RIDGE
THAN ON ANY OTHER BATTLEFIELD
OF THE WAR

Photo: G. T. Watson.

ON THE BATTLEFIELD OF POZIÈRES RIDGE

If not a sermon, history has certainly been written upon this simple stone, set up just where the ruins of Pozières Windmill gave an objective and an inspiration to the attacking Australian Forces. The heaviest fighting took place on the nights of July 22nd and 23rd, 1916, the two following days, the night of August 18th, and during the 19th. The "Diggers," however, captured that part of the ridge where the mill once stood on August 4th, itself the anniversary of a date that will for all time be historic in the annals of the world.

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Photo: A. P., Paris.

A MACHINE-GUN NEST IN THE SOMME

It is possible that this emplacement for machine guns was originally erected by French engineers, in the early days of the War, at Chilly, a small village 3 km. south-west of Chaulnes, the latter place being some 6 km. south of the arterial highway between Amiens and St. Quentin. Even before the Germans fell back in 1917, however, Chilly was just within our lines, and there is every likelihood that British machine-gunners made full use of the structure. Chaulnes itself was captured by the 61st Division on March 17th, 1917, when the British line had reached a point opposite Roye.

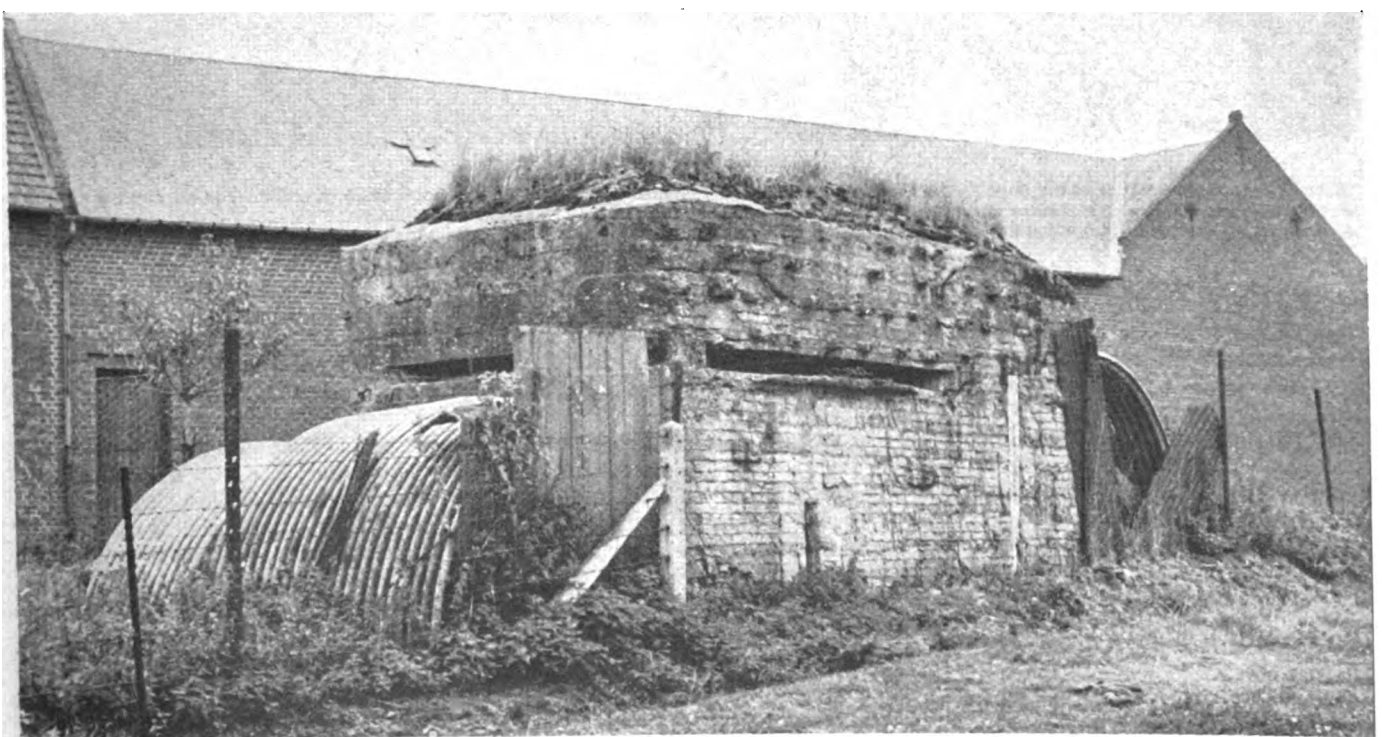

Photo: G. I. Watson.

NOW A NEST FOR POULTRY

If some of our machine-gunners were again to visit Chilly, they might still with difficulty find the self-same emplacement. Now, however, a goodly-sized barn has been built near by as a sort of annexe, and the miniature fortress of the War has become in peace a mere fowls' house. Where was once a nest of machine guns are now nests for poultry; and the embrasures and peep-holes are stopped up in rough-and-ready style with sacking.

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Photo: Central Press.

AT THE MOUTH OF THE STRAITS

Above is seen only the base of the Cape Helles Memorial, for it is surmounted by a tall obelisk in hewn stone, a reminder to all who pass from the Mediterranean to the Sea of Marmora of those who were lost by land, by sea, and in the air in this most inhospitable spot. The congregation assembled for a memorial service is comprised largely of the pilgrims of St. Barnabas who visited Salonica and the Dardanelles in 1926. Cape Helles is at the western end of Sedd-el-Bahr Bay.

road back, they still lingered. A mother from Southend-on-Sea had brought an old-fashioned wreath in a glass case for the grave of another London Yeomanry lad.

Wandering among the stones of Norfolks, Scots, West Surreys, Londons, Middlesex, Welsh, Irish, Manchesters, and Anzacs, I discovered a similar wreath on the grave of a major, D.S.O., of the R.F.A.; it was inscribed with a touching tribute from "Mother," and dated Christmas Day, 1926. . . . Propped against a side-wall was a cumbrous cross of iron which men of the 91st Heavy Battery, R.G.A., had fashioned in memory of a comrade.

Yes, a barren, elemental place, vastly different from the cemeteries of our 4,000 dead at Alexandria, or our 2,000 at Cairo, where stone of remembrance and cross of sacrifice formed part of a trim vista flanked by avenues of cypress and other trees.

From Jaffa, on the Palestine seaboard, we had to motor a few hours south, through Biblical Philistia and the land of the Arab Bedouin with his tents and camels, before finding our first British cemetery near Gaza. An avenue of eucalyptus-trees shaded the approach; among the uniform rows of headstones were clusters of bougainvillea, a geranium, rosemary, and Palestine lily. One passed from the sterile to the sown, and could not conceive how, in an eastern country, the resting-place of our dead might be more worthily guarded and cherished.

Nameless Deaths

Here our Australian medico searched the graves of Australian units for names he must know; but his task was not an easy one, for too many were only inscribed: "Known unto God." Men who die in the desert sometimes die a nameless death—fall in shrub or cactus clump, are abandoned in the ebb of fruitless attacks, and are roughly buried by the enemy, if at all.

Our oldest woman pilgrim this time, a grey-haired mother from Maidstone, Kent, had come specially to see the adjacent hill of Ali Muntar, surmounted by its small mosque and flanked by deep ravines, where the heroic 53rd Division bled itself to death in the ill-fated attacks on Samson's city.

As we motored yet another ten miles

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south to Deir el Belah, she watched that sinister hill and said of her Welch Fusilier son: "They carried him into that mosque and left him there, and were never able to go back and bury him. That was the last his fellow-officers and men saw of him." An arid track we were following, flanked by clumps of grotesque, giant cactus. It took us over the dry bed of the Wadi Ghuzze, which the 53rd had had to cross in a dense dawn fog, with death lurking in the gloom ahead.

At Deir, one of the points from which the first Gaza attack was launched, a woman from Ayr found her Scots Fusilier son's grave among 650 others, in a cemetery like a garden oasis by a eucalyptus copse. She had only a few minutes in which to lay her wreath and commune with her lad, although she had come a few thousand miles to do it; for the rest of the convoy waited at Gaza, and time pressed.

The fellahin cemetery-keeper could not speak a word of English; all he could do was to offer us silently the War Graves register; but we felt gratitude to him for the care he had expended on this remote corner of the desert "for ever England."

From Gaza a 30-mile run across unrelieved desert took us over the country our troops had had to negotiate—forced marching by night, hiding in wadis by day—during their out-flanking advance on Beersheba. Here, on the outskirts of the village, there were 1,236 graves. One, a Scots Fusilier officer's, had four mourners in our party: mother, father, widow, and young daughter—a sterling Scots family from Kilmacolm, who brought with them a wreath of purple heather from the Highlands, with a centre of white heather from their own garden. The daughter had been but an infant when her father went east to serve and sacrifice; one wondered what were her thoughts now, standing by his desert grave.

On to Jerusalem

And so to Jerusalem, through Hebron and the stony heart of the Judæan hills over which our men had driven a stubborn foe in one of the most epic advances in history, storming a 3,000-foot pass on the heights of Kuret el Enab in fog, and bivouacking in torrential rain.

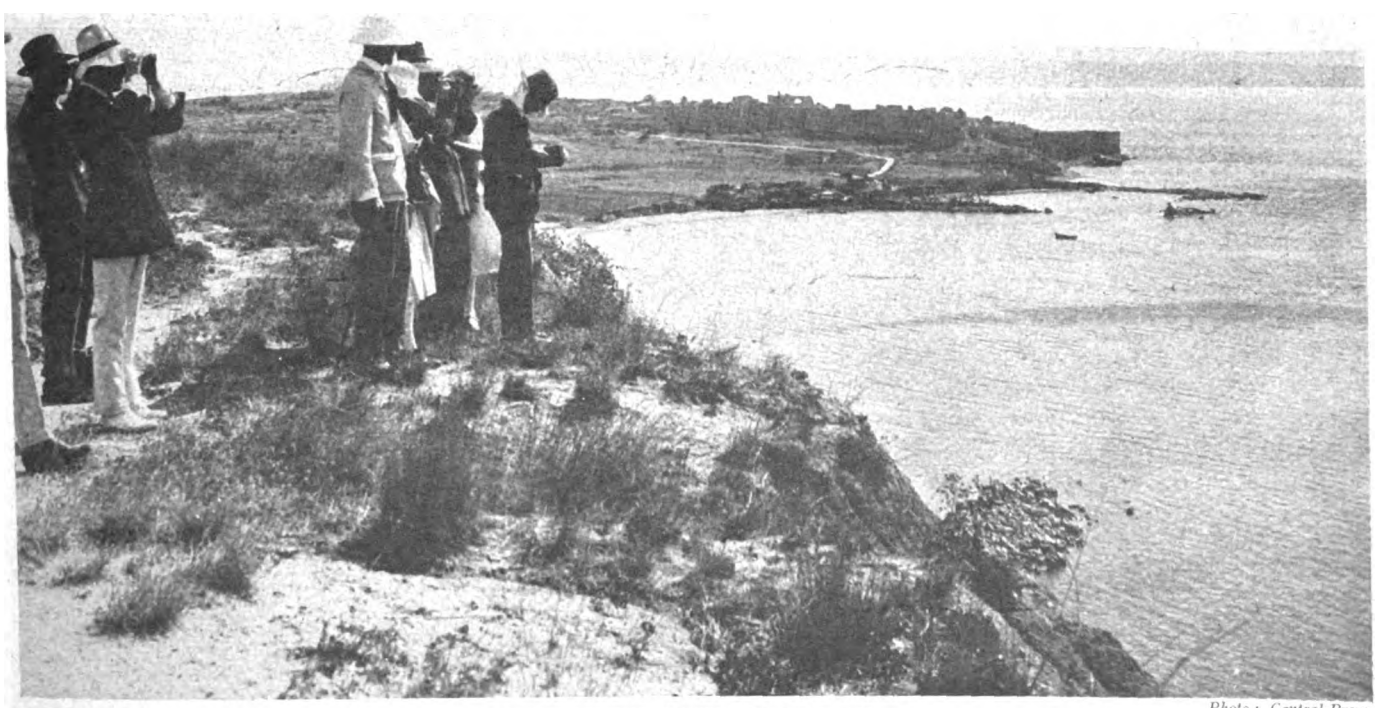

Photo: Central Press.

HERE IS THE HISTORIC V BEACH

V Beach, Cape Helles, stormed by the 29th Division in the April dawn of 1915, looked like this in 1926, eleven years after. In the picture members of the St. Barnabas Pilgrimage are peering down—those who once fought here seeing, in stolid thoughtfulness, the beach of memories and beyond, the gloomy fort of Sedd-el-Bahr, custodian of the bay which bears its name. In the horrors of the fighting hereabouts, 40,000 British died, and of this great company were some 27,000 who had "no known graves," their names figuring on magnificent collective memorials.

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From the Holy City, during our brief stay there, we climbed Mount Scopus, adjacent to the Mount of Olives, to see Viscount Allenby and Sir James Parr, High Commissioner for New Zealand, unveil the memorial and chapel of the hill-top cemetery where nearly 2,500 British soldiers lie and 3,382 " missing " are commemorated.

It was a profoundly impressive ceremony, in the most beautifully laid-out cemetery we had seen in the Near East. Lord Allenby and Lord Plumer stood on either side the altar-like stone of remembrance on the paved terrace crowning the slope. Behind them were the high screen wall and memorial chapel, the latter a simple structure of stout stone pillars and deep architrave ornamented with a carving of St. George. Before them were the plots of uniform headstones with a cross of sacrifice in the centre, flanked by pergolas of rose and honeysuckle; and, farther off, olive-girt Jerusalem on its distant hill—a shining glory of domes and minarets and ancient walls in radiant sunlight.

The native population which had thronged up the hill for the ceremony lent a touch of exotic colour to the formal, dignified function; on the terrace, along with British officials and military, were Oriental priests in the strange garb of their sects, and Moslem Boy Scouts in Arab head-cloth. In the course of his soldierly address, Lord Allenby turned towards the heights of Nebi Samwil which our men had stormed, and said: " They were the men who fought and worked with me, and the victory was theirs."

And to Nebi Samwil alone, riding a hired donkey along the road which legend says that Joseph and Mary took when they had lost the lad Jesus, went our woman pilgrim whose husband had fallen mortally wounded there. She stood by the small mosque on the summit, now rebuilt, and gazed down the slope which he and his men, advancing in sharp spurts from rocky terrace to terrace, with only bare inches of head-cover, had conquered. She saw range beyond range of bare hills, and marvelled that men could drive an entrenched enemy from them.

In the Steps of the Crusaders

Others had nearly a score of graves to visit on Mount Scopus. They lingered by them long after the close of the ceremony, when the path back to Jerusalem was thick with crowds returning, the Mount of Olives and Gethsemane deepened to purple in the waning light, and there were only ghosts to share their solitude—ghosts of the 52nd, 53rd, 54th, 60th, 74th, 75th Divisions, and 10th Light Horse, who had seen the Holy City from the surrounding heights as Richard Cœur de Lion had done, and—unlike Richard—had liberated it at great sacrifice.

During the two to three days we remained in Jerusalem many of our pilgrims climbed again the path to the cemetery on Mount Scopus. It was seldom out of our thoughts; it lent added significance to our visits to the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, the Via Dolorosa, the Mount of Olives and Garden of Gethsemane, for was not the young Christ also a campaigner who made the great sacrifice from impersonal motives, in humanity's name? Our homage was a dual one: we trod the tracks of the Master and those of our army's courageous advance.

After Jerusalem—Galilee, Nazareth, Haifa, and then homeward with unforgettable memories of the most impressive post-war pilgrimages ever undertaken by British men and women.

Photo: G. T. Watson.

WHERE GERMAN SOLDIERS SLEEP THEIR LAST SLEEP

All those who served in France and Flanders can name many British cemeteries, and it is perfectly natural that one should wish to know, without the slightest suggestion of morbidness, what happened to the enemy dead. As an answer to the question, here is a photograph of the German Military Cemetery at Vermandovillers, immediately to the north of Chaulnes and in the heart of the Somme battlefield. These burial-places are kept in admirable order by French custodians, and it is of interest to note that fallen Germans were interred in pairs, head to head, so that two names appear on every cross

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CHAPTER XXII

WITH THE MUNITION WORKERS

One of the greatest problems that confronted this country on the outbreak of the Great War was the question of munitions. Not for many a long year had the British Army fought on the Continent of Europe, and neither in the size of the force available, nor in the munitions of war with which to equip it, were we, in 1914, prepared for the ordeal that lay ahead. The story of the building up of the Army has been told elsewhere in this work, but the solution of the munitions problem was an even more remarkable achievement, and one of which this country has reason to be proud. All those men who served at the Front in the early days remember the shell-shortage. Those who survived until the end remember likewise the intense artillery fire of the closing stages. That shells and every other type of munition were then at hand in ample quantity was the contribution of the munition worker, man and woman alike.

WHEREVER old soldiers forgather, one of the topics of conversation that are bound to crop up sooner or later is " Who won the War ? " The gunner, the infantryman and anybody else who may happen to be present will generally out with a plea for his own Arm. But in our quieter moments we are probably most of us agreed that, though the P.B.I. were called on in the nature of things to bear an unduly large share of the heat and burden of the day and of the casualties, the fact remains that the actual winning of the War was an affair in which everybody bore his part. No one Arm could have done it without the rest. It was a co-operative affair.

The Other 4,000,000

But there is another aspect of the struggle which the fighting man is more apt to forget. It was a national war to a far greater extent than any of the other struggles in which we have found ourselves engaged from time to time in our history. From first to last, somewhere about 5,000,000 men were enlisted in the armed forces. But another 4,000,000-odd men and women left their homes and their ordinary work and took on jobs such as making munitions and other things directly connected with the War, and without their whole-hearted co-operation it could not have been won.

The slogan " business as usual " did not take us far. The only time when it had any meaning was during the early period, before anybody, with the exception of a few far-sighted men like Lord Kitchener, had any real idea of the magnitude of the task that we had undertaken.

In the conversations that took place between the British and French General Staffs in the years 1906 to 1914, as to how we might assist our Allies in the event of an unprovoked attack by Germany, it was never suggested that our military contribution should be more than an expeditionary force of between four and six divisions ; and all our preparations were on this modest basis.

When war actually broke out in August, 1914, our mobilisation worked like clockwork, and the original B.E.F. was probably the most efficient force of its size that has ever left these shores. It was trained and equipped for a war of movement, and from Mons to the Aisne it proved itself admirably fitted to fill the rôle for which it had been designed.

It is interesting to take a glance at its equipment. The supply of aeroplanes now seems ridiculously inadequate—not more than 179 machines all told ; but it should be borne in mind that the aeroplane was essentially a development of the War, and that in 1914 we were probably as well off as any of the other combatants in this respect.

We had an excellent rifle, and knew how to use it ; which is perhaps the only excuse for the very low allowance of two machine guns per battalion. Our field artillery was equipped with the 18-pounder gun and the 4·5-inch howitzer, both admirable weapons that stood the test of war at least as well as, if not better than, their equivalents in any other army—not excluding the famous French 75-mm. The 60-pounder was a good gun, although it was hopelessly outclassed by the weight and variety of metal thrown by the German " heavies," designed originally for use against the French and Belgian frontier fortresses, and used, contrary to expectation, in open warfare.

Preponderance of Shrapnel

With the exception of a proportion of lyddite (a type of high explosive that we had used as far back as the Boer War) for the 4·5-inch howitzer and the 60-pounder, the whole of the shell available consisted of shrapnel, whereas both the French and Germans had gone in extensively for H.E. Our lack of this type of shell, and the delay in supplying it when asked for, were the subject of a good deal of acrimonious correspondence between Sir John French at G.H.Q. and the War Cabinet at home.

The fact of the matter is that the bulk of military opinion before 1914 had envisaged a war of movement ; and there is no doubt that against troops in the open, shrapnel is exceedingly effective. Anybody who has stood up to it will be agreed on this point. There was an instance in the early days of the War of an entire German company being wiped out, while in the act of crossing a bridge, by a single well-burst 60-pounder shrapnel shell.

But, if shrapnel is to be effective the fuses require very accurate setting, and in the heat of action this is possible only with highly-trained gunners. One of the reasons why the French and Germans adopted the H.E. shell before we did was that they had doubts about the fuse-setting capabilities of their short-service gunners.

But when the front was stabilised on the Aisne and the Germans went to ground, shrapnel was of little use against trenches, and there arose an urgent demand for H.E. The absence of this was probably the most serious flaw in our otherwise excellent equipment, and measures were at once put in hand to make good the deficiency. However, it is impossible to pour H.E. into shell-cases designed for shrapnel. A specially designed case is required if the H.E. is not going to prove more dangerous to the gun detachment than to the enemy —and *it takes the best part of a year to produce shells on a manufacturing scale when one has to start from the beginning.* This was among the first and most im-

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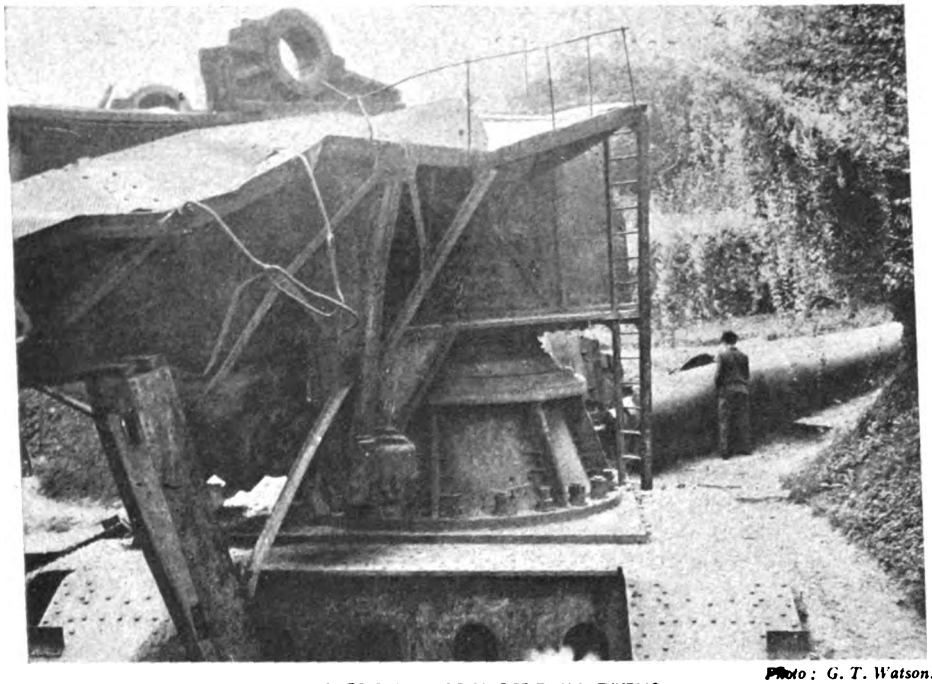

Photo: G. T. Watson.

A MONSTER GUN LIES IN RUINS

At Chuignes, 2½ km. south of Cappy, a short distance to the south of the River Somme, is the amazing war relic here depicted. It is the largest gun captured during the conflict, and is 70 ft. in length, with a calibre of 15 in. The gun was used for long-range bombardment of Amiens, and bears upon its breech "Krupp 1914."

portant lessons hammered into those responsible for the conduct of the home front in the years 1914–1918.

In the early days of the War, the task of those responsible for supplying the Army with its requirements was an extremely difficult one. Apart from the lack of H.E., and of various other things, such as hand-grenades, trench-mortars, and so on, that were necessary for trench-warfare, there was a grave shortage of guns and machine guns. We started the War with a reserve of 25 per cent.; and all, if not more than all, of this was absorbed in making good the losses incurred during the retreat from Mons.

The Sources of Supply

There were three Government factories: Woolwich Arsenal, the rifle factory at Enfield, and the Royal Gunpowder Factory at Waltham Abbey. Then there were the regular armament firms such as Vickers, Armstrong Whitworth, Birmingham Small Arms, Coventry Ordnance, Beardmore, Firths, Hadfield, and Cammell Laird. The practice in peace-time was to give these firms a certain number of Government orders, in order to keep their armament shops working on a skeleton basis.

To give an idea of the amount of armament work that these firms actually did for the Army in peace-time, the following figures are illuminating. "Between 1902 and August 4th, 1914, there were ordered from the trade in Great Britain, i.e. the 'armament firms,' 657 18-prs., 168 13-prs., 9 4·7-inch, 12 60-prs., 15 6-inch, 4 5-inch, and 1 9·2-inch.

"Taking all types together, the trade was called on to supply the British government with just under 1,000 guns and howitzers; or about 70 pieces a year. This was the average. But the great bulk of the 1,000 was manufactured in 1904–1905. In some years only two or three guns were ordered; in 1910–1911 the number was 0; and between May 1st and August 4th, 1914, it was 1."[1]

It is obvious that these firms in peace-time could never have made both ends meet if they had not concentrated the bulk of their production on ordinary civil engineering and shipbuilding work. By far the greater part of their peace-time armament labour—and that was little enough—was done for the Navy; and when the War broke out they had the greatest difficulty in dealing with the spate of orders that came in from the Admiralty, quite apart from the volume of work suddenly put upon them by the War Office.

To give an idea of the unprecedented magnitude of these demands, compare the above figures for peace-time requirements with these: "Between August, 1914, and May, 1917, first the War Office and then the Ministry of Munitions placed orders (with the same armament firms) for 17,737 guns and howitzers of all descriptions, together

[1] George A. B. Dewar, *The Great Munition Feat.*

Photo: G. T. Watson.

AN AUSTRALIAN SOUVENIR

This particular piece of ordnance was originally destined to be fired across the English Channel, had the French Channel ports been captured. The monster piece was actually taken by Australian troops, who promptly had the muzzle sawn off and dispatched it to Sydney Museum. The Germans had time only to blow up the breech with demolition charges

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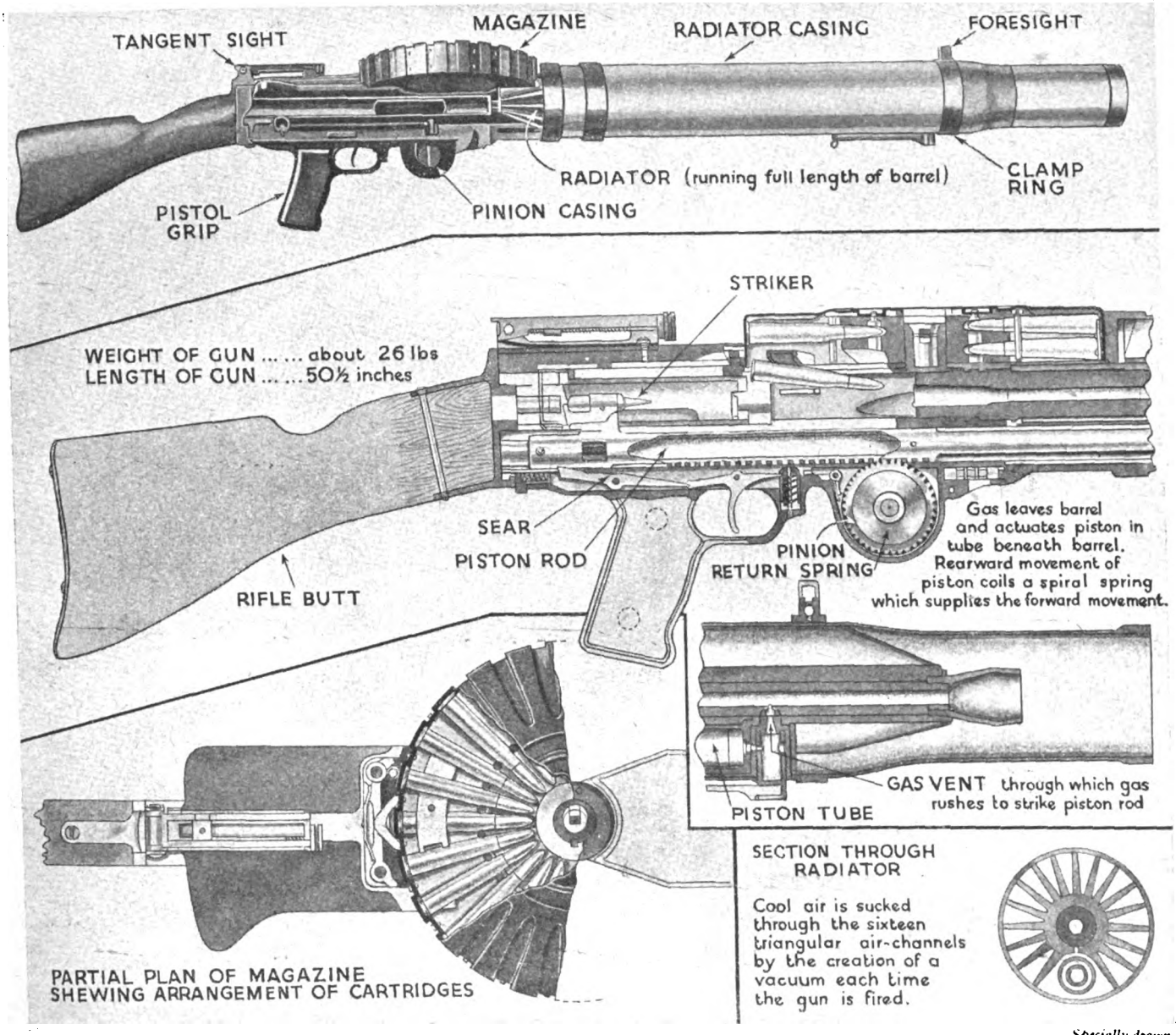
TANGENT SIGHT
MAGAZINE
RADIATOR CASING
FORESIGHT
RADIATOR (running full length of barrel)
CLAMP RING
PISTOL GRIP
PINION CASING
STRIKER
WEIGHT OF GUN ..... about 26 lbs
LENGTH OF GUN ..... 50½ inches
SEAR
PISTON ROD
PINION RETURN SPRING
Gas leaves barrel and actuates piston in tube beneath barrel. Rearward movement of piston coils a spiral spring which supplies the forward movement.
RIFLE BUTT
GAS VENT through which gas rushes to strike piston rod
PISTON TUBE
SECTION THROUGH RADIATOR
Cool air is sucked through the sixteen triangular air-channels by the creation of a vacuum each time the gun is fired.
PARTIAL PLAN OF MAGAZINE SHEWING ARRANGEMENT OF CARTRIDGES

Specially drawn.

THE MECHANISM OF A LEWIS GUN

In this composite drawing of a Lewis Gun we reveal the works of a weapon designed to speed up enemy "wastage." Still in the experimental stage at the outbreak of war, 250 of the guns were ordered early in August, 1914, then a further 1,250. Difficulties of manufacture and the shortage of labour held up delivery until July, 1915, and then only 621 were available. The first issue to the infantry was made on the 14th of that month, the allotment being one per infantry battalion in six selected divisions. By July, 1918, the maximum of 36 per infantry battalion was reached. Carried and fired by one man, the gun can expel bullets at the rate of several hundred rounds a minute. Owing to the rapid rate of fire, there is, in addition to the gunner, a man who acts as loader and carries the ammunition.

with a somewhat lesser number of carriages." [1]

No Limited Liability

It was difficult enough to keep pace with the requirements of the original Expeditionary Force, now swollen in numbers by the arrival of troops from India and the Dominions, and by the first units of the Territorial Army; but this was only a tithe of the task. It was all very well to talk in peace-time about limiting our military commitments, but it was very soon evident that there could be no limited liability about the job we had taken on. We were fighting for our lives, and if the War was to be won we should have to create a vast army on the Continental scale.

Kitchener put the case frankly to his countrymen, and issued his call for men. By the end of the year nearly 1,000,000 had enlisted, and the British Empire had altogether no less than 2,000,000 men under arms: The New Armies were coming into being, and had to be equipped. In a short time they, too, would be in action, swelling the total of munitions required to a hitherto undreamt-of figure. It was clear that the essential counterpart of a national army was an organisation on the national scale for equipping and supplying it.

In the spring of 1915 the whole matter was brought to a head by Colonel Repington, the Military Correspondent of *The Times*, who wrote that during recent attacks in France the shortage of H.E. had been "a fatal bar to success." It was known that he had taken this action after consultation with Sir John

[1] *Ibid.*

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Photo: G. T. Watson.

IN A GOOD FIELD OF FIRE

In the latter part of the War emplacements of ferro-concrete sprang up like mushrooms wherever there happened to be a good field of fire and the cover round about was scanty. Note particularly with what a lavish hand steel girders are embedded in the roof. This particular structure is of special interest because it bears the impress of the badge of the Royal Artillery. Our photographer found the emplacement to the north of Arras, and it must present problems to the farmer upon whose land it stands.

French at G.H.Q.; and Lord Northcliffe's papers, *The Times* and the *Daily Mail*, opened the campaign which finally resulted in the establishment of a Ministry of Munitions under Mr. Lloyd George.

It was an unfortunate way of getting things done, no doubt; but it is difficult to see what means other than vehement publicity would have sufficed to awaken the country and concentrate it on the tremendous task which lay ahead. At last, after ten months of earnest but distracted energy by a series of committees, munitions for the Army were put under a single and energetic central control.

On June 3rd, the new Minister of Munitions took the field and plunged into a whirlwind campaign in the North and West of England. A serious strike had broken out in South Wales, and he besought the workers to abandon trade union restrictions during the War, promising that the Government would restore them on the declaration of peace. He declared that the labour of women ought to be introduced into shell factories here, as had already been done in France.

Training of Women

In London he met the representatives of a number of leading trade union organisations, and discussed with them how the labour force could be increased, and how loss of time and efficiency through disputes could be prevented. Arrangements were made by which a number of essential munition workers who had enlisted were released by the Army, and, with the agreement of the trade unions, a start was made in the training of women for a type of work on which they had not hitherto been employed. At last the country was being organised for war on a scale commensurate with the danger that threatened us.

It will be of interest to take a glance at what was being done in some of the various munition establishments. Woolwich, as we have already mentioned, was one of the few pre-War Government arsenals. "On August 1st, 1914, the total number of hands employed in its Ordnance Factories was 10,866—all men. During the first week of the War it took on another thousand, and by the end of 1914 its total strength had risen to 23,000. It went on developing until the Armistice, when it was employing a grand total of 74,000 workers, 27,000 of whom were women."[1]

If we include the Navy Ordnance and Inspection Departments of the Arsenal, the total number of men, women, and boys employed was 96,000. It had become a great city, with its own houses, huts, hostels, and so on, 150 miles of railway, and 27 miles of roads. Probably, with the exception of Krupp's, it was the greatest arsenal in the world.

Woolwich made most things; guns, gun-carriages, small arms, small-arms ammunition, shells of all calibres up to 15-inch, and innumerable accessories. There was one record month when it turned out no less than 50,000,000 rounds of S.A.A. alone. The wages were good—often as much as £10 and £15 a week—but the hours worked were correspondingly long. There were times when men were at it for 100 hours a week.

A Picture of Woolwich

"To envisage Woolwich, to get a fair idea of its diversity and the immensity of its production, was like trying to grasp the scheme and scope of a great battle going forward on the Western Front. You could drive and walk through miles upon miles of material and seething energy at Woolwich as behind the battlefields of the Somme, and not the longest day sufficed to show you much more than a fraction of its effort. You might stay an hour or so among the workshops where naval guns up to 15-inch were being re-tubed, and where new guns were being made from the rough steel billets delivered from the North. You saw the mighty tubes

[1] George A. B. Dewar, *op. cit.*

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being tempered, lifted by cranes, and dipped red-hot into their baths of hissing oil.

"A few minutes later you were perhaps in some department like the tailors' shop, where women and boys were making trifling little paper cases for gaines and other shell components, and stitching shalloon and silk bags for the cordite cartridges that fire the shells, armour-piercing and high explosive, of the heavy naval and army guns and howitzers. In this department were made those delicate parachutes, some of them wrought of the finest white silk, for the Army's star shells, with larger parachutes of silk or cotton for aeroplane flares in reconnaissance work."[1]

Woolwich Arsenal was one of the most vital spots in the whole country, and it is curious that the German aircraft did not make more of this huge target that covered an area of nearly two square miles. The Zeppelins first came over Woolwich in February, 1915, but on this and many subsequent occasions they failed to hit the Arsenal. The only time in the whole War when they damaged it was in October, 1915, when six bombs fell on the shops, causing a fire that was put out without much difficulty, and wrecking one or two machines. The total casualties amounted to one man killed and a few injured.

In addition to the three Government establishments, the only shops that were in a position to take up War-work immediately on the outbreak of hostilities were those belonging to the officially recognised armament firms already listed. It was they who saved the situation in 1914 and 1915, before the Ministry of Munitions had been formed to undertake the task of organising the whole of the national production.

The Navy's Huge Demands

As we have said, the greater part of the armament work done by these firms in peace-time was for the Admiralty. From the outbreak of war onwards the Navy was clamouring for ships, guns, and shells, and its demands had to be met. To take the example of one firm only, Armstrong Whitworth's contribution to the war-time expansion of the British Navy was 12 armoured ships, 11 cruisers, 8 sloops, and 11 submarines. Besides this they constructed two floating power-stations, a floating crane capable of lifting 250 tons, two train-ferry ice-breakers to keep clear the passage to Archangel, and two train-ferry steamers to carry munitions between Richborough and France.

Ibid.

The same firm made no less than 4,000 guns for the Navy, as well as 9,000 of all calibres for the Army, together with their carriages. Their total output of shells during the War was 14½ million. In 1914 they made six aeroplanes; in 1918 their production had risen to 423. They also constructed a number of airships for the Admiralty, including the R29 and R33.

The Birmingham Small Arms Company concentrated on turning out rifles and Lewis guns—the latter in itself a product of the War. During the South African War they had reached a production of 2,500 rifles a week—the Lee-Metford in those days. After that, Government orders fell off, and in the five years before 1914 they only made 7,000 service rifles; had it not been for a certain demand for sporting rifles, they would have had to close down their shops altogether.

With the outbreak of War the orders poured in, until in 1918 they were turning out a total of 10,000 weapons a week. The rifle is one of the most complicated of arms to produce, being made up of 131 distinct parts, so that 10,000 rifles involved the weekly turning

Photo: G. T. Watson.

A PHŒNIX-LIKE WAR MEMORIAL

Neuville St. Vaast, near neighbour of Vimy, only 6 km. north of Arras, was just within our lines at the beginning of the Battle of Arras, April 9th, 1917, but even then the village itself had long been utterly demolished. To-day, however, one may see there this most arresting memorial—a cairn of stones actually collected from the débris, a symbolic hand rising from among them and grasping a representation of the flame of victorious life. Note at the wrist the identity disc bearing the name of the village, the shells, rifles, steel helmet, and other "Souvenirs."

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out of no less than 1,310,000 components.

Kynochs, a firm speciaiising in S.A.A., turned out some 25,000,000 rifle cartridges a week, 700,000 revolver cartridges, 5,000,000 cartridge-clips, and 110,000 brass cartridge-cases for the 18-pounder gun. Hadfields specialised, in their Hecla works at Sheffield, in turning out armour-piercing shells for the great naval guns such as the 12-inch, 13·5-inch, and so on, up to 18-inch. The 18-inch shell weighs a ton-and-a-half, and has a maximum range of 30 miles; at 15 miles it can pierce hard-faced armour 16½ inches thick. Later in the War Hadfields started making guns, as well as shells, and in 1916 they made the first steel helmets of a special manganese-steel.

Industry Revolutionised

The arsenals and the professional armament firms between them had to supply the plans and the experts for building up the new National Factories that the Ministry of Munitions began building in 1916, and also for the numerous commercial concerns which left their ordinary work and converted their plant to war requirements. A few examples of these industrial "volunteers" will give an idea of the way in which British industry was revolutionised:—

"I found one or more instances of a bridge-builder turned into a trench-bomb maker, a railway-signal factory turned into a gun-sight maker, a sewing-machine firm into a maker of gaines. A Court jeweller became a maker of optical instruments; a cream-separator maker—primers; a gramophone maker—fuses; a lead-pencil maker—shrapnel; a paper maker—trench and aeroplane bombs; a cloth factory—hand grenades; a gas geysers maker—aeroplane tanks; a yacht builder—seaplanes; a firework firm—hand-grenades; a church decorator—aircraft wings; a wire-netting maker—complete aeroplanes (except for the engines); a boot and shoe maker—gun mountings; water meter factory—fuses; window-frame maker—shells (150,000 a week); well sinkers—trench and aeroplane bombs; syphon maker—fuses; sheep-shearing firm—shells; music-roll maker—gauges; textile manufacturer—field-kitchens; baking-machine maker—high-explosive shells; Birmingham jewellers—shells; printers' metal and plates—shrapnel; bedstead makers—shells, fuses and primers; carpet makers—ditto."[1]

The infantryman who cursed the whole breed of gunners to Hell for planting a premature behind his advancing line might, or might not, have felt more kindly if he stopped to reflect that the offending shell was exploded by a fuse made by a young lady aged 18 years, who had never before left home and was now working in a factory of which the normal job was turning out iron bedsteads. On the British side the War was certainly a triumph of adaptability.

1 George A. B. Dewar, *op. cit.*

Photo: A. P., Paris.

IN BATTLE-SCARRED MÉHARICOURT

Méharicourt, one of the countless Somme villages whose place-names have the same termination, is to be found a fraction over 3 km. from Chilly, and about twice that distance south-west of its larger neighbour Chaulnes. It wears its naked war wounds in this picture, and was actually taken at the gallop by the 8th Hussars, 1st Cavalry Division, on August 9th, 1918. Behind the cavalry—it was a day of spirited mounted actions in this area—came the 2nd Canadian Division to consolidate the position.

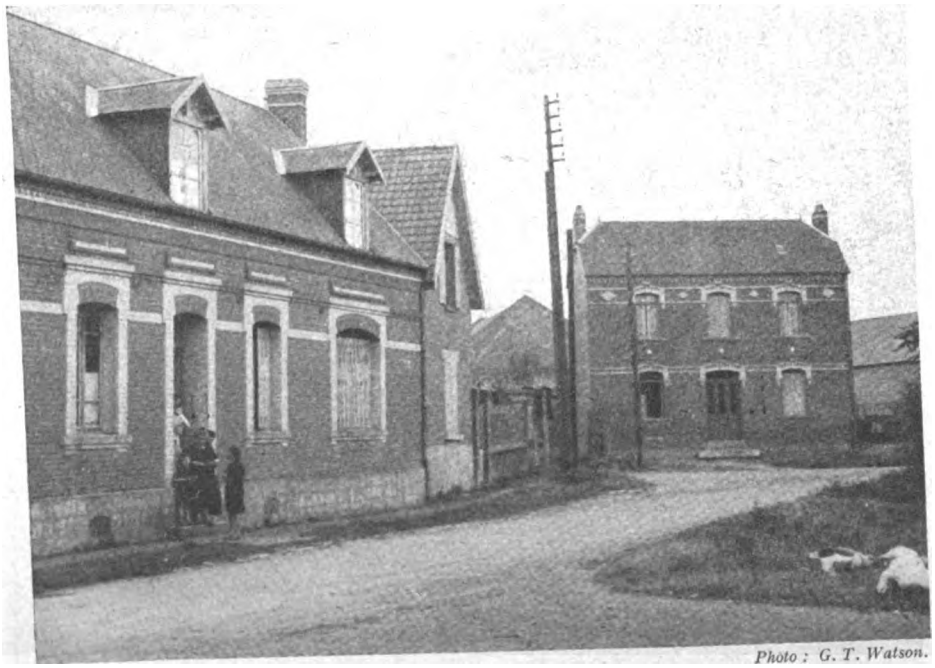

Photo: G. T. Watson.

WHERE BUSY DUCKS HUNT WORMS

War-scarred Méharicourt and this Somme village as one may see it to-day are by contrast darkness and daylight, and quite substantial buildings have taken the places of the battered wrecks. Even the ducks searching for their dinner in the greensward at the road junction typify the peace that has spread over the scene where once the cavalrymen thundered through. The woman standing in the doorway is daughter to the "Madame" of the former building.

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Photo: A. P., Paris.

BEFORE THEIR MODEST WOODEN HUT

The tiny Somme village of Béthencourt, some 7 km. north by slightly east of Nesle, was practically obliterated in the War, and was successively occupied by British and German forces. To a French family, however, the place was home, and they stayed on bravely, at one period living in this military hut. The romance lies in the fact that the woman on the right can be seen again in the picture below—twenty years after.

The engineer played a great part in the winning of the War, and to realise just what his contribution meant, one has only to recall the thousands of guns, tanks, and ships, the millions of rounds of ammunition of all calibres, and the countless other requirements, that were turned out by the arsenals, factories, and workshops great and small throughout the country while the struggle lasted.

The Scientist in the Background

But, less obvious than the engineer, but no less indispensable, there was somewhere in the background the man of science. The public has heard little of his work, and for two reasons. First, whilst the conflict endured there was a natural need for secrecy; and secondly, perhaps even more important, the man of science is generally the last person who can explain his processes in intelligible terms to the layman.

The scientific laboratories of all our universities were engaged on problems relating to the War. We owe it to them that an efficient gas mask was produced within a few weeks of the first use of gas by the Germans. We owe to them the invention of various means of dealing with the submarine menace, the technical improvements in our aircraft which enabled us to keep pace with the enemy in this respect, and a dozen other things without which we should have found difficulty in holding our own.

Some people may remember the imperative need for field-glasses that arose at the beginning of the War, and Lord Roberts's appeal to patriotic people to let the Army have their binoculars, telescopes, opera-glasses, or anything that would magnify. How many know the state of affairs underlying this appeal? Before the War there was in England one solitary pioneering firm making optical glass—Chance Bros. of Birmingham. The Germans had built up a great optical glass industry at Jena, and we were drawing the greater part of our supplies from there.

When the War broke out, the Services required telescopes, periscopes, field-glasses, photographic lenses, range-finders, dial sights, clinometers, and a dozen other instruments, and we had not so much as the means of replacing breakages and losses, let alone catering for a vast expansion. We lacked instruments, factories, skilled hands, and even one of the essential ingredients of optical glass—potash. Yet in 1918 we were making 75 different varieties of optical glass—in 1913 we only knew of eleven varieties—and were turning out instruments every bit as good as those of Zeiss.

Even Youth was Enrolled

The firms doing the work had to create their own staffs. They chose them, mostly girls, and sent them to do courses of instruction, lasting from three to six months, at places such as the Northampton Polytechnic in Clerkenwell. Sir Herbert Jackson relates how he went to inspect a new factory in 1917, which had been rushed into being the year

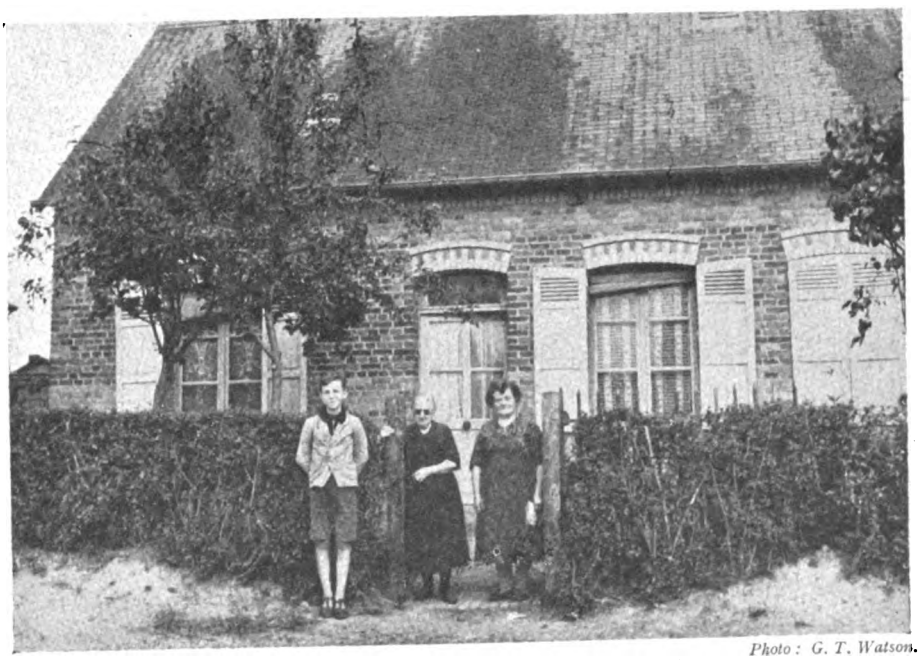

Photo: G. T. Watson.

AN UP-TO-DATE "VILLA RENAISSANCE"

Here is the modern villa which has arisen to replace the wooden hut. "I shall never forget taking this photo," writes our cameraman. "The moment I showed her the print of the hut, the old lady broke down in uncontrollable sobs, telling me disjointedly how her husband (seen in the top picture) had died from his wartime privations. She possessed no portrait of him, and her memory of him was growing dimmer and dimmer. 'How much?' she asked, pitifully, pointing to the print, a copy of which I was able to secure for her."

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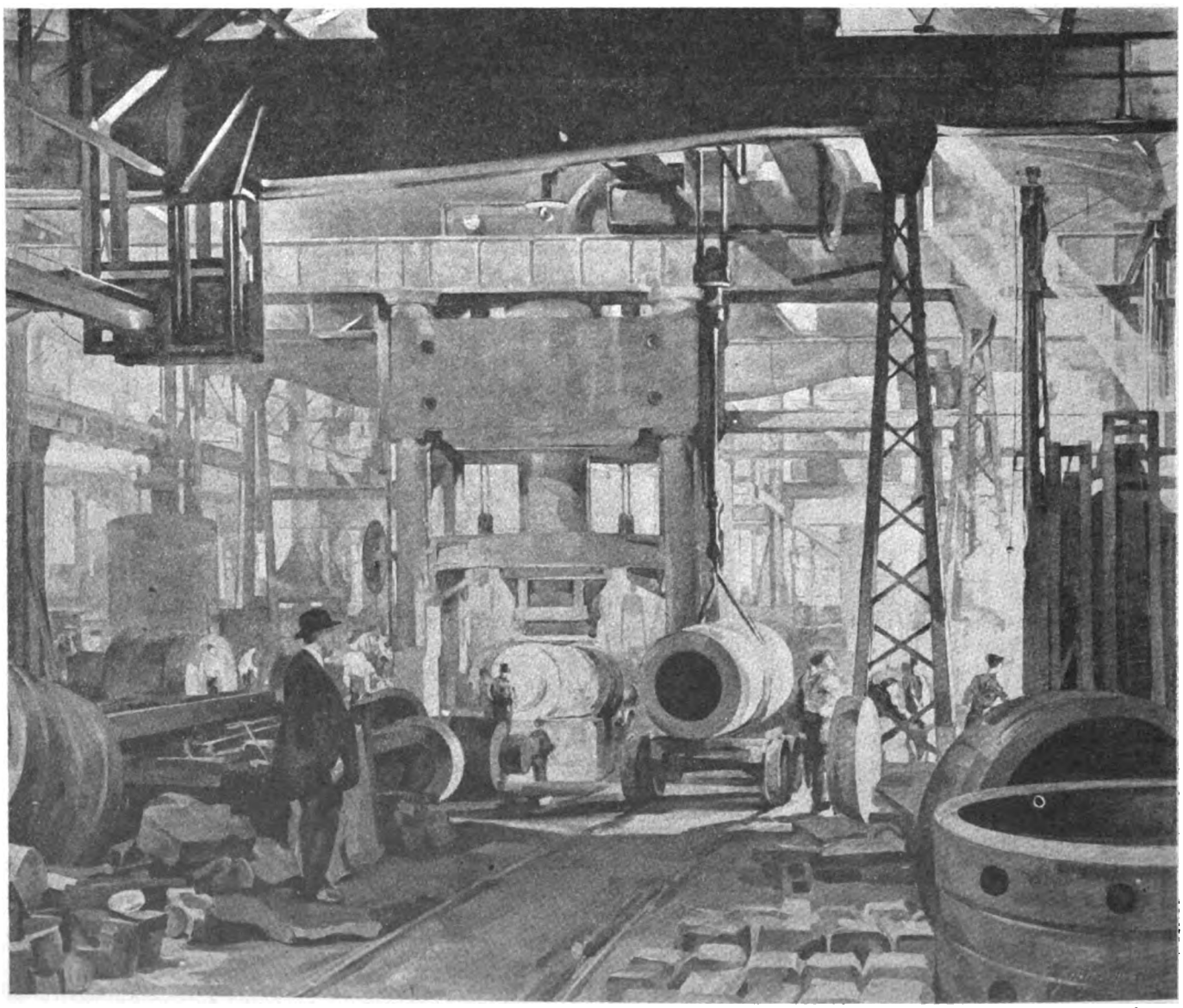
before. He found it already going full blast. He noticed one very young girl polishing lenses. "You must excuse her if she is not very good at it," said the manager; "she only came in at nine o'clock this morning for the first time." It was then eleven o'clock.[1]

Another "key-industry" that was in German hands in 1914 was the manufacture of magnetos. Magnetos were required for firing the engines of motor-cars and lorries, aeroplanes, and all types of petrol-engine; and before the War we were importing 90 per cent. of our requirements from Germany, where the firm of Bosch was as supreme in this field as that of Zeiss in the realm of optical glass. We had to build up a magneto and sparking-plug industry, with all its plant and workers, out of nothing.

Before the War the man who made guns, shells, fuses, and the rest of it was a skilled craftsman who had served his apprenticeship at the trade; and in the early days of the struggle, before it was generally realised what we were up against, the trade unions set their face against "dilution"—that is, the introduction of fresh and untrained labour into the industry. We have seen how Lloyd George, when he became Minister of Munitions, was able to convince them of the necessity of submitting to "dilution" as the only way of backing up the fighting men and winning the War. The thought of leaving one's pals to be pounded to a bloody jelly in their trenches, whilst their own guns are unable to reply for lack of ammunition, is not a pleasant one.

The present writer, who was a gunner, has a vivid recollection of one attack. Our infantry got across with few losses, and the guns lifted just at the right moment to let them over the parapet with bomb and bayonet before the

[1] George A. B. Dewar, *op. cit.*



From a painting by Anna Airy in the Imperial War Museum.

A JACKET FORGED IN A PRESS

The handling and shaping of vast masses of molten metal, so awe-inspiring to the mind of the average person, was naturally an everyday occurrence in munition shops. In this picture, inspired at the Armstrong-Whitworth works, Openshaw, the jacket of an 18-in. naval gun is about to be forged in a hydraulic press. The main piece has just been drawn from the furnace on the right, and this red-hot mass weighs 60 tons. The billet, or chief gun casing, has been roughly forged and bored through, and now reaches the press. Men working in concert indicate how the gun should be swung by the crane to bring it into the right position. The action of the press is gentle and squeezing, though exerted with enormous force. Meanwhile, the next billet has been run into the shop by a railway engine.

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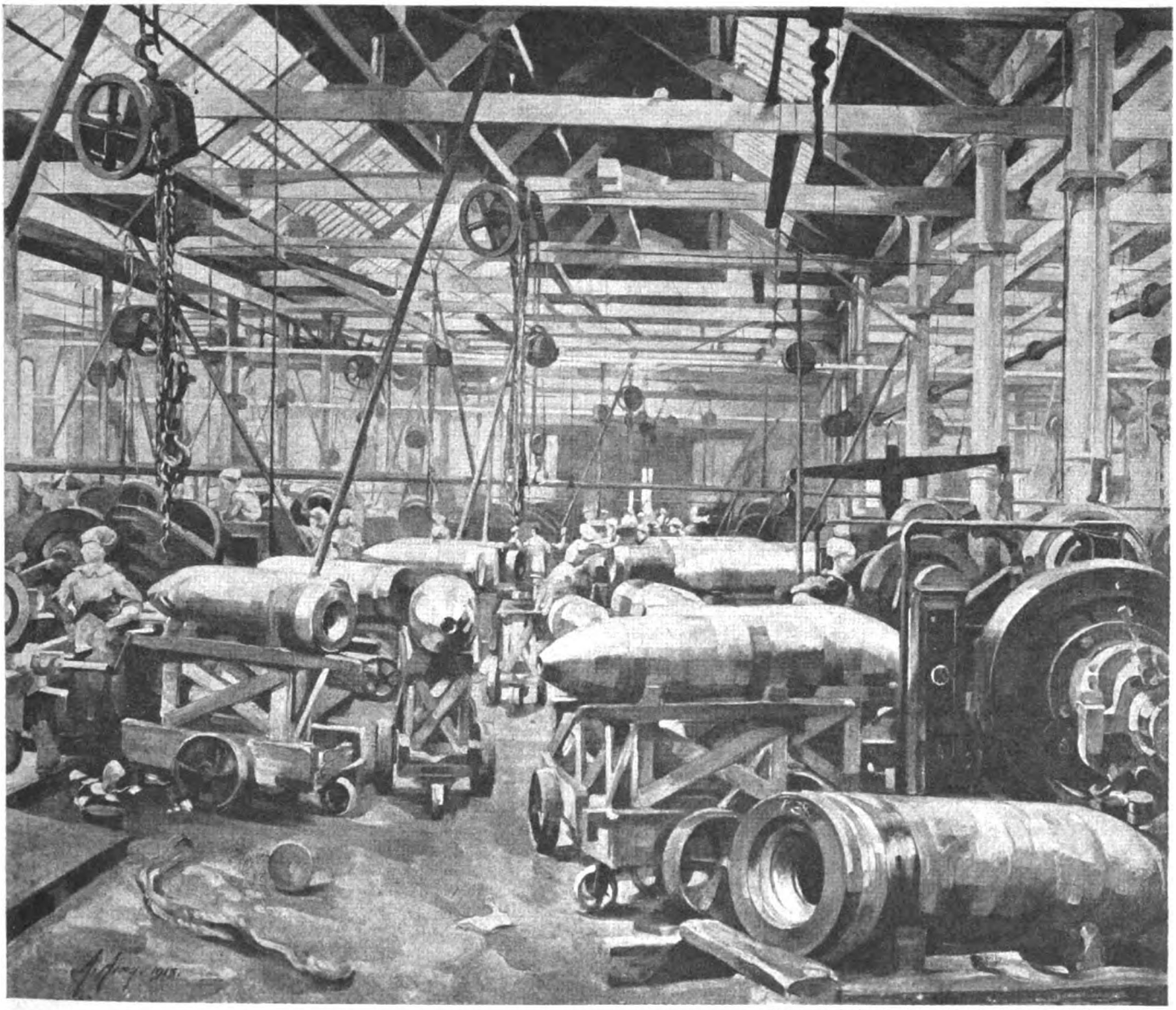

From a painting by Anna Airy in the Imperial War Museum.

IN A MACHINE SHOP FOR MONSTER SHELLS

When one considers the weight of projectiles of large calibre, it is marvellous how easy the process of handling was made in the course of manufacture. There is a wealth of detail in this spirited picture, and the shop seen is one at the works of the Singer Manufacturing Company, Clydebank, Glasgow, where 15-in. shells were turned and had deftly fitted to them their copper driving-bands. This particular shop was staffed entirely by women, working under a foreman. To each machine a derrick was provided, so that the massive shell might be handled without delay by two of the girls. Each shell could be run about the shop on a small wooden bogie. Seen in the foreground, the shell marked P. 38 has come back for some slight adjustment.

enemy could bring their machine guns into action. I watched them, from my O.P., " mopping up " and consolidating their gains. Then I saw the enemy leave their trenches and counter-attack —wave after wave of them ; and, at the same moment, their barrage came down like a curtain of fire on the captured trench.

Cheerful News

Our guns were soon blowing great lanes in the attacking masses ; there was no doubt about it, we should hold them. Just at that moment a signaller thrust a message into my hand in an envelope marked " confidential." I tore it open, and read : " There is no ammunition behind your waggon lines."

It would have been murder to stick to the letter of trade union principles in the face of that sort of thing, and so " dilution " came about. Training establishments were set up where a nucleus of the new hands could be given intensive courses to qualify them for filling the necessary semi-skilled posts, and from first to last somewhere about 50,000 men and girls passed through them.

Munition-making of all kinds calls for work of precision. Behind the difficulty of producing guns and shells in 1915 there was another trouble, more obscure than those we have mentioned, but no less difficult to cope with. All the various parts of gun, shell, and fuse must be minutely tested, for the least inaccuracy will make them a source of danger to those who have to handle them.

The few sets of gauges that were in existence were inadequate to meet the needs of expansion. Woolwich alone was unable to cope with the demand. A number of sets were obtained from Sweden, each small, flat strip of beautifully finished and polished steel accurate to the 100,000th part of an inch. But,

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Photo: Imperial War Museum.

THE FINISHED CARTRIDGES FOR SMALL ARMS

It is a fact that during the War about 5,000,000 men were enlisted in our armed forces, but it is quite as remarkable to hear that about 4,000,000 men and women left their normal employment and their homes to take up such work as munition-making. Before the conflict Woolwich Arsenal, where girls are here seen with finished small arms cartridges, was one of but three Government factories.

INSPECTING THE CASES OF SMALL ARMS AMMUNITION

At one period in the War, immediately prior to the Armistice, some 74,000 workers were in constant employment at Woolwich Arsenal, and of these 27,000 were women, of whom some are seen in the photo below engaged in a detailed inspection of the cases for small arms ammunition. High wages were paid, but it was not easy money and some of the men worked 100 hours a week.

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

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Photo : Imperial War Museum.

GAUGING THE THICKNESS OF SHELL-HEADS

Meticulous accuracy of size was essential in the finish of shell-cases, and in this picture girls are seen gauging the thickness of the heads, one of the workers stamping with a die the approval mark of her department. Women first began to flock into munition factories in the spring of 1915 ; and, after about three months' tuition, became amazingly proficient in skilled labour of many types.

METAL-TURNING IN THE LATHE SHOP

Women's work in munition factories was bounded solely by their physical strength, and seldom by any want of skill. After a short period of training, women were put to work on lathes ; and in the department illustrated below, the copper fitments for shell cases are being skilfully turned. During 1917 it was ordered that of the workers engaged in producing shells of up to 4·5-in. calibre 80 per cent. must be women.

Photo : Imperial War Museum.

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Photo: Imperial War Museum.

HERE STOOD THE VILLAGE OF MONTAUBAN

You would have found Montauban on a map some 8 km. to the east of Albert, hard by the well-known railway line which ran on to Guillemont and circled round to Combles. Of the actual village, however, there would have been nothing but the ravished site here illustrated. Montauban figured in the First Battle of the Somme, falling to the 30th Division on July 1st, 1916, this division being assisted by the 18th, which took the brickworks to the east and the ridge on the west.

because they came from a neutral country, with which difficulties in a struggle such as the World War might conceivably arise, it was felt that a home source of supply must be found.

The services of the National Physical Laboratory were called in. Early in 1915 their staff of workers accustomed to gauge-testing amounted to five men, and they may have turned out at most 1,000 gauges a year. Towards the end of 1917 they were testing 10,000 gauges *a week*, and their original staff had grown to 200—men, women, and boys.

Photo: A. J. Insall.

"HIGH STREET" IN MONTAUBAN TO-DAY

This is the main street running through the Montauban which has been reared again on the site of the old village. Mud there still is, and the proverbial café, but little children toddle on the spot which once resounded to the bark of machine guns, the whine of rifle bullets, and the crashing of shells. We lost Montauban toward the end of March 1918, and retook it five months later.

No account of munition work during the War would be complete without some special reference to the women who comprised more than half the total of all munition workers. Many of them had no previous factory experience; thousands came straight from their homes, or from domestic service and similar occupations where the limits of accuracy required amounted to nothing more exacting than measuring out the ingredients for making a pudding or snipping off a yard of lace.

Suffragettes Throw in Their Weight

In the years before the War, many of the ablest and most energetic women in the country had thrown themselves fiercely into the Women's Suffrage Movement. Anybody who can cast his mind back to those times will remember the extraordinary lengths to which the militant suffragettes were prepared to go in pursuit of their claim to the vote. Burning churches, throwing themselves under horses' hoofs on the Derby course, chaining themselves to railings, and hunger-striking in prison, were only a few of them. But the day before the outbreak of War, the executive committee that had been running the "Votes for Women" campaign decided to drop its political activities, and to place its services at the disposal of the Government.

By the spring of 1915 the vanguard of the army of women had made its appearance in the munition factories. "The effects of diluting skilled labour with quickly trained women were illuminating. There were even cases where new and unskilled hands did better work in producing munitions than trained labour. . . . Women with a three months' training or less turned out parts of fuses, magnetos, optical instruments, and all kinds of work hitherto restricted to highly skilled men. I saw them in numberless factories, large and small, in the industrial districts, handling gauges and managing gun and ammunition lathes as if they had been bred to the work."[1]

By August, 1916, women were already working on a large number of munition processes, and during the last year of the War they were engaged in practically every operation in factory, foundry, or laboratory, for which they had the physical strength. In 1917 it was laid

[1] George A. B. Dewar, *op. cit.*

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down by the Ministry of Munitions that 80 per cent. of the workers engaged on contracts for making all types of shell up to and including the 4·5-inch must be women.

Before the War was over there were factories where every single process that went to the making of a shell, from the forging of the steel billets in the foundry upwards, was carried out by women. The War could never have been won without their work.

A National Affair

If there is one lesson that stands out clearly from all the mass of argument and controversy which we have read and listened to in the last twenty years on the subject of the War, it is this: whatever it may have been in the past, war in these days is a national affair, and it can only be won if everybody in the country is prepared to pull his or her weight in his or her own sphere.

Of old, Britain won her wars on the battlefield, on sea or land, and there the matter ended. But from 1914 to 1918 a medley of claims were put forward, beside which the famous remark that the Battle of Waterloo was won on the playing-fields of Eton sounds blushing modesty.

One statesman announced that the War would be won or lost on the wheat-fields of Britain, another said in the shipyards; a third claimed kitchens and store-cupboards, and a fourth the subscription-list to the 5 per cent. War Bonds as the ultimate field of victory or defeat. In the enthusiasm of after-dinner oratory it has been declared, perhaps with more truth, that "the Allies swam to victory on a sea of petrol." The soldier would rather it had been beer.

In 1914 this country was not organised for war, but for peace; and the requirements of a war on an unprecedented scale had to be met, as they arose, by improvisation.

"A Damned Close-run Thing"

In order to win the War we had to trust the munition workers on the home front to produce and deliver in time huge quantities of guns, tanks, shells, mines, aeroplanes, and ships. There were quarrels between employers and employed over management and wages. There were strikes, sometimes the fault of one side, sometimes of the other. There were differences between employers and the State and between employed and the State. It was what the Duke of Wellington once called "a damned close-run thing."

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

IN THE FIFTH ARMY RETREAT

Many members of the British Forces, especially those with the Fifth Army during the historic retreat, will remember Coullemelle, 10 km. almost due west of the fine town of Montdidier, though off the main roads leading through to Amiens. The photograph gives one an impression of the ruined church and habitations in the Rue de l'Église on June 10th, 1918, the damage being due to "Jerry's" heavy shelling, though the enemy did not take the place, his greatest advance being to a point about 4 km. away.

However, the goods were delivered, and we emerged from the struggle victorious. The future may hold trials and difficulties no less taxing than those that we met and overcame in the years 1914–1918, but with our essential unity unimpaired we shall surmount them as we did twenty years ago.

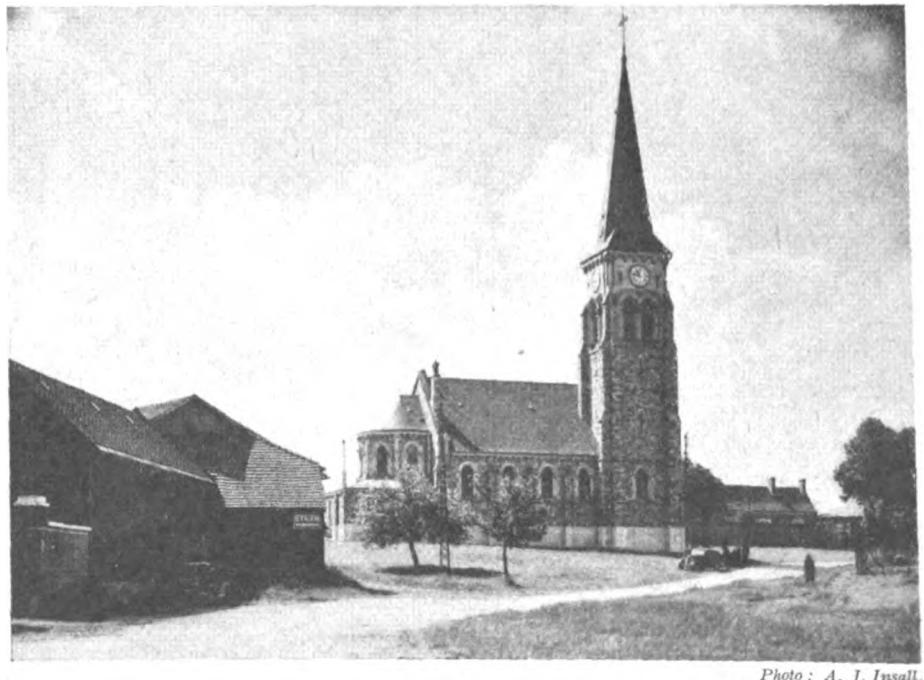

Photo: A. J. Insall.

THE RUE DE L'ÉGLISE IN PEACE-TIME

In this side street of Coullemelle trees are fast growing again. A new and noble church has proudly risen with fresh homes grouped around it, and the sunshine of a peaceful and fertile countryside gives warmth to the placid scene. French refugees of all ages, with their goods and chattels, cows with bleeding hooves, and waggons piled high with implements and household goods, passed pitifully through this village in the March Retreat.

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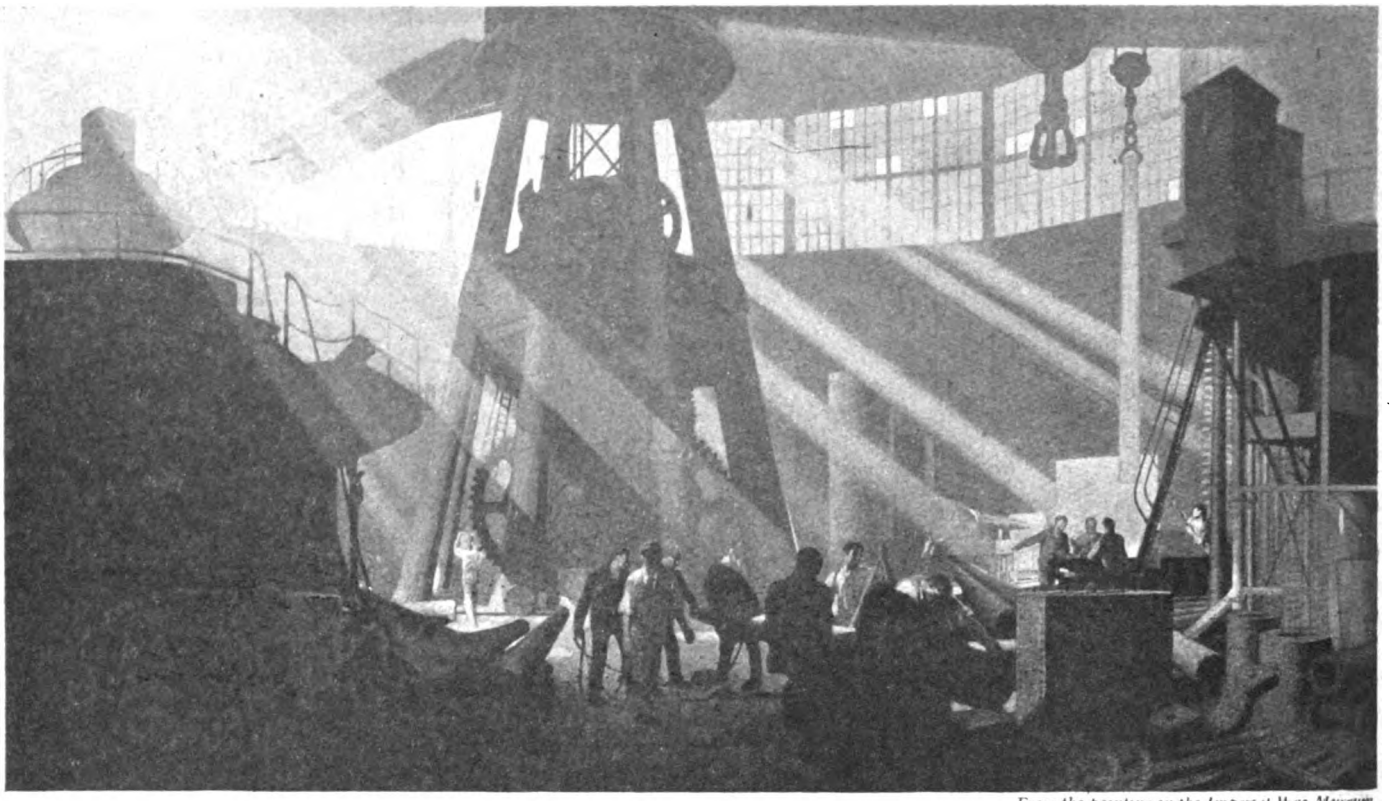
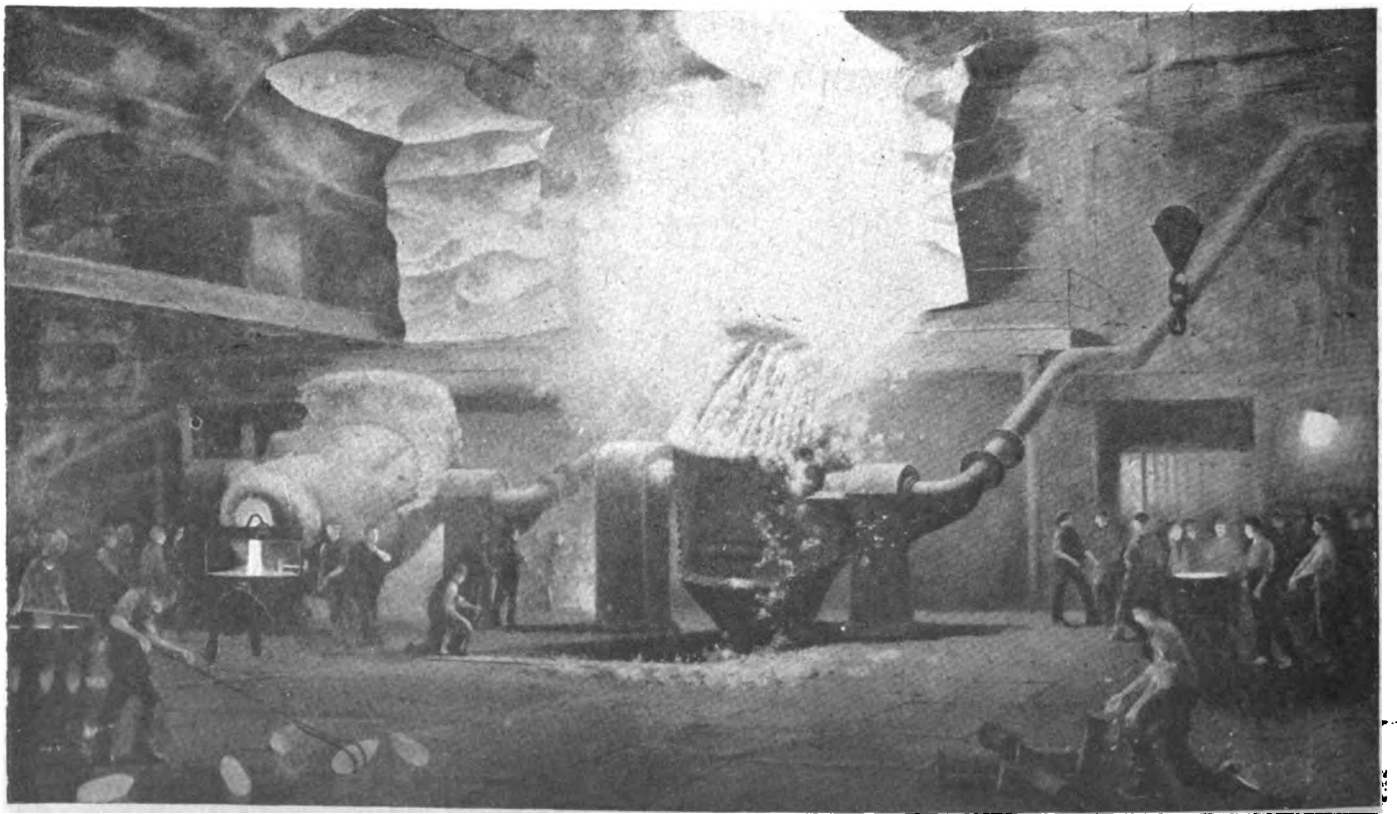


From the painting in the Imperial War Museum.

IN THE GUN FACTORY AT WOOLWICH ARSENAL

This painting by Sir George Clausen gives a realistic idea of one of the gun shops at Woolwich Arsenal, which stands close by the Kent bank of the Thames, and only a few miles from the heart of the Metropolis.



From the painting in the Imperial War Museum.

A MOLTEN "BLOW" FROM THE STEEL CONVERTER

In this scene, the vast converter on the right is in the act of a "blow," i.e. a blast of compressed air is being driven on to a cauldron of molten metal. By means of the "blow," impurities are eliminated from the metal. On the left, molten steel is seen pouring like water into a ladle, which will be conveyed by overhead crane to the shell moulds. This picture of the Royal Laboratory Shell Foundry at Woolwich Arsenal is by William Hyde.

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CHAPTER XXIII

MEMORIES V.—CONCERNING OFFICERS AND N.C.O.'S

The following chapter, by one who describes himself as a ranker, will be recognised as something that rings true. The private soldier of the Great War was not the mercenary of other days. He represented the British nation. He was drawn, not from one class, but from every class. This being so, the average standard of intelligence was high. The men, as they were called, quickly became adept at sizing up those placed in authority over them, and the vast majority of one-time privates who survive to-day are able to conjure up memories of officers and N.C.O.'s somewhat akin to those recorded here.

We who served in the ranks, we civilians disguised as soldiers, were often rather critical of our officers. They, naturally, were critical of us. So far, honours were equal; and when it came to face-to-face expressions of opinion, they had the advantage. But while we knew (because they told us plainly) what they thought of us, they could only guess what we thought of them. Sometimes they guessed right. There was a story in those days of an officer who made it a practice, after he had ticked a man off, to pause significantly and add "And you!"

A Composite Character

"Officers"—as we used to say—"I've —— well met 'em." Looking at them through the mist of years, they all roll into one—a composite character, boyish and middle-aged, cool and reckless, grave and humorous, aloof and intimate; a martinet lapsing into an indulgent father; a thwarter becoming an aider and abetter; an enemy melting into a friend.

As this impossible figure slowly disintegrates before my eyes, I can distinguish one of the first officers I met, a colonel in my days of training, a man of about fifty, whom foreign service or years on half-pay or a sound philosophy had so mellowed that he was incapable of an unkind word, and still more so of an unjust action. He addressed us bewildered recruits in terms such as these:

"Look here, you chaps. You mustn't regard me as a thing on a pedestal. I want you to think of me as a friend. I know you'll find this job hard and monotonous, but try to stick it. I shan't expect too much of you at first. And remember it's not all honey for me. I'm as badly bored as you are. But we all want to get this war finished, and the only way to do it is to be keen. So let's work together."

As you were! My memory has let me down. I never encountered this officer in the flesh. I remember now that he was described to me in a letter from a friend in another regiment. Such a character seemed incredible, and I protested to my friend that he must have confused the colonel with the chaplain, unless he had joined the Boys' Brigade by mistake. He replied, "The incredible colonel exists, but he doesn't count. The sergeants soon 'larned' us!"

For most of us recruits our own colonel was "that bloke on the horse" who came galloping up to us while we were at squad drill, and said, "Not a very promising lot, corporal. Keep them at it. . . . No, stand them at ease a minute. . . . Listen to me, you fellows. You're in the Army now, remembah. You've got to forget all you ever learned. I expect some smart drill from you. When you go overseas I want them to know where you came from. We shan't have you with us long, but while you're here you've got to work. Understand? . . . Carry on, corporal."

("That," said the corporal, when the colonel had ridden off, "was old Tinribs!")

The Purpose of Officers

Officers were then remote personages who appeared to exist only for the purpose of receiving our salutes. We did not see much of them in camp, but the streets were infested with them.

Saluting was an irksome necessity, but happily I soon made, quite unaided, the discovery that if I had to salute officers, they had to salute *me*. Not all of them were punctilious in returning salutes, and one of the few things I have to regret is that I never yielded to my impulse to pull them up about it. "Look here," I wanted on many occasions to say, "that was a very slack salute. You know better than that, surely. Don't let me have to speak to you again."

(The only satisfaction I ever got in that way was when I was home on leave, and then it was not an officer who was concerned. I had the great joy of pointing out to a sergeant-major whom I met that he was walking about with a button-stick clinging to his shoulder strap.)

The officers in my training battalion were charming fellows, I am sure (one of them gave me twopence for holding his horse outside a restaurant), but I did not get to know them. I had so few contacts with them. Possibly they were attending lectures on "Winning the Confidence of Your Men."

Good officers predominated over not-so-good in the proportion that a kindly observer of humanity would expect. "Good" here does not necessarily mean "efficient" in the strict military sense of the word. The qualities that made a good officer from the men's point of view are not easily defined, but certainly no officer was good who had not learned when to be deaf, dumb, and blind—and when not to be.

This necessary wisdom most of them acquired overseas, together with the conviction that Kipling had not said the last word about a private soldier's psychology and character, or the text-book made the final pronouncement on the behaviour of men in the mass.

It was inevitable that we should have liked some officers better than others, that some should have earned our respect without our warm regard, that we should have despised some for their deficiencies on parade, while admiring their imperturbability under fire.

Talent Where Talent Mattered

I remember a platoon commander who could always be trusted to get us into an unholy mess when our captain took it into his head to give us company-drill while we were out for a rest.

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At the command "On the left, form line!" for example, our platoon (No. 11), in spite of a sergeant playing sheep-dog and our own goodwill, usually got entangled with No. 10, or finished up in the open country well to the left of No. 12. Yet this officer was the best in the battalion for care of his men in the trenches; and the fact that his platoon usually got the most comfortable billets could not be attributed to mere coincidence.

I have an odd recollection of him when, through circumstances beyond his control, he was temporarily in charge of the company. He might have pleaded that it was only a little company. There were about two dozen of us left.

We had been relieved, and had trudged for hours in the darkness through knee-deep mud, winding along in single file through the chaos of floundering traffic, straying off the road to skirt water-filled shell holes, becoming enmeshed in straggles of barbed wire, losing our way and being misdirected, wandering into gun emplacements whose occupants were inhospitable—in fact, going through the usual routine following a relief during an offensive. When we stopped for a rest, we fell asleep. Only the officer, tired as he was, kept awake to rouse us when he thought it advisable to do so.

Photo: G. T. Watson.

ONCE SHAKEN BY THE ROAR OF BATTLE

Here is a portion of Vimy Ridge, recently photographed on a damp and misty morning with the famous Memorial seen almost opalescent through the haze. Sturdy young conifer trees are shooting up amidst the coarse untended grass, and Nature will soon obliterate for ever the scars of the conflict. We first heard of Vimy Ridge in 1916, when "Jerry" launched a heavy attack against our 47th and 25th Divisions.

It happened that, as day was breaking, I was sitting beside him on a pile of iron pickets. I watched him as with head erect he stared at the angry, red dawn. Presently his head began to droop, his chin sank on to his chest, and for a moment he enjoyed oblivion. Then he started up.

"No, you don't!" he said sharply to himself.

"If you feel like dropping off, sir," I suggested, "you can rely on me to wake you."

"Sleep," he replied. "Sleep—Death's half-brother. You can see the family likeness, can't you?"

He pointed to the others who, sprawled in the mud, might from their attitudes and their perfect stillness have all been dead.

"Some wake," he continued. "Some don't. Do you think you'll know when you're dead?"

"Of course not, sir. That's the beauty of it."

Photo: G. T. Watson.

NATURE SPREADS HER VERDANT CAMOUFLAGE

If you were to visit Vimy Ridge you would still see undulations to remind you of the craters and shell-holes of the War. Twenty years after, however, rough herbage and rasping grass spread their camouflage over the scene, and the going for the foot-slogger is not easy even to-day. It was on April 9th, 1917, that the Ridge was won by Canadian troops and the 13th Brigade of the British 5th Division. The enemy began his final withdrawal from the heights on the morning of April 13th.

The Broken Stick

He laughed and stood up, twirling his walking-stick. It was then that I noticed that his stick was broken—not more than eighteen inches long.

"Can I get you a pick-handle in place of that stick, sir? We seem to have struck an R.E. dump here."

"No, thanks. I couldn't bear to part with this. It's come through the day with me. The feel of the handle is so friendly."

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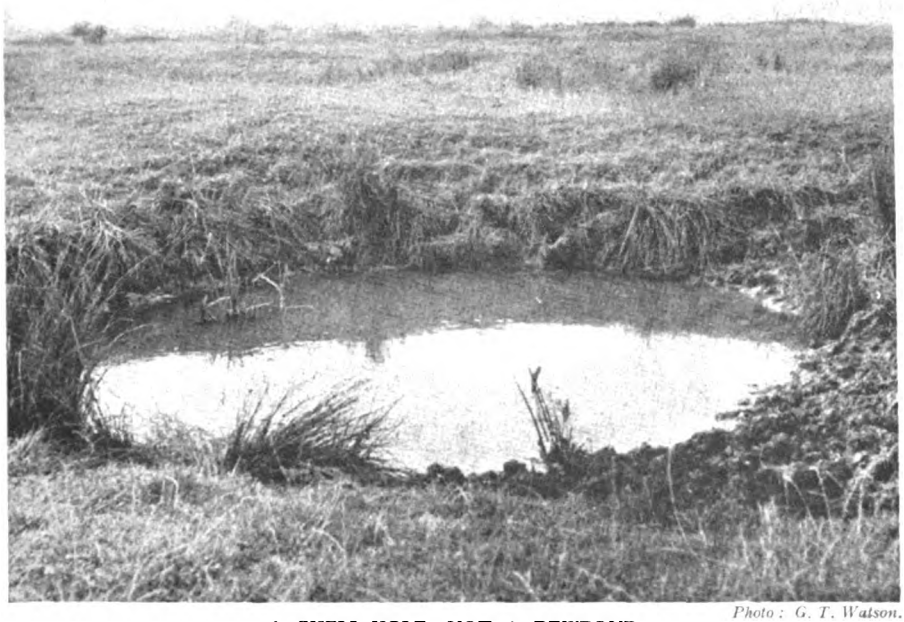

Photo: G. T. Watson.

A SHELL-HOLE, NOT A DEWPOND

"Where did that one go to, Herbert?" to quote the old War refrain, is answered by this miniature lake still to be found a little way off the beaten track, which pilgrims to the Memorial usually take. The shell that made this hole must have been an outsize, for the brackish, evil-smelling water is goodness knows how deep. Here is one convincing reply to the question "Is there anything left of 1914-18?" Except for the moor-like undergrowth and herbage, the trademark of this mighty projectile still remains as it was first fashioned.

"I bet you won't come on parade with it, sir."

"You wait!"

He did not come on parade with it. He never came on parade again. Our tents were bombed that night.

Most men were afflicted with dumbness when alone with an officer. I found many officers, when they had overcome their shyness, quite pleasant and intelligent to talk to—as long as I kept off the subject of the War. They did not seem to know much about that. (I was one of those strange people who were really interested in the War. During a discussion in a front-line trench a friend said to me, "Keep your hair on! Don't be so serious about the b—— War. Anyone would think you had 'arf a quid on it!")

We met some dud officers, physically and temperamentally unfitted to command. ("Couldn't command pussy," we used to say.) We felt sorry for them; we covered up their deficiencies; we did not let them down when we saw them unnerved in a tight corner. Paradoxically, this rare type of officer would sometimes inspire men with more courage and initiative by force of bad example than officers of the efficient kind who never got "wind up."

One of our officers was a poet, and had gone to the extent of publishing a book of verse. I know, because he sent me along the trench with it to the officer of the next platoon, and I looked at it on the way.

"Mr. Smith's compliments, sir," I said. "He's sent you a ration of poetry."

"Is it any good?"

"I think he wrote it before he came out, sir. It's very patriotic."

His eyes twinkled. "I see. Well, thank Mr. Smith, and tell him I'll lose no time in reading it."

The War was so Disappointing

I conveyed the message to Mr. Smith and he seemed gratified. Evidently he had not met that charming ambiguity before. Alas, he was no better as an officer than as a poet! He never saw a joke. No one could have been more abjectly miserable than he was at times. The War was so different from what he had imagined. When he had an opportunity to acquire the glory about which he had dreamed, he failed to rise to the occasion.

The officer to whom he sent his book was a different type altogether. In the course of time he was transferred to my platoon, and I got to know him well. Destined for the Church, he had abandoned his studies to join the Army. As an officer he was unorthodox, not to say heretical. If he is still alive and preaching, his sermons must be worth listening to.

I remember his coming into the trench

Photo: G. T. Watson.

HERE THERE WERE TRENCHES

It is just possible to visualise the zigzag trench system which once spread athwart this desolate, windswept expanse of Vimy's famous ridge. Nature in her own time and by her inexorable methods is levelling the indentations, but the sign standing sentinel-like in the distance is one that will always remain to bear its grim testimony. It is a board directing the traveller to a cemetery of the Imperial War Graves Commission away across the wastes.

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Photo: Imperial War Museum.

FOREFATHERS OF THE HAMLET RESTED HERE

Once upon a time, before the fury of 1914-18 broke loose, men, women, and little children worshipped in the church whose battered fragments are here seen. This village Bethel was the centre of life in Martinpuich, 10 km. or so south-west of Bapaume, and a similar distance from Combles, a great storm-centre in the Somme fighting. The place fell to our arms on September 15th, 1916, following the taking of Fiers, which lies a short distance due east. Here, two or three British tanks came into action, at the baptism of fire for these inventions in the Great War.

one morning and saying, " I've just got a *oiseau* for not being serious enough. The colonel said he'd heard that I actually *skylarked* with the men. So I'm not going to stand any more damned nonsense. See ? "

And then he caught me behind the ear with a snowball.

I did not mind that, because I was able to return the compliment. What I did object to was his assumption that I was as keen on patrols as he was. Roaming about No Man's Land was his hobby. One night we ran into some of the other side, and he got a Blighty one —at which he was genuinely annoyed. " I'll be back with you soon," he said. But he never came back. If he returned to France, some other regiment had the luck.

Our captain at that time was a ——. Old soldiers can fill in the blank. (How readily the word that must not be printed springs to the lips !) He was spit-and-polish mad. Even in the trenches he was finicky—a no-litter fiend of the worst kind. He would have had us trimming the grass in No Man's Land if there had been any left to trim. Not that he saw much of the line. When he was awarded a staff job we felt that the worst of the War was over.

His successor was a Scot, and sang ballads at our improvised concerts. Scottish ballads are either heart-rending or bawdy. He sang the heart-rending ones, until in the end our excessive show of emotion annoyed him. But he was a good officer, and there was no mockery in our grief when he was killed.

Officers and Civil Employers

Looking back, with a better appreciation of their difficulties than we then had, at the officers under whom we served, we can have nothing but admiration for almost all of them—admiration with a tinge of affection. Those who always lost the way, those who took wiring and digging too seriously, those who preferred an N.C.O.'s word to ours, those whose motto was " —— you : *I'm* all right," we can afford to forgive.

We do not need to be reminded that if in civil affairs we could get as square a deal and as much consideration from our superiors as we got from officers when we were in the Army, the world would be a pleasanter place to live in than some of us are finding it.

I think it is true that unpopular officers were mostly unaware of their unpopularity. But I am sure that some N.C.O.'s were proud of the dislike they provoked. Nowadays, I gather, bullies are not so much in favour with the

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authorities. It is thought that men may respond satisfactorily to fair treatment. It has even been suggested that patient and intelligible instruction of a backward recruit may produce better results than obscene abuse.

Whether the instructors who broke me in were a boon or a bane I have not yet been able to decide. Under them I learned (I won't say I was taught) a number of things, and they provided me with a foretaste of the horrors of war. But I still think their methods were crude.

There was one who was known to us as Banana Bill—I never discovered why. He was morose ; he never smiled ; he looked at us as though he hated us, and he had a nasty, rasping word of command. No peculiarity of feature or figure escaped his attention. A recruit below the average stature was referred to as " that short-—— little b——. *You*, I mean—you with duck's disease." A tall man was " six foot of —— silliness."

He liked to learn a recruit's Christian name. " 'Arold ! " he would say. " 'Arold, the terror of the 'uns ! . . . Architeck in civil life, was you ? Well, if you don't architeck that rifle when I give you an order I'll architeck you into the —— guardroom."

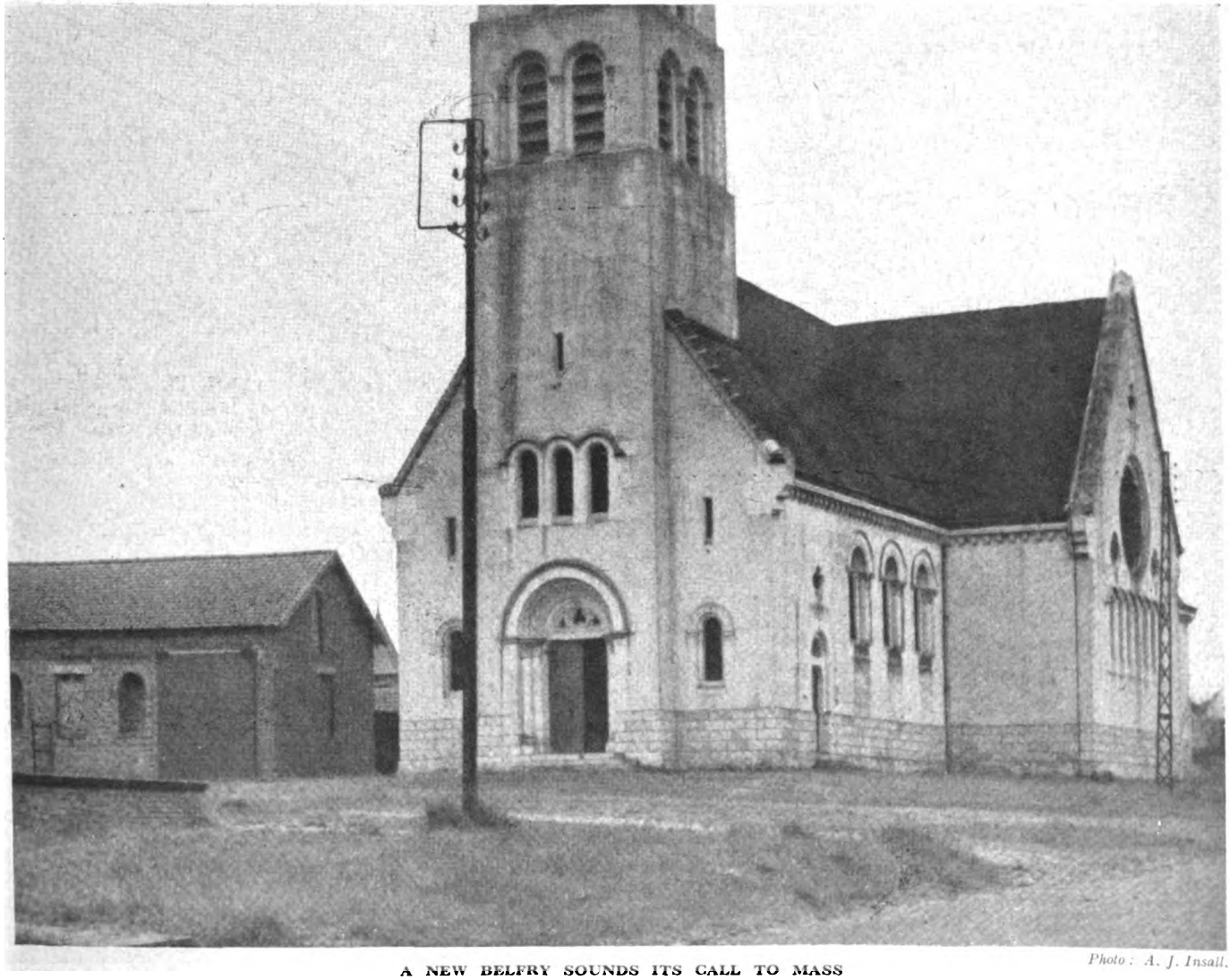
I prefer to forget him and his type, and to remember those N.C.O.'s who shared our lot abroad. Not all of them had enviable dispositions, but the majority were quick to shed their old habits and become surprisingly tolerant, good-humoured fellows. Even sergeant-majors modified their manners.

Passing of the " Canaries "

When the War got really going, of course, the old Regular type of N.C.O. disappeared. Its surviving representatives were deservedly given jobs at the base. Known as " Canaries," they were to be encountered in such places as the Bull Ring at Étaples, putting what with sublime effrontery they called " the fear of God " into newly arrived drafts.

The later N.C.O.'s tried to model themselves on the earlier, but most of them had been civilians too long. They posed as what we nowadays think of as " tough guys," but they could not keep it up. Their fundamental friendliness showed through.

The C.S.M. I knew last and longest was as different as can be imagined from the character more-or-less faithfully



A NEW BELFRY SOUNDS ITS CALL TO MASS

Photo : A. J. Insall.

Upon the shapeless ruins depicted on the opposite page, a new church with Norman arches and a stately tower has now been reared, unfenced and close beside some modern stabling—a creditable effort for a place so small as Martinpuich. To the 15th (Scottish) Division belongs the honour of first taking this village. The enemy came into occupation again toward the close of the fateful month of March, 1918. Five months later Martinpuich became ours once more, troops of V Corps being responsible. In this area is a British cemetery, containing four special memorials. One Canadian soldier and 34 Australians are here taking their last rest, with a large contingent of the fallen from the Motherland.

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portrayed in music-halls by heartless comedians. He was as perky and cheerful as a cock robin, and as quick-sighted, too. There was not much he missed.

He soon got me taped ; but there was no rancour in his forecast of my future, and as he proved a poor prophet, I am able to hope that his eyes are as bright and the tips of his moustache as sharp as ever. His lack of inches no doubt prolonged his life, though among the perils of street traffic he will not be at such an advantage. Do be careful, major !

Every Q.M.S. laboured under a stigma. It was popularly supposed that his position carried with it opportunities for acquiring an income apart from his pay, but I imagine that there were few quarter-blokes, however astute or unscrupulous, who gained any personal advantage. All their ingenuity, all their wangling ability, was employed on our behalf. If, sometimes, they had to manipulate facts and figures to secure ample supplies for the men for whom they were catering, I dare say their consciences gave them no trouble.

The Q.M.S. I remember best was one who on a cold, wet night signified his thanks for some tea I had offered him by lacing mine with rum which he carried in his water-bottle. (That happy memory was swiftly followed by another—of seeing his brains in his tin hat beside a scattered limber.)

Photo : Imperial War Museum.

SOME TYPICAL BRITISH TROOPS IN THE LINE

These cheery foot-sloggers were snapped in an emplacement not far from the point where Passchendaele Church originally stood. Whether it is the joy of facing a camera instead of enemy shrapnel and bullets that has brought such grins to their faces, no one can say. Together they formed a gun-team in the 33rd Bn. Machine Gun Corps, and the covering seen in the foreground is camouflage for their gun tripod. On the left the M.G. belts are drying amongst the timber of the "nest."

Platoon sergeants—what would the War have been without them ? Why, they ran the thing ! At least, that was the impression we received. Upon them ultimately devolved the duty of ensuring that plans conceived at G.H.Q. stood a chance of being hatched. And no one is going to say they dodged that duty.

Not a Nice Man

I can remember only one sergeant on active service for whom my admiration was severely restrained. We forbore, however, to give him away for anticipating an order to withdraw from a position which did not become untenable for the rest of us until some hours later. Of all the others I have pleasant memories. Time has cleansed my bosom of any grievances I may have harboured there against them. They were good to know, and it gives me a comfortable glow to recall them.

As for the corporals and lance-jacks, my mind is thronged with recollections of them.

Pale hands that gleamed above the burgo dixie,
Where are you now ? Where are you now ?

I had a real affection for lance-jacks —or rather I have for them as they exist in my memory. Their duties were multifarious and ill-rewarded, their spirit indomitable, their patience almost inexhaustible. It was to them that men made their heart-felt complaints when rations were unsatisfactory. It was on them that blame descended with accumulated weight when handed down from stars to stripes. There were a splendid lot of fellows. I was a lance-corporal once.

But the best of the bunch were the men at the bottom. They file past the

Photo : Imperial War Museum.

FUTURE MARKSMEN LEARN ABOUT TARGETS

In the often very short period of training our soldiers had perforce to submit to one lecture after another upon subjects as wide apart as musketry and personal hygiene. What proportion of these lectures, whether delivered by officers or N.C.O.'s, was mentally digested is unknown, but the greatest effort was put forth by the authorities to make the talks practical. Here, for instance, the subject is targets, the points being rendered clear with much pictorial detail.

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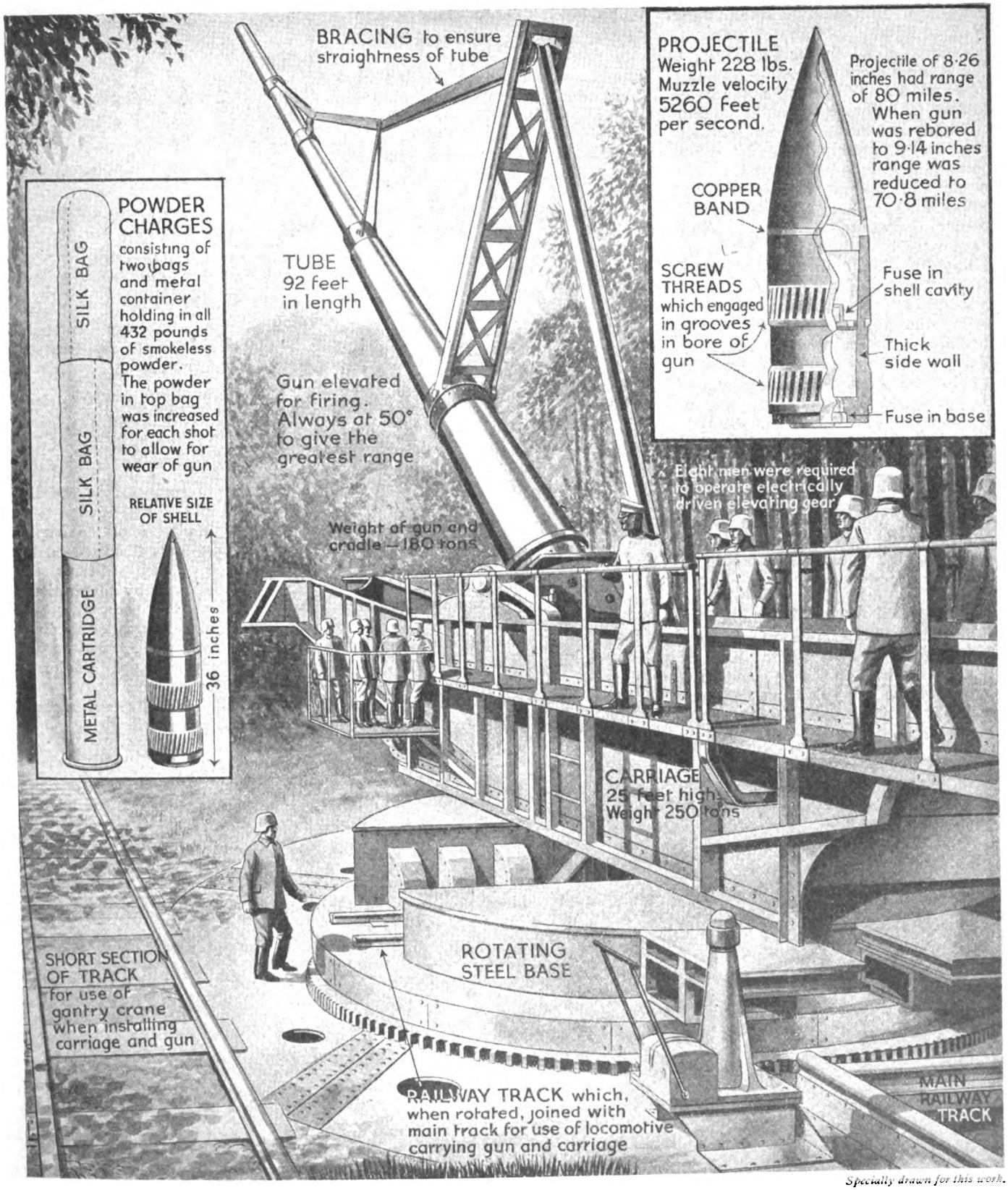
BRACING to ensure straightness of tube
PROJECTILE
Weight 228 lbs.
Muzzle velocity 5260 feet per second.
Projectile of 8·26 inches had range of 80 miles. When gun was rebored to 9·14 inches range was reduced to 70·8 miles
COPPER BAND
SCREW THREADS which engaged in grooves in bore of gun
Fuse in shell cavity
Thick side wall
Fuse in base
POWDER CHARGES consisting of two bags and metal container holding in all 432 pounds of smokeless powder. The powder in top bag was increased for each shot to allow for wear of gun
SILK BAG
SILK BAG
METAL CARTRIDGE
RELATIVE SIZE OF SHELL
36 inches
TUBE 92 feet in length
Gun elevated for firing. Always at 50° to give the greatest range
Weight of gun and cradle—180 tons
Eight men were required to operate electrically driven elevating gear
CARRIAGE 25 feet high. Weight 250 tons
ROTATING STEEL BASE
SHORT SECTION OF TRACK for use of gantry crane when installing carriage and gun
RAILWAY TRACK which, when rotated, joined with main track for use of locomotive carrying gun and carriage
MAIN RAILWAY TRACK

Specially drawn for this work.

A LONG-RANGE, RAILWAY-MOUNTED GERMAN GUN

The particular gun illustrated in this sketch-diagram is of the type used for the shelling of Paris, but the details apply almost equally to all the pieces of the "Big Bertha" type. Such guns must have a very high muzzle velocity, which means a propellant far heavier than the shell itself. Moreover, the barrel of the gun must be well elevated to give the projectile a trajectory, or line of flight, high enough for the enormous range. Paris was first shelled by long-range guns—three such are known to have been used in the bombardment—on March 23rd, 1918, and again on Palm Sunday and Good Friday. On the latter day a church in the capital was struck, and there were 76 worshippers killed and many more wounded.

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mind's eye—men of all shapes and sizes, of all social levels, of all degrees of intelligence, of all shades of character. One knew them so intimately, so much more intimately than one's friends of to-day. Of how many of our peace-time acquaintances can we be sure that they would be " all right in the line ? " It is a point which we do not feel called upon to consider, but we withhold our real selves from them ; there are polite barriers between us. In the Army there were no barriers, and not much politeness. " As man to man " was a phrase that had meaning then.

When I look back, it becomes evident to me that some of my best friends exhibited qualities which are not those of a good citizen. One man, for example, a delightful companion, was known as the Compleat Wangler. He was an engine driver when the end of the War came. Before it he had been a ladies' tailor. In between-whiles he professed a number of trades without success. Back he would come to the line, announcing with a grin, " They rumbled me." How he eventually " got away with it " would take too long to tell.

A Champion Scrounger

There was another friend of mine who had no equal as a scrounger. Even in England we used to say he could have scrounged the colonel's horse and concealed it in his kit-bag. In France his services were invaluable when we needed blankets, sandbags, sheets of corrugated iron, duck-boards, coke, rum, rifles, ammunition, candles, petrol, and other things which in varying circumstances seemed desirable.

Then there was . . . but one could go on and on and on about the men one knew. Perhaps it is as well for me to remind myself at this point that I am now a grave, grey-haired man, living in a respectable neighbourhood, with a family who are inclined to think, when sometimes a word escapes me, that I got into bad company in the Army.

The men I knew were ordinary men like myself—unreasonable, easily angered, unaware or sceptical of the immediate purpose of their efforts ; men who could not be brave for long, who felt no exultation in going over the top, who called themselves " cannon-fodder," and clung steadfastly to the hope that the War would soon be over.

Consider some of the sayings current in the ranks from 1916 onward, or even earlier.

" I reckon it's about time we 'anded over France to Fritz, and apologised for the b—— awful mess it's in."

" I wouldn't join up again—no, not if the Kaiser himself was —— up against Buckingham Palace."

" Give me a chance to get out of it, and you wouldn't see my —— for dust."

" The man who ordered this attack ought to be —— on publicly from a great height."

Those Defeatist Songs

Remember, too, the defeatist songs. One of the earliest was :

> Oh, my ! I don't want to die,
> I want to go home.

And the campaign was not very old before we were singing :

As we go out you'll hear us shout,
We're badgered if we'll be badgered about.
We won't, we WON'T,
We won't be badgered about.

(*Badgered* was not the word we used.)

The latest version of a favourite song, set to a hymn tune, was :

> When this b—— war is over,
> O how happy I shall be !
> When I get my civvy clothes on,
> No more soldiering for me !
> No more —— Spring Offensives,
> No more Open Warfare farce. . . .

It went on to suggest that the High Command would be well advised to put their plans in a pigeon-hole, so to speak.

No one who finds it surprising that the utterance of such seditious sentiments was followed by unquestioning obedience, and the acceptance, ultimately with cheerfulness, of conditions where hope seemed folly, can begin to understand the English soldier, or indeed the English race.

As the bulletins used to say, the spirit of the troops was excellent.

Photo : G. T. Watson.

FALLEN OF THE FIELD-GREYS

Throughout the battle-scarred war zone of France and Flanders there are many cemeteries, such as the one at La Targette, here illustrated, where German soldiers were laid to rest when death claimed them. As explained on a previous page in this work, the Germans were buried head to head, with one black cross for every pair. The names of the fallen are inscribed upon the arm of the cross, both back and front. The scene above is wintry and desolate, but these German graveyards are as well tended as those of the other combatant nations. La Targette is within a short distance of Mont St. Eloi, north-west of Arras.

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ENVIRONS of PÉRONNE

Then and Now

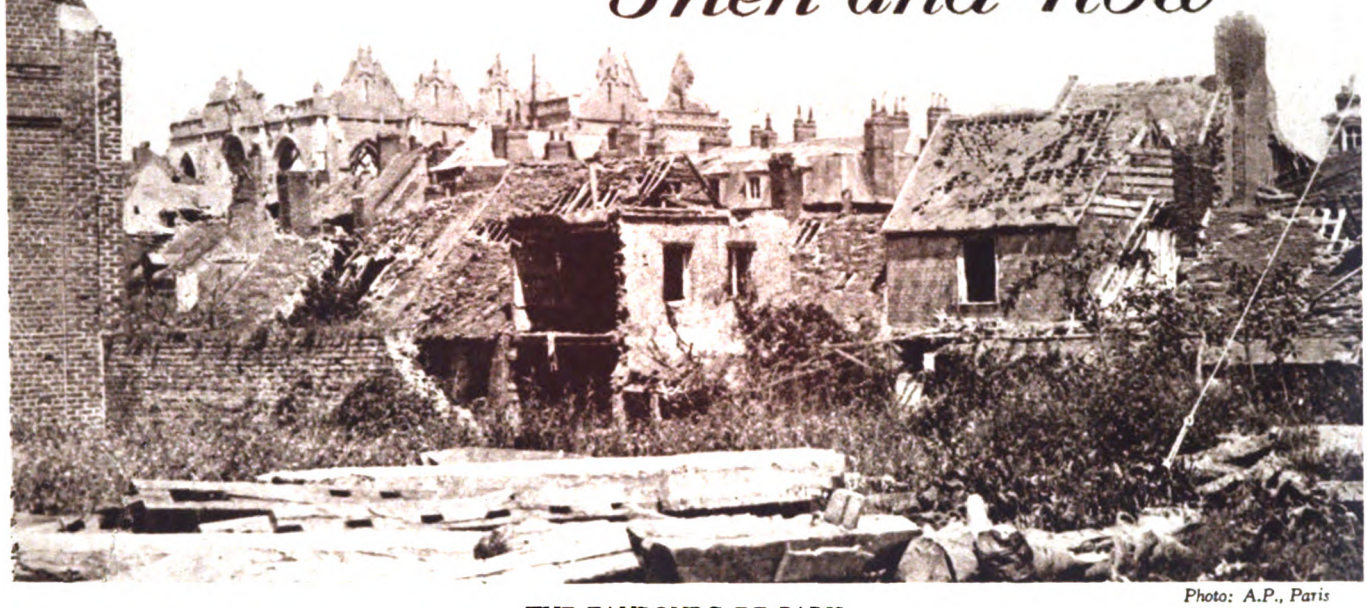

Photo: A.P., Paris

THE FAUBOURG DE PARIS

This suburb lies on the southern side of Péronne, just beyond Flamicourt, and on the right or east bank of the Somme. The district flanks the southern exit from the town, whence the highway leads to Marchélepot and Roye, or to Licourt and Nesle, according to the branch taken at Villers-Carbonnel. The above photograph, dated July 26th, 1917, shows wrecked houses in the faubourg, with the ruins of the church rising in the background.

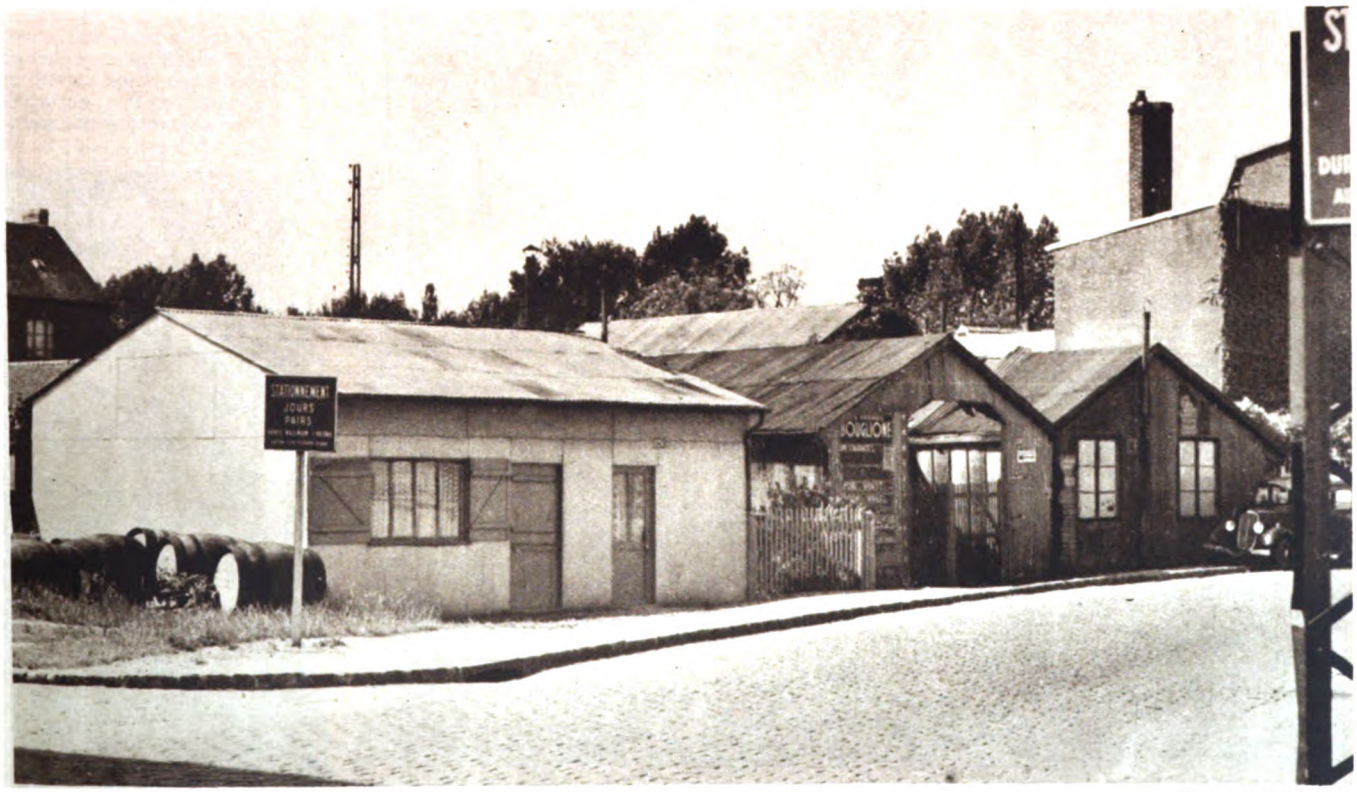

Photo: A. J. Insall

AWAITING COMPLETION

The Faubourg de Paris has not yet been fully rebuilt, and the wooden sheds seen above, though not altogether "temporary," seeing that they have lasted a good many years, are shortly to be supplanted by more substantial buildings. The bridge which carries the main road, here shown, over the Somme, is the successor to one known to the British as "Bristol Bridge." On March 23rd, 1918, this was one of the last Somme bridges to be blown up during the Retreat. Both bridge and faubourg were in the 66th Division area.

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Photo: A.P., Paris

THE FAUBOURG DE STE. RADEGONDE

Taken on the same date as our war-time view of the Faubourg de Paris, the above photograph shows a suburb on the south-western side of Péronne, immediately opposite to Biaches. In both pictures the river, meandering amid its marshes and lush meadows, crosses the scene, and in the contemporary view the thick vegetation has obscured the houses altogether. The tram-lines of wartime have long since vanished.

ON MONT ST. QUENTIN

This German pill-box on the famous hill once dominated in a formidable manner, and must have been responsible fo successive waves of fighting which swept over the regio about 2 km. north of Péronne, on the road to Bapaume, a the knoll contains at the present day somewhat

STILL DEFIANT

The strong-point which so many bitter assaults failed victoriously the more subtle but no less formid attac Indeed, the whole hilltop is still much as it was w stormed in on that long-past August 31st of 1918. B inevitably, the minor scars, but one can still

Photo: A. J. Insall

IN A RURAL SETTING

Unlike the Faubourg de Paris, the Faubourg de Sainte Radegonde is a separate commune, with its own Mairie and local administration, and today contains about 750 inhabitants. Biaches, the faubourg's "opposite number" on the other side of the Somme, formed, on March 23rd, 1918, the point of union between the 118th Brigade, 39th Division, and the 198th Brigade, 66th Division. There had previously been a dangerous gap between the two divisions.

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ON MONT QUENTIN

This German pill-box on the famous hill dominated the flat surrounding country in a formidable manner, and must have been responsible for many a casualty during the successive waves of fighting which swept over the region. Mt. St. Quentin stands about 2 km. north of Péronne, on the road to Bapaume, and the small village crowning the knoll contains at the present day somewhat less than 240 souls.

Photo: A.P., Paris

STILL DEFIANT

The strong-point which so many heavy assaults failed to destroy has survived just as victoriously the more subtle but no less powerful attacks of peace-time " development." Indeed, the whole hilltop is still unchanged since it was when the 2nd Australian Division stormed in on that long-past August 8th, 1918. Bushes and young trees are covering, inevitably, the minor scars, but one can still make out the run of major earthworks.

Photo: A. J. Insall

Photo: A.P., Paris

MONT ST. QUENTIN: THE WRECKED VILLAGE

Both our War views of the Mount were taken in September, 1918, and show it in its final state of demolition, with no more gruelling days to face. Perhaps the most gruelling of all had been encountered, not during the two British assaults on the hill, in March, 1917, and August, 1918, but during the valiant defence of it made in March, 1918, by the remnants of the 39th Division.

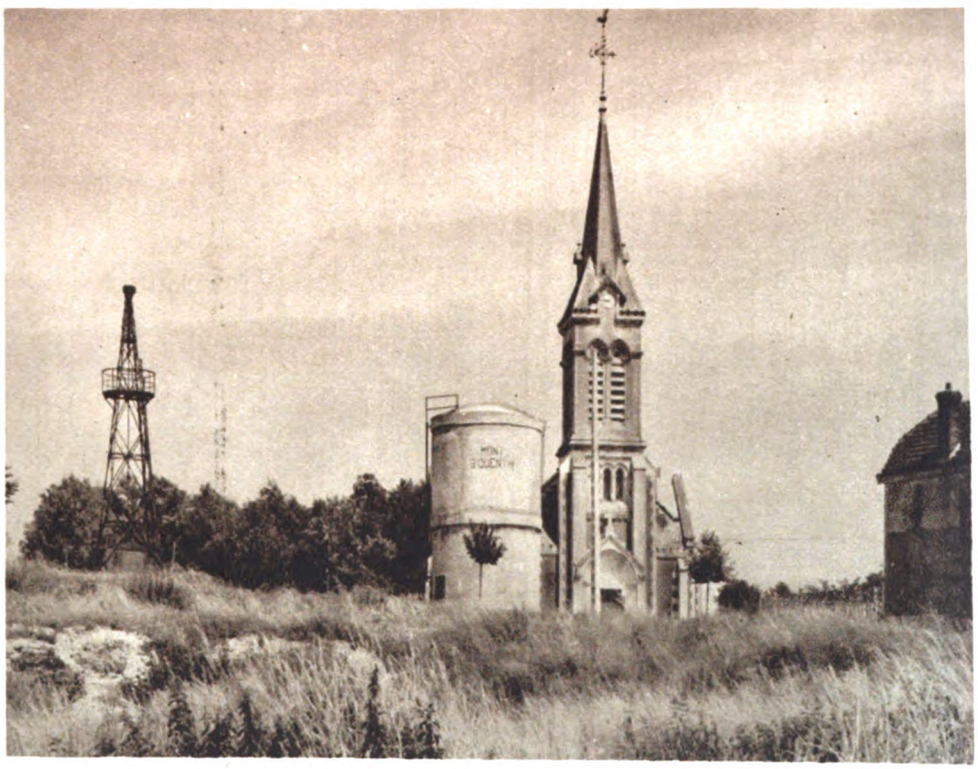

Photo: A. J. Insall

CHURCH AND WATER-TOWER

The 118th Brigade of the 39th Division was first ordered to cover Mt. St. Quentin at about noon on March 23rd, 1918. As the enemy attack grew in force, the 116th and 117th Brigades fell back, the latter first, to join the 118th. On the way the 13th Royal Sussex of the 116th were nearly cut off, but escaped across " Bristol Bridge " to the 66th Division. The rest of the brigade was sent back to Cléry, but the 117th and 118th held the Mount gallantly until 4 p.m.

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Photo: A.P., Paris

IN ÉTERPIGNY

This is the furthest distant from Péronne proper of the places which we have illustrated in the present section, for the village lies 4 km. south of the town, on the Villers-Carbonnel road. Another and perhaps more famous Éterpigny is situated east of Arras, and it is this one which has a British cemetery named after it. At Éterpigny-sur-Somme a few British dead lie in a special extension to the Communal Cemetery, but otherwise there are only such ruins as those of the château, below, to serve as reminders of the Four Years.

Photo: A. J. Insall

RELICS OF A CASTLE

After the XIX Corps had retired across the Somme on March 23rd, 1918, the 50th and 1st Cavalry Divisions were directed to remain on the river-bank, holding the line Béthencourt—Éterpigny, until relieved by the 8th Division. The 23rd Brigade of the latter succeeded, although one battalion short, in taking over the sector St. Christ—Éterpigny bridge during the afternoon, and held it for 1½ days. The bridge and village were then finally lost, on the morning of the 25th, after a remarkably stubborn defence by the 2nd Middlesex, one company of which was entirely surrounded, only 11 men escaping.

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CHAPTER XXIV

THE CAMPAIGN IN NORTH RUSSIA

Perhaps the saddest chapter in the story of the Great War is that relating to the collapse of Russia. It will be remembered that her gallant offensive in the early days of the struggle was largely instrumental in saving the situation when it was indeed critical. As time went on, Russia, more or less isolated from her allies and from sources of supply, gradually weakened, until revolution intervened and the end, in so far as her fighting powers were concerned, was at hand. In the sequel, for reasons given below, it ultimately became necessary for this country to step in. Intervention took shape in the form of more than one strange adventure, the stories of which will be set down in this and in later chapters.

BRITISH adventures in North Russia, in Siberia, on the Don, and in the Baltic, derive in the first instance from the Russian Revolution. On the 15th March, 1917, the Czar abdicated, and a Provisional Government of Liberal and Radical statesmen assumed control.

Rise of the Bolsheviks

In the Army, the saluting of officers and the death-penalty for military offences were abolished, and consequently indiscipline and insubordination became rife. Soldiers' and Sailors' Councils were formed, and contested every order. Organised military bodies melted away, one-and-a-half million soldiers returning to their homes. Supplies failed, and confusion reigned. To render chaos complete, the Germans smuggled Lenin in a sealed truck from Switzerland to Petrograd.

Kerensky, the revolutionary leader, was an orator rather than a man of action, and accordingly he soon fell under the control of the Frankenstein monster which he had himself largely created—a mutinous Army. His sympathies were pro-Ally, and he actually carried out an offensive in the summer of 1917. Though defeated with devastating losses, his effort was of considerable value, and was the last chapter of Russia's magnificent contribution to the common cause.

Always struggling under terrible difficulties from lack of weapons and supplies, and suffering casualties heavier than those of all the other allies combined, she had earned the lasting gratitude of the Western Powers by maintaining a fighting front until the Americans began to arrive. Now, militarily, she was to be of no more account.

The Army, such as it was, became the tool of the political extremists. The Liberals, the Radicals, even the Anarchists were deposed and destroyed. Where within range, opposition to the new régime, whether in thought, word, or deed, was annihilated.

Lenin proposed an armistice, and set in train negotiations which led to peace. At Brest-Litovsk he signed away Poland, Lithuania, Latvia, Esthonia, Finland, the Ukraine, and the Caucasus—and with them 55 millions of his fellow-countrymen. He and his colleagues were desperately unhappy about it, and raved over the iniquities of German Imperialism; but without an army and without allies they were impotent. The Central Powers advanced their front until it rested on a line 1,000 miles long stretching from Galatz near the mouth of the Danube to Reval on the Gulf of Finland. Russia was under the German thumb.

The Blockade Broken

It is at this point that our story opens. The Germans had succeeded in breaking the blockade. The process of strangulation applied so successfully up to this point by the navies of the Allies, and by the closed fronts of their armies, had become inoperative. The rich granary of the Ukraine, the oil of Baku, the coal of the Urals, and a continent of forests, were now at the disposal of our adversaries.

It was even feared that Siberia, with its immense supplies of food and raw material, might be seized by them. The sharpest weapon of the Allies was blunted. Moreover, a million troops might now be transferred from east to west, and the ports of North Russia used as bases for submarines. Prospects of an early and successful issue to the War faded into thin air.

The Allied statesmen at Versailles strove to liquidate the new problem. There were numerous anti-Bolshevik forces in Russia. They must be supported. The Eastern Front must somehow be re-established. The northern ports must be occupied. Japanese and American forces had, as yet, hardly been employed, and might be used in Siberia. Unfortunately, they were unwilling to co-operate; and to employ Japanese alone would unite all Russia in a national cause.

The situation grew worse. The Germans inflicted two defeats upon the British and two upon the French. They occupied Finland. Their submarines still presented a grave threat. Belief in their invincibility spread over the eastern theatres.

Then, from an unexpected quarter, a stroke of luck favoured the Allies. At the beginning of the War, a number of Czechs domiciled in Russia had obtained permission to fight against Austria. They received continual accessions of strength from Czechoslovakian prisoners and deserters, and, by the time the Revolution occurred, were some 60,000 strong. But they were now isolated. Russia had withdrawn from the War, and Germany prevented direct access to the Western Front. Lenin, however, wishing to be quit of them, signed a treaty with the Allies in which he promised to transport them to Vladivostock, whence they could be shipped to France.

They began their momentous journey in a succession of small parties. Some 20,000 of them succeeded in reaching the Maritime Province and Vladivostock safely. The remainder, in spite of promises, were attacked by Red troops on the way. The difficulties of their further transport eastward then appeared insuperable, and it was therefore decided to turn them northwards to Murmansk and Archangel.

Prowess of the Czechs

They fought, however, with such astonishing valour that the change of

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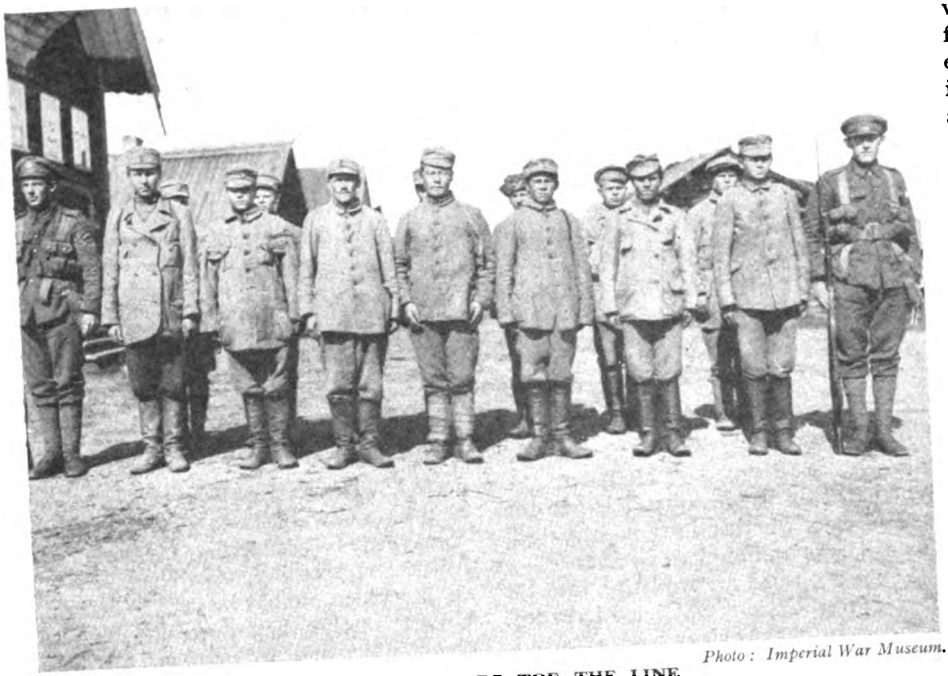

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

SOME DESERTERS TOE THE LINE

It has often been wondered why Britain sent a force to the Murman Coast, and one of several reasons was to prevent the Germans from using this point as a submarine base. In this campaign the Allied troops were drawn from no fewer than six nations, which added very materially to commissariat difficulties. Above is shown a detachment of White Finnish deserters fallen in two-deep under a Slavo-British escort.

plan proved unnecessary. A party of gunners arrived at Irkutsk. Under the treaty, they had surrendered the bulk of their weapons, and therefore seemed easy game, as their train steamed into the station, to a greatly superior body of well-armed Bolsheviks. But the latter soon learned their mistake. The Czechs repulsed the attack, then countered, put the Russians to flight, and seized their arms.

All along the line similar incidents occurred, with the result that, at the end of two months, this young army sprung from a budding nation had taken possession of the whole country as far as Lake Baikal, and was effectively preventing ex-prisoners of war from reaching Austria and Germany, or any of the resources of Siberia from reaching the Central Powers. By September, the party which had reached Vladivostock, assisted by detachments furnished by the Allies, had cleared the Maritime Province of Reds and rejoined their compatriots at Chita.

"An immense area of Russia, several hundred miles broad and 3,000 miles long, was in the effectual possession of these strangers thus foully attacked when seeking to leave the country in virtue of signed agreements. The pages of history recall scarcely any parallel episode at once so romantic in character and so extensive in scale. . . . A region almost as large as the continent of Africa had passed as if by magic into the control of the Allies." [1]

1 Winston Churchill, *The Great War*, p. 1335.

The possibility of reconstructing, with the help of the Czechs, the Russian front against Germany at once became evident; and the Czech Commander-in-Chief himself suggested that his army should remain in Russia instead of returning to France. The Czechoslovakian National Council, then sitting in Washington, concurred.

On July 5th, 1918, Versailles, in agreement with President Wilson, who had previously been strongly opposed to intervention in Russia, decided to despatch an international force to Siberia to support the Czechs and maintain their line of communications. The Americans "also proposed to send a detachment of the Young Men's Christian Association to offer moral guidance to the Russian people." [1]

A Mixed Force

The control of the force was confided to Japan. It consisted of two Japanese divisions, 7,000 Americans, 3,000 French and Italians, and two British battalions —the 1/9th Hampshires and the 25th Middlesex.

Shortly before this, a small British force had landed at Murmansk, in North Russia; and early in August an international force, 7,000 strong, captured Archangel. Later, British Missions were despatched to South Russia to

1 *Ibid*, p. 1338.

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

A FLEET OF SAILING VESSELS AT MURMANSK

The White Sea (refer to map, page 390) is in such a position that it becomes completely ice-bound through the winter months, and ships which use the Arctic Ocean ports are locked fast in harbour until spring, with us, is well advanced. The sailing vessels seen above are at Murmansk, a port at the northern end of the Murman Coast which is generally ice-free in winter. The greater part of our forces in this theatre of war were embarked by night from this port.

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assist Denikin, and to West Russia to save the nascent Baltic States from being overrun by either Germans or Bolsheviks.

There were thus small parties of Britons ringing round the vast continent of Russia; and it is with their separate and varied fortunes that we propose to deal in the succeeding pages. At the time, the British nation, war-worn and war-weary, followed their actions with but little interest. Yet together they form an epic of British history: not because they express devotion to any great cause: for, from the outset, the cause was doubtful and grew more so; not on account of historic battles: for the war was one of skirmishes; but because they bore witness to the homage paid in every quarter to British honour and integrity.

It was the trust reposed in British officers during all these appallingly tangled happenings in politics and war that enabled them to take the initiative so often, and to dominate events with a power wholly disproportionate to their small numbers and exiguous resources.

In inimitable language, Winston Churchill thus describes this vast campaign in its later stages:

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

A RAILWAY STATION NEAR MURMANSK

In thinking of the world-wide activity of the Great War, we have but to visualise the lot of some of our troops in the tropics and then to contrast their surroundings with the Arctic scene above. The snow-clad timber structure is the railway station at Polyarni Kru, near Murmansk, in 1919. The railway line comes through from Petrograd, skirting the White Sea and then running from Kandalaksha to Murmansk. There are no rail communications in the Kola Peninsula.

"During the year 1919 there was fought over the whole of Russia a strange war; a war in areas so vast that considerable armies, armies indeed of hundreds of thousands of men, were lost—dispersed, melted, evaporated; a war in which there were no real battles, only raids and affrays and massacres, as the result of which countries as large as England or France changed hands to and fro; a war of flags on the map, of picket lines, of cavalry screens advancing or receding by hundreds of miles without solid cause or durable consequence; a war with little valour and no mercy. Whoever could advance found it easy to continue; whoever was forced to retire found it difficult to stop.

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

JOB OF WORK FOR THE PRISONERS

In what is often called the "adventure" in North Russia the three Services—sea, land, and air—had almost unique opportunities for working together, and they proved in every way a most happy and united family. Above are seen some prisoners of this particular expeditionary force engaged in sawing ice at Soroka, Murmansk, in 1919. It was in April, 1918, that we landed our first forces, 150 Marines, at this port.

The Great War's Ghost

"On paper it looked like the Great War on the Western and Eastern fronts. In fact it was only its ghost. . . . Koltchak first, and then Denikin advanced in what were called offensives over enormous territories. As they advanced they spread their lines ever wider and ever thinner. It seemed that they would go on till they had scarcely one man to the mile.

"When the moment came the Bolsheviks lying in the centre, equally feeble, but at any rate tending willy-nilly constantly towards compression, gave a prick or a punch to this point or that. Thereupon the balloon burst and all the flags moved back and the cities changed

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Photo: A. P., Paris.

WHERE THE TIDE OF THE 1918 OFFENSIVE WAS STEMMED

Those who, prior to the Fifth Army Retreat, passed along the great highway that linked Amiens with St. Quentin, will well remember Lamotte-en-Santerre, 5 km. eastward of the even more historic Villers-Bretonneux. They may, indeed, have seen it in the battered, demolished, and war-scarred state in which it is depicted above. This photograph of the village main street was taken on August 8th, 1918. The vigorous German offensive which began on March 21st extended almost, but not quite, to include Lamotte; but this did not prevent a strafing that lacked nothing in its thoroughness.

hands and found it convenient to change opinions, and horrible vengeances were wreaked on helpless people, vengeances perseveringly paid over months of fine-spun inquisition.

" Mighty natural or strategic barriers like the line of the Volga River or the line of the Ural Mountains, were found to be no resting-places; no strategic consequences followed their loss or gain. A war of few casualties and unnumbered executions! The tragedy of each Russian city, of loyal families, of countless humble households, might fill libraries of dreary volumes." [1]

In telling our story—which will be carried over several chapters—we may start in time-honoured fashion on the right of the line (in this case almost a circle), and begin with the operations at Murmansk. This town is a little-known seaport on the north coast of Russia, not far from the Norwegian border. Though facing the Arctic Ocean, it is ice-free in winter, and, occupied by the Germans, would have made a useful base for their submarines. In June, 1918, there was a German army, 15,000 strong, under von der Goltz in Finland, and allied with it were 50,000 White Finns. Detachments from these forces were moving northwards with a view, it was thought, to seizing Murmansk.

A few British Marines had already been landed at that point, and the reinforcement of so tiny a force was regarded as urgent. Hence a small expeditionary force, consisting of one company of the 29th London Regiment, the 253rd Machine Gun Company, and two sections of the 584th Field Company R.E.—600 men in all—was despatched to Murmansk, arriving there on the 23rd of June.

1,600 Against 40,000

It was commanded by Major-General Maynard, who was also to control the 400 Marines already landed, a Serbian battalion, a detachment of French artillery, and any troops he might enlist locally. The Moscow Government, at whose invitation the Navy had landed Marines, was now sending two Red Guard divisions to Murmansk.

There were thus available about 1,600 troops for opposing the Germans and Finns, of whom 40,000 might perhaps be employed against the port. Thirty per cent. of the Allied force were sick, and a further large percentage was scattered in detachments along the railway.

But the situation was in reality much worse than even this. For it was becoming clear that the Bolshevik Government, under pressure from the Germans, was going to treat the Allies as intruders. The two Red Guard divisions said to be arriving shortly might therefore prove a source of danger, and a legion of Red Finns, which had been driven out of Finland by the White Finns and had

[1] Churchill, *op. cit.*, p. 1445.

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offered its help to the Allies, would be a prey to divided loyalties. At the same time the Russians in the Murman district were not volunteering in great numbers. The counter-attractions in the Red Guards—" no work, no discipline, good food, and good pay "[1] were too strong. The whole situation was, in fact, complicated and uncertain.

Fortunately, however, geography was favourable. Murmansk was connected with Petrograd by a railway which, as far south as Kem, was in Allied possession. From Kem northward there was no road fit for military traffic, and the only serviceable tracks from the Finnish frontier on the west were those debouching on to the railway at Kandalaksha and Kem.

It was possible, indeed, to advance from the south or south-west by one of the waterways leading to the Kola inlet; but these routes presented such great difficulties of transportation that their use was unlikely. It was almost certain that any advance made would take place along the railway, which, passing over bog-land and crossing many waterways by wooden bridges—some of them 200 yards long—was easily defensible during the summer.

Importance of the Railway

By holding the railway, a resolute force might repel the attacks of greatly superior numbers; and the further the line were held to the south, the greater the delay which it would be possible to impose upon a hostile advance, provided the approaches to the railway at Kandalaksha and Kem were strongly garrisoned. Even if von der Goltz were to reach Kandalaksha, he would still have to fight over 150 miles of bog before he could reach Murmansk.

Kem, a further 200 miles to the south, was a more likely objective, however, as it had better communications with Finland. Strong defensive posts were constructed at both points, and the position as regards attack by Germans or Finns seemed then reasonably secure. Should, however, the Bolsheviks under guise of friendship collect a force north of Kandalaksha, the Allied contingent would be exposed to the gravest danger.

On June 27th, Maynard started down the railway on a tour of inspection. At Kandalaksha he found a train packed with Russian soldiers, evidently the vanguard of the Red Guard divisions. Seeing that it was just about to steam

[1] General Poole's Despatch, *London Gazette*, April 6th, 1920.

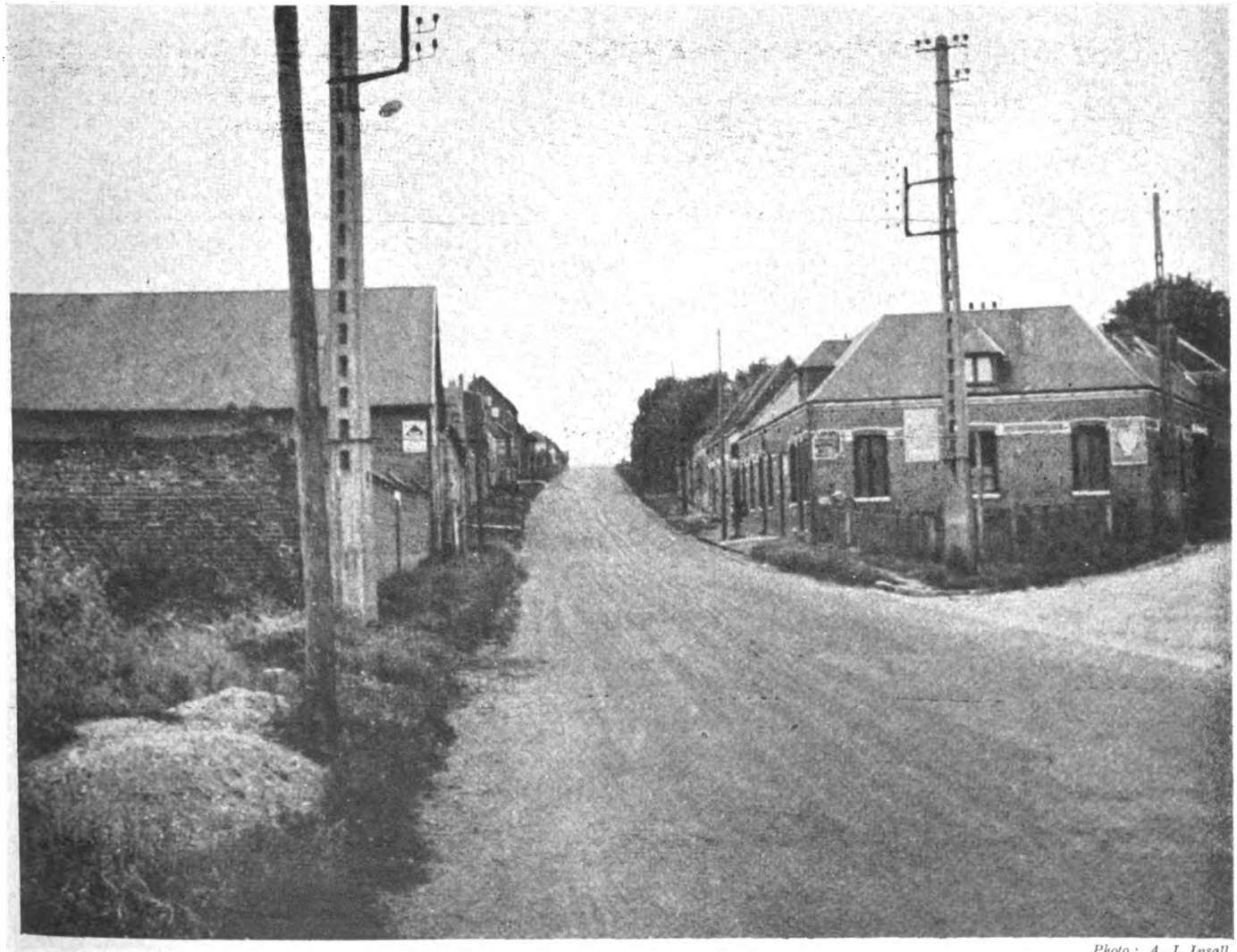

Photo: A. J. Insall.

THE WELL-STRAFED VILLAGE STREET AS IT IS TO-DAY

Out of the tumbled riot and rubbish-heap seen on the previous page has grown a new and sturdy, if not exactly beautiful, Lamotte-en-Santerre, standing astride the great highway which figured so largely in the operations of 1918. It is certainly more utilitarian than æsthetic, this new-made village of the rolling Somme. At one period the enemy actually penetrated our positions west of Villers-Bretonneux, but he was flung back on April 25th by the 4th and 5th Australian Divisions.

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north, he assembled his escort of one platoon across the track, ordered the Allied garrison of the post to come to the station, and sent for the Russian commander.

The latter refused to budge until an armed party was sent to fetch him. Maynard, however, was then fortunately able to keep him engaged in conversation until the garrison, which included the French guns, arrived; otherwise the Russians might easily have swept the platoon away and proceeded on their journey.

Placing the train under observation, Maynard proceeded to Kem with his escort increased by a Serbian platoon. There he found two trainloads of Red Guards. With the help of the garrison, he repeated his earlier action, and he issued instructions that no more trains were to be allowed in from the south. Then he returned to Kandalaksha, where he learned from agents that the two Red Guard divisions were on the move north with orders to drive the Allies out of Murmansk.

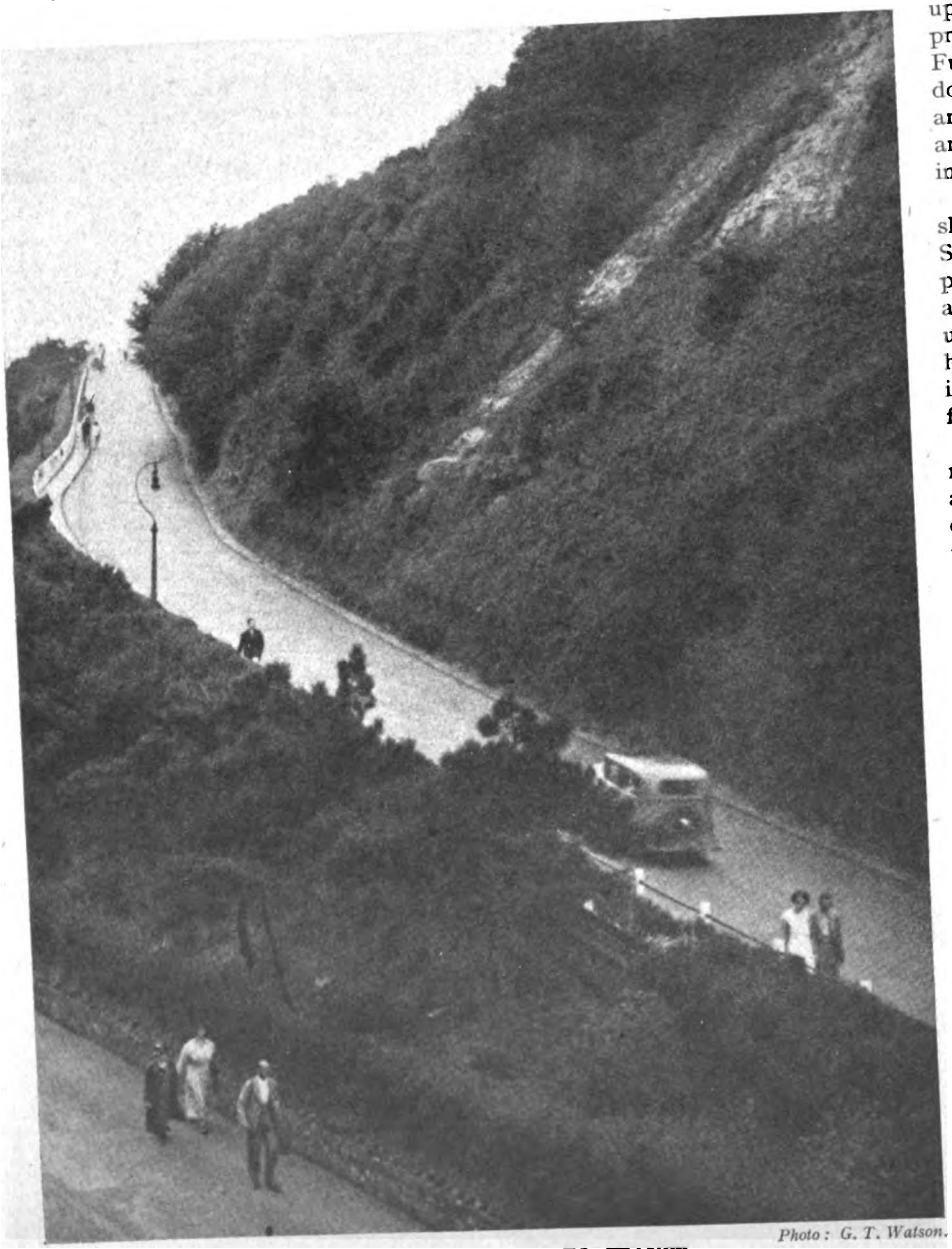

Photo: G. T. Watson.

THE ROAD THAT LED TO FRANCE

If ever you went to the French or Flanders fronts *via* Boulogne, you are almost sure to have passed along this highway, the road from Shorncliffe Camp leading down along the edge of Folkestone to the quayside. In the district round Verdun, where the French engaged in some of their most bitter fighting, every milestone bears the inscription: "To VERDUN (so many km.) VIA SACRA," meaning a road made sacred by the tramp of countless brave *poilus*, who never returned that way. At our great Kentish resort the hill here depicted is known as the "Road of Remembrance."

Bold and Effective

He immediately made arrangements for the disarmament and removal south of the three trainloads of Bolshevik soldiers whom he had halted at Kem and Kandalaksha, and, by searching the two towns, discovered and collected 50 machine guns and 10,000 rifles which were to have armed the inhabitants against us.

These were bold steps, undertaken mainly on guess-work, and without reference to higher authority. They proved remarkably effective, clarifying an obscure situation, imposing a check upon the enemy, and enabling suitable protective measures to be instituted. Further, they had the effect of causing doubtful officials in the Murmansk area to break off relations with Moscow and to throw themselves whole-heartedly into the cause of the Allies.

On July 3rd, hearing that the Bolsheviks were perpetrating atrocities at Soroka, further down the line, Maynard pushed on to that point, and, with the assistance of H.M.S. *Attentive* (which, under the command of Captain Altham, had been rendering splendid service in the White Sea), evicted the malefactors and occupied the town.

It is surprising that von der Goltz made no attempt to interfere with our actions at this time. Probably he expected the Red Guards to do all that was required; and, when they failed, he may have been deterred by their discomfiture and by the bold front presented by Maynard, which gave an impression of far greater strength than was in fact available.

Major-General Poole was in charge of the North Russian front, which included both Murmansk and Archangel, and had been for some months at Murmansk awaiting the break-up of the ice. On July 30th he sailed from Murmansk, and, on August 2nd, captured Archangel. The achievements of his force will be described later.

The Russians in the Murmansk area, who had thrown in their lot with us at a grave risk to themselves, had to be fed by us, for the district was almost devoid of supplies, and, with the railway to the south in hostile hands, was cut off from the remainder of Russia. Moreover, they had to be paid for the work they were doing—on the railway, in erecting accommodation for the troops, and in military service; and there was no money available.

Salted Herrings Across the Trail

Maynard had foreseen this difficulty and, before leaving England, had im-

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plored the Treasury to meet it. All that the officials concerned could suggest, however, was that he should take possession of an immense store of salted herrings which had been purchased from Norway, and were lying on the coast at Vardo about 100 miles from Murmansk. The Russians, they said, would certainly be short of food, so he might feed them with herrings instead of paying them. It was not divulged how he was to collect these delicacies, nor was there given any guarantee of their condition when collected.

Moreover, the general had "some doubt whether a long-continued diet of salted herring would appeal to the Russian workman, and greater doubts still whether he would regard it as a welcome substitute for a money wage."[1] Besides, he "had a strong objection to adding the running of a glorified fish-shop" to his other duties.[2]

This lack of money and food nearly ruined the whole enterprise, and needlessly endangered many lives. Maynard was placed in the unpleasant position of being unable to implement promises made on behalf of his Government. As a result, British prestige gravely suffered, strikes became continuous, and the population, previously so friendly, adopted a sullen and aggressive attitude. After a succession of frantic cables had produced no effect, the general sailed for England, and there, with the assistance of the War Office, managed to extract from the Treasury the minimum sum necessary for his requirements.

Money was, of course, very scarce at the time; and the British were not wholly to blame, for the Americans had promised to supply the food. Eventually, when hope of Transatlantic assistance had vanished, Britain sent out the supplies needed from her own scanty stores.

About the middle of August, it appeared from concentrations on the Finnish border that von der Goltz was on the point of taking action. Strong Bolshevik forces, with heavy guns, were reported also as advancing from the south. Having no aircraft and but a scanty intelligence service, Maynard decided to clear up the situation by despatching southward a mixed British and Serbian reconnoitring detachment of 150 men.

Successful Deception

This party, under the capable command of Captain Sheppard, advanced for some 50 miles and drove back hostile detachments estimated at a strength of only one battalion and one squadron without guns. The effect of its report was to relieve Maynard's mind of all anxiety in that quarter, and he could therefore turn his attention elsewhere. Captain Sheppard had taken with him, and managed to pass to the enemy, the copy of a false order, prepared with scrupulous care, suggesting that his party was making a reconnaissance prior to the advance of a large Allied force. It was afterwards discovered that this device had well fulfilled its deceptive purpose.

Photo: G. T. Watson.

ON THE HIGHWAY OF REMEMBRANCE

The idea of commemorating the roadway between Shorncliffe Camp and Folkestone Harbour has been put into practical effect in this memorial column, which stands at the top of the historic thoroughfare. The bones of many thousand British soldiers, who marched gallantly down the hill and beside the White Walls of Old England, now rest in France, but the grand march-past of the unending khaki-clad throng is still gratefully remembered. "They grow not old, as we who are left grow old"; but this Road of Remembrance forges yet another link with them.

By this time we had enlisted and trained, to a fair standard, some 600 Finns and an equal number of Karelians. The latter were inhabitants of the area between the line—Kandalaksha–Kem and the Finnish border, and were staunch soldiers and—as concerned the ousting of Germans—good patriots. Maynard decided to despatch to the Finnish frontier one column—strengthened later to 1,000 men from each of these bodies: the Finns to operate from Kandalaksha, and the Karelians from Kem.

The second column, under Lieut.-Colonel Woods, who had organised and

[1] Maynard, *The Murmansk Venture*, p. 17, from which book this account is mainly drawn.
[2] *Ibid*, p. 17.

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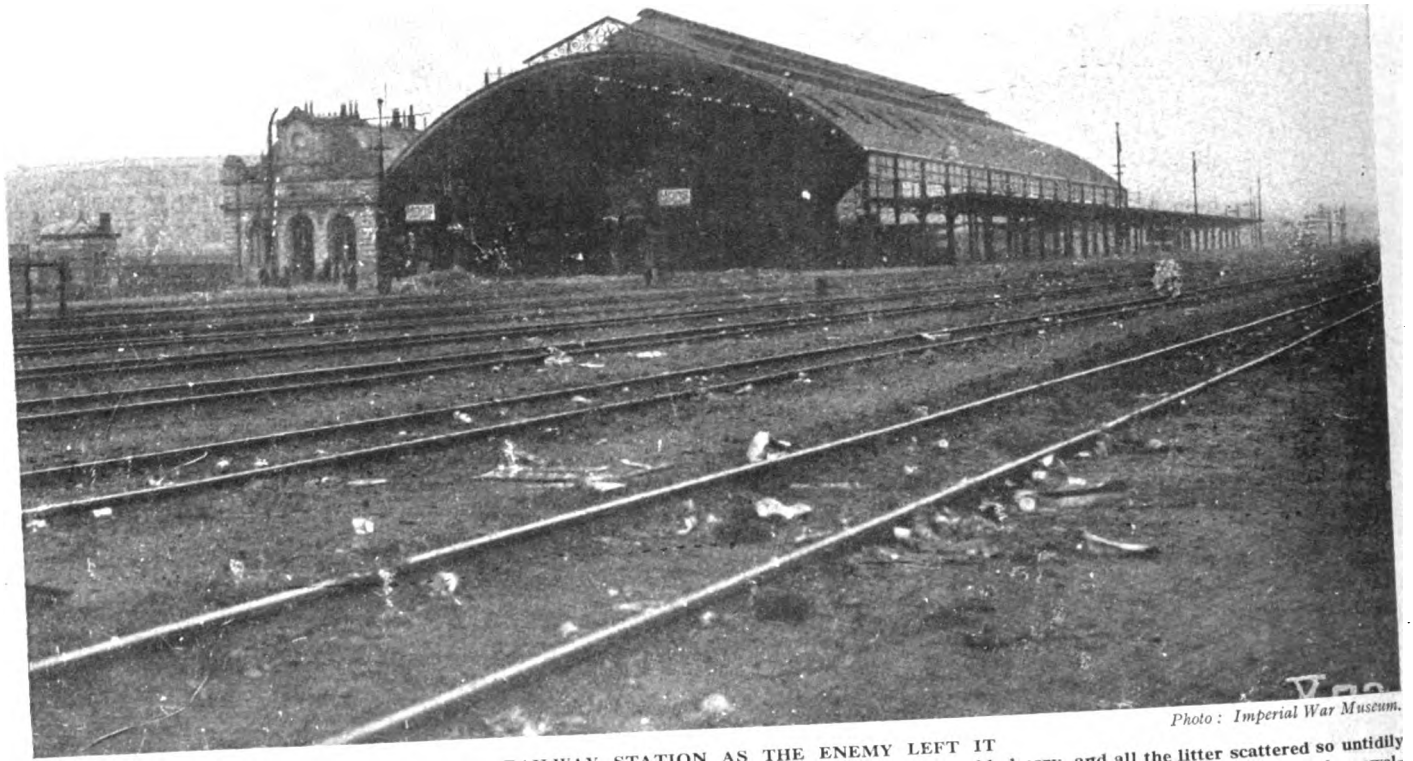

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

ONE RAILWAY STATION AS THE ENEMY LEFT IT

In this view of the railway station at Mons there is ample evidence that the Germans left in a considerable hurry, and all the litter scattered so untidily is ample evidence of haste. Mons is a considerable town, standing on an important line of railway running eastward from Valenciennes; and the unwelcome visitors left the place actually on Armistice Day, November 11th, 1918, with British troops closely at their heels. No rolling-stock whatever is apparent in the picture, and the line itself was probably heavily mined before the invader vanished.

trained the battalion, moved up the Kem River, and in the course of a campaign which lasted until October, drove a goodly number of Finnish White Guards, officered by Germans, over the border 130 miles west of Kem.

In this operation, much of the boat transport work was performed by Karelian women. On one occasion two of them won our Military Medal. When forming the crew of a ration boat, they were intercepted by three Finns, and a naval action followed. The Finns opened fire and missed. The women turned their boat, rammed, and then attacked with oars, killing two of the enemy and placing the third *hors de combat*.

The northern Finnish column under a Canadian—Major Burton—had a similar story to tell; and the success of these two small offensives imposed a passive attitude upon the enemy which ensured the safety of Murmansk and the railway until the arrival of winter.

Reinforcements—and the Armistice

With ground and water rendered passable by snow and frost, a dangerous situation might then have arisen. But, before its advent, two things had happened to relieve anxiety in this respect: reinforcements had reached Murmansk, and the signing of the Armistice had removed the fear of German action.

The first phase of the campaign was over. As a war measure against Germany, the occupation of Murmansk had fully justified itself. It had prevented the use of the harbour by German submarines, and Maynard's offensive action had helped to retain German divisions in Russia. The Central Powers could afford to take no risks with their base of supplies. In June, the stream of reinforcements which had been pouring from east to west came to an end.

With the Armistice the question naturally arose as to whether or not Allied troops should be retained in Murmansk. It was decided to keep them there for two reasons: the first—a moral obligation—we could not leave to Bolshevik vengeance the many Russians who had been loyally supporting the Allies in a patriotic attempt to drive the German invader from their soil; the other, it was too late in the season to evacuate the garrison of Archangel, owing to the imminence of ice; and, as Archangel depended for reinforcement during the winter entirely on Murmansk, clearly the latter port must be held.

In the meantime, the force at the disposal of Maynard had been increased

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Photo: A. J. Insall.

A MODEL OF PRESENT-DAY EFFICIENCY

This is the railway station at Mons as one may see it to-day, in sharp contrast to the same place as depicted on the preceding page. It is of great interest to note that the 3rd Canadian Division recaptured the town in the early morning of November 11th, 1918, the final day of the War. The actual Armistice line was fixed at a point six miles on the enemy's side of this station. Mons is in the centre of a great coal-mining district, which accounts for the multiplicity of sidings in the photograph. The town is a little over 50 kms. from Brussels and is itself capital of the province of Hainault.

considerably, largely because of the conditions which had prevailed before the Armistice, when a powerful German advance was expected. By the beginning of December, it numbered nearly 7,000 British troops, 3,000 Allies (French, Italian, Serbian), and 4,000 Finns, Karelians, and other Russians, the total amounting to 15,000, of whom 10,000 were combatants.[1]

It was now organised on a divisional basis, with two infantry brigades—the 236th (Turner) and the 237th (Marsh)—and was being equipped and trained for winter service. Sir Ernest Shackleton, with six officers who had accompanied him on Arctic expeditions, was advising about clothing and all the preparations required for action, military or otherwise, during the winter.

[1] Maynard, *op. cit.*, p. 132.

Canadians and French "Ski-men"

Among the reinforcements were a Canadian company (Leckie) and a French ski company, both likely to be invaluable when operating over frozen country. Six hundred reindeer-sledges were supplied by the neighbouring Laplanders. Seven mobile columns, each 200 strong and fully equipped for Arctic conditions, were under training.[1] The force was now not only numerically powerful, but also well-equipped, mobile, and well-staffed.

As the training of British troops in the use of skis, snow-shoes, and reindeer-sledges would take about two months, it was decided not to attempt any advance until mid-February. An enemy party of 150 men who had entered Karelia for propaganda purposes had, however, to be weeded out, and this was effected by a mixed detachment of 200 Canadians and Karelians. The Bolsheviks were surprised in a village, and all either killed or captured, at a cost to the assailants of only six wounded.

[1] *Ibid*, p. 162.

Between January 26th and February 11th, a number of orders were received entailing the despatch to Archangel, which was being heavily attacked, of three battalions and two machine-gun companies from Murmansk. These were to march *via* Soroka and Onega—a distance of 150 miles over snow and ice—and might expect opposition. The supply of the troops also presented great difficulties, but they were all overcome, and the journey accomplished satisfactorily.

The operation to the south began on February 15th. Segeja—a village some

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70 miles south of Sokota—was the objective. The main reasons for the advance were: to practise the troops in winter fighting, to maintain their offensive spirit, and to enlarge the area for the recruiting of Russians. The force numbered 600, of which only the 50 machine gunners were British. The temperature dropped to 40 degrees below zero, and a fierce blizzard had to be faced. Nevertheless, the task was accomplished, one column with its sledges covering 100 miles in 16 hours.[1]

A Bolshevik Discomfiture

The Bolsheviks counter-attacked without success to regain the village, and then retired a distance of 20 miles, having lost 200 men killed or captured in the engagements, against a loss to the Allies of 12 wounded. The recruiting area had been enlarged by 3,000 square miles, the principal railway bridges had been captured intact, and winter equipment and methods had been given a satisfactory trial.

Militarily, therefore, events were moving favourably; but not so politically. The Karelians, who had been absorbed by the Russians some centuries before, and had always hated them as rulers, wanted their independence. The new North Russian Government, which had been formed at Archangel, refused their request, just as the Moscow Government would have done; and when their wishes were disregarded, they became sullen and their loyalty waned. This was unfortunate, for they numbered 4,000 good soldiers.

Then the Finns, as had always been expected, gave trouble. They wished to return to their own country, where the White Finns, who were in control, did not want them; and we could not force them upon the Whites. So the Red Finns became insubordinate, they threatened sabotage, and were too powerful to be disarmed.

Next, the unpopularity of conscription among the Russians in the Murmansk area provided food for the propaganda of Bolshevik agents. Plans were laid, in fact, for a simultaneous mutiny among Finns, Karelians, and Russians, with which an attack by Bolshevik troops was to be combined.

Fortunately, however, the plotters were discovered, and many of the leaders were arrested. But the matter unluckily did not end there. Plot followed plot in a continual succession, with most unpleasant results. "We lived practically in a state of siege. The more important buildings were surrounded by wire and miniature fortifications, and stored with reserves of food and water; windows were loopholed, and made bullet-proof by heaping firewood logs against them; every officer slept with a loaded rifle at his side, with bayonet ready fixed."[1]

General Dissatisfaction

Lastly, it was not only the Muscovites who were intractable. The French ski company, on which high hopes had been placed, threw in their hands. They said that Clemenceau had promised that they would not have to fight in Russia.

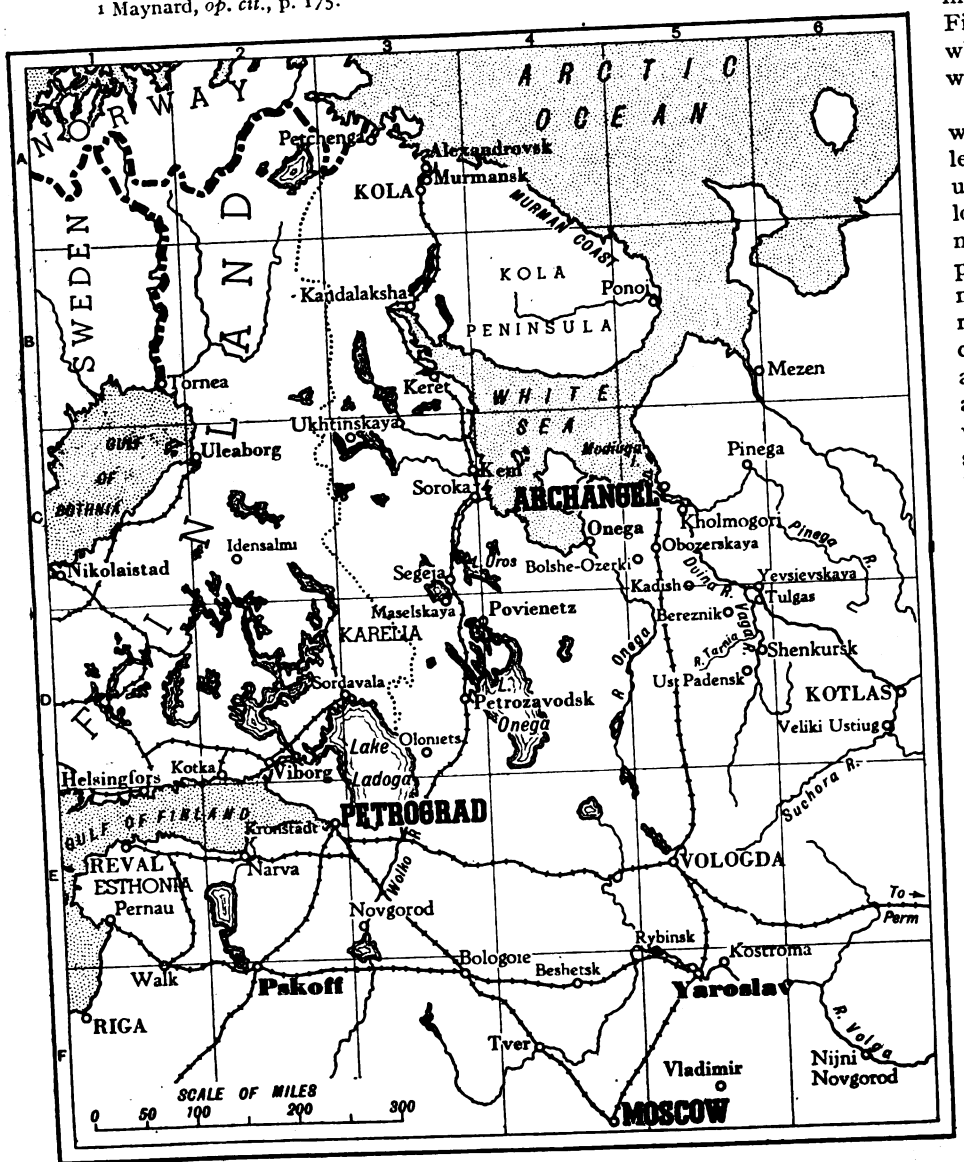
The period was, in fact, one of dissatisfaction and lawlessness in armies throughout the world. The blessed peace had not matured in the expected happiness. Even the best disciplined troops were suffering from a restlessness which was adversely affecting their efficiency.

Early in April, the Bolos threatened an attack on Segeja. Major Anderson, who was in command there, at once, without asking sanction, moved out against them, taking with him an armoured train and some Russians, his total force numbering 100. The enemy, surprised in the midst of his preparations, was completely defeated, losing two field guns and much valuable material.

It was now decided to continue the

1 Maynard, *op. cit.*, p. 175.

1 *Ibid*, p. 214.



MAP OF NORTH RUSSIA

In the territory to which the North Russia Expeditionary Force was sent there were no trenches, for the ground deep down is never unfrozen. Ships at most points are ice-bound through the winter and till late spring, and the problem of supplies presented constant difficulties. The first British forces in this Expedition were landed in April, 1918; and, from small beginnings, the army grew to a strength of 50,000, accompanied by naval and aerial establishments. Murmansk, on the Arctic shores, was the chief base of operations.

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Specially drawn.

OVERSEAS BADGES—TWELFTH SERIES

From left to right, the top row first, the badges are those of: 1—103rd Mahratta Light Infantry. 2—104th Wellesley's Rifles. 3—107th Pioneers. 4—108th Infantry. 5—109th Infantry. 6—110th Mahratta Light Infantry. 7—116th Mahrattas. 8—120th Rajputana Infantry. 9—121st Pioneers. 10—122nd Rajputana Infantry. 11—123rd Outram's Rifles. 12—153rd Punjabis. 13—154th Indian Infantry. 14—1st King George's Own Gurkha Rifles (The Malaun Regiment). 15—2nd King Edward's Own Gurkha Rifles (The Sirmoor Rifles). 16—3rd Queen Alexandra's Own Gurkha Rifles. 17—4th Gurkha Rifles. 18—8th Gurkha Rifles. 19—Army Bearer Corps. 20—Supply and Transport Corps.

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advance as far as the northern shores of Lake Onega. The movement began on May 1st in three columns on a front of 60 miles. The centre column, composed of British, occupied Maselega, after some hard fighting, on the 3rd, and the other two columns came into line. On the 15th, the advance was resumed on a front of 35 miles. An order was captured in which Trotski heartily damned the Red Commander for the series of defeats which he had suffered, and insisted that he should hold on to the last gasp.

Nevertheless, by the 21st, Maselskaya Gora and Povienetz had been taken. This was a fine performance, for supply and intercommunication were exceedingly difficult, and the right column had to make a march of 100 miles through marshy and practically unmapped country. Also, it was thawing fast, which rendered movement, especially of transport, particularly hard. But it was impossible to postpone the advance until the ground hardened, for it was essential to reach the lake before the melting of the ice should enable the flotilla there to co-operate with the Bolshevik Army.

Photo: A. P., Paris.

THE ONCE NOBLE CHÂTEAU DE NOULETTE

Aix-Noulette, well known by name, at all events, to most of those who saw service on the Western Front, comes to the north-west of Arras and on the fringe of the Notre Dame de Lorette, scene of the most bitter fighting between French and German troops before British forces took over this section of the long front line. In the above picture we see the shell-devastated ruins of the Château de Noulette, the view being taken through the wrought-iron railing and gateway to the estate.

6 Aeroplanes—5 Casualties

The operation had been assisted by six aeroplanes; but, partly because they were of such ancient pattern, and partly because of the scarcity of landing-places, only one survived. The new conditions rendered it possible to employ seaplanes, of which three flights of good machines were available.

The Allied position was now strong. The Armistice had eliminated from the list of our enemies not only the Germans, but also the White Finns. The latter did indeed give a certain amount of trouble, the story of which would take too long to tell; but, on the whole, our right flank was protected by the Finnish border, which, thrusting a shoulder forward towards the lake, considerably narrowed the front to be held.

Motor-boats were being hurried from Murmansk by rail, and, with the aid of the seaplanes, were expected to establish command of the lake. An additional 10,000 square miles had been added to the recruiting area in a country which was distinctly more anti-Bolshevik than that further north.

The last point was most important. It was certain that the Allies would evacuate North Russia during the ensuing summer. It was their duty to ensure the creation by that time of a Russian Army capable of standing by itself. Fortunately, at this moment, a commander of merit—General Skobeltsin—was appointed to the command of all Russian troops in the Murmansk area. Both recruiting and training then improved until, by the end of July, his army numbered 5,000.

This increase of force offered Maynard

Photo: G. T. Watson.

THIS WAS ONCE A MANSION

The building here illustrated consists merely of the ground floor of the once magnificent château. As showing the resource of the French in war-time difficulty, a roof has been constructed over the only usable part of the mansion, to form a habitation for the caretaker and his wife. Several British soldiers were once interred in the grounds of the château, but their remains have been reverently transferred to graves in an official cemetery in the neighbourhood.

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some compensation for the departure at this period of valuable Allied units. He had lost not only the French gunners, who had proved of great value in manning the armoured trains, but also—what was of much greater moment—his two companies of American Engineers.

Like their compatriots in the same branch at Archangel, these "dough boys" had kept trains continually running over a rickety railway-line vital to the whole operation, and had performed their tasks not only with skill, but—what was surprising in such a depressing climate—with an enthusiasm which was infectious.

On the shores of the lake, the troops were, for the first time in the campaign, really happy. The deadly monotony of peat and pine had given way to grassy slopes and to beautiful scenery. The fisherman had a well-stocked trout-stream at his door. Accommodation was ample and the force was concentrated on a frontage of 12 miles, so that arrangements for training and recreation were easily effected. It was even possible to make gardens and grow vegetables—luxuries quite out of question further north.

A Mixed Blessing

Early in June, the inhabitants of the Shunga Peninsula rose against the Bolsheviks, and, with the assistance of a small party of Russian troops, expelled them from their villages. This was not wholly to our advantage; for, though it opened up another large area to recruiting, it entailed the further advance of the army in order to keep touch with the forward troops and with the inhabitants.

As the move could not be avoided, the opportunity was taken to test the capacity of the new Russian units when acting alone. They failed miserably; and fresh operations had to be undertaken with a strong infusion of British units, and a sprinkling in the Russian ranks of individuals from the gallant Serbian battalion which had fought so finely throughout the campaign.

The second stroke was successful, and the forward position was consolidated. To make it more secure, the R.A.F. attempted to destroy the great bridge over the Suna River—the most important link in the enemy's communications north of his base at Petrozavodsk. The airmen failed, for the target was narrow. Lieut. E. A. Small, of the Intelligence Branch, then had a try. He took with him a band of 40 devoted Russians who had served him faithfully in former adventures.

Photo: G. T. Watson.

NANNY DOES HER TURN OF SENTRY-GO

The massive gateway to the Château de Noulette is a magnificent example of the craftsman's art, and stands to-day much as it did during the years 1914–18. Probably at times the château served as corps or divisional H.Q. and sentries may have been posted at the wrought-iron entrance. Now, however, only the thrifty caretaker's nanny-goat bars the way as one approaches the ruins and over-grown gardens of what was once a patrician home.

Together they marched for five days through the hostile lines, until they reached their objective. They overwhelmed the guard and set fire to the bridge, destroying the greater part of it. The party then returned home, carrying with them two machine guns they had captured. After that, the airmen took care that the bridge should not be repaired. The Bolsheviks, who had assembled a whole division at Petrozavodsk with the object of retaking the lost positions, were completely foiled.

On another occasion Lieut. Small and his party surprised and captured a brigadier, a complete brigade staff, 50 other men, and a field gun.

An Inland Naval Battle

Meanwhile, quite a large Allied flotilla had been assembled on the lake, comprising 16 modern motor-boats, each armed with a 3-pounder gun and manned partly by naval ratings and partly by Russians. With the assistance of seaplanes this fleet dominated the northern end of the waters, and on July 18th, actually fought a pitched battle,

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Photo: A. P., Paris.

THE VILLAGE SMITHY COMES TO GRIEF

Judging by the farm carts, ploughs, scarifiers, harrows, and other implements of peaceful husbandry here forgathered, most of them by this time completely beyond repair, this must once have been the village smithy, or the scene of activity of the blacksmith was closely in the neighbourhood. The unfortunate village is Beaulencourt, 3½ km. south-east of Bapaume, on the road to Bouchavesnes Ridge. There was particularly heavy fighting here in August, 1918, when bayonets and shrapnel were more in evidence than ploughshares.

destroying three vessels and capturing many more, one of which was found to carry two 3-inch guns, one 3-pounder, and six machine guns.

On August 9th, Lord Rawlinson arrived. The decision having been reached to withdraw the Allied troops, he had been appointed to co-ordinate the actions of the two forces. As both the latter were fully extended, he was given a reserve, which reached Murmansk on August 27th, of two battalions, two machine-gun companies, two field batteries (personnel only), a field company R.E., and a tank detachment.

Both Rawlinson and Maynard were anxious that the North Russian Government should evacuate Archangel and concentrate on holding Murmansk, which was by far the more defensible of the two ports. General de Millar—the Russian Governor—insisted, however, on holding Archangel, as he was afraid that its abandonment might have unfortunate repercussions on the operations of Denikin, who was at that time meeting with considerable success in South Russia.

The main feature of the Allied withdrawal was in each case to be a bold stroke at the enemy, delivered at the eleventh hour, and intended to render him powerless while the retirement and embarkation took place. The evacuation of Murmansk was naturally to be carried out after that of Archangel; for, being an ice-free port, Murmansk could be held for as long as might be thought desirable. Moreover, the Admiralty wished to utilise it for refitting, prior to their despatch to England, all the small craft which had been employed in the operations.

In the meantime, Skobeltsin had been gradually eating his way forward until he had the whole of the Shunga Peninsula in his hands. For the final operation, he wished to gain and hold the line of the River Suna, which was some 35 miles to the front. Maynard, however, did not wish to commit so deeply the troops whom he was about to withdraw, and declined to move beyond the River Nurmis.

Finnish Reds' Victory

On September 14th, the army advanced in three columns totalling 9,000 men, of whom 6,000 were Russians. The column on the right, in attempting a wide turning movement, was defeated by Red Finns. The other two, with the help of a party landed from the flotilla behind the enemy's right flank, succeeded in advancing 20 miles and in capturing many prisoners. On the 16th, British troops occupied the line of the Nurmis.

Skobeltsin thereupon decided, in view of the failure of the turning column, to remain for the present on that line. He had captured 1,000 prisoners and much

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war material, and had hammered the enemy sufficiently to ensure the safe withdrawal of the British troops. The latter then began their retirement. On the 25th, they handed over to the Russians the flotilla, all aircraft, and all military stores in the forward area. The withdrawal and the embarkation next proceeded without serious incident.

The end had come; and it was a sad moment for the British commanders. However sound the political reasons for a withdrawal may have been, they could not but feel that they had encouraged Russians to resist the Bolshevik Government, and were now abandoning them to a fateful struggle, which could not be regarded hopefully in view of the marked disproportion of strength between the antagonists.

Meanwhile it is time to turn to the fortunes of the British troops in other parts of Russia, and these will now be dealt with as clearly as possible.

It will be remembered that Major-General F. C. Poole was appointed to command the North Russia Expeditionary Force. He landed at Murmansk on May 24th, 1918. In his despatch describing the operations, he says: "My instructions were to organise the Czechoslovaks, of whom there were said to be some 20,000 *en route* to Archangel and Murmansk; and these troops, together with any local troops I might be able to raise, were to form the bulk of my force, stiffened with a few Allied troops, of whom I might ultimately hope to obtain about 5,000."[1]

Nebulous Instructions

There is a strange absence of any motive in these instructions. The commander was to organise a large and somewhat heterogeneous force, but for what purpose is not stated. Nor is this clear in any other contemporary document. Certain ideas, however, emanate from the discussions on the subject at Versailles and elsewhere.

Murmansk must be occupied, to prevent the Germans from using it as a submarine base. The vast stores despatched to Archangel by the Allies—200,000 tons of war material and 300,000 tons of coal—must not be allowed to fall into enemy hands. The Eastern Front must be reconstituted—though how that was to be effected from Archangel, which is 800 miles even from Petrograd, is not apparent.

Poole had hardly arrived at Murmansk when he discovered that there was no chance of the Czechoslovaks reaching his command. The bottom

1 Despatches, *London Gazette*, 6/4/1920.

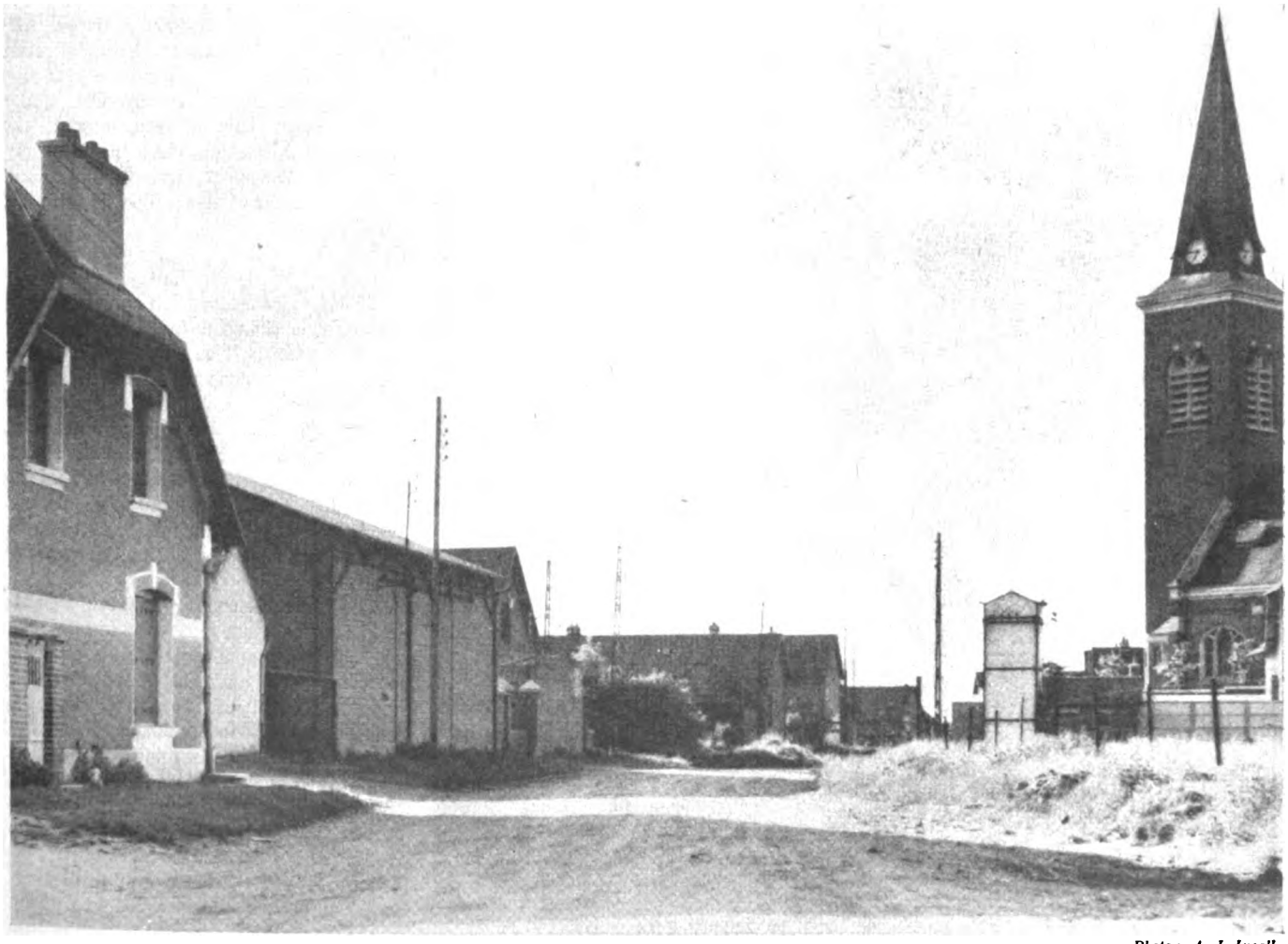

Photo: A. J. Insall.

SUNSHINE AFTER SHADOW IN BEAULENCOURT

From the stress of battle and turmoil Beaulencourt has lifted its head once more, and the deserted village street is here seen with pathways of sunlight across it as though suggesting peaceful prosperity. Here are well-built homesteads, and the parish church rears first a tower four-square to all the world and then a steeple, complete with clock. In the later stages of the great Somme tussle of 1916 Beaulencourt was an important strategic point, as vital to the enemy as it was to us. After losing it earlier in 1918 we captured it again on September 1st of that year.

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had consequently fallen out of his meagre instructions. It would be his task to capture Archangel; but, thereafter, he must choose objectives suited to his exiguous force.

By the end of July, the White Sea being free from ice, and a French battalion having arrived, he thought that the moment for action had come. By scraping together every soldier and sailor on whom he could lay hands, he was able to muster 1,500 men—a force which he thought might suffice for the seizure of the port.

He had heard that a hostile detachment 1,000 strong, including 500 Germans, was nearing Archangel, and he therefore realised that there was a serious risk of failure. But he was an optimist; and, on this occasion at least, his optimism was justified. Had he waited longer, his own forces would indeed have grown, but those of his opponents would have grown still more.

He had planned to embark at Murmansk on August 3rd. On July 30th, however, he heard that friendly Russians in Archangel regarded the situation there as desperate, and had decided that they could not delay the revolution which they had planned against the Government. He at once consulted with Admiral Kemp—the senior naval officer—and together they decided to embark the greater part of the force that night. They did so—a wonderfully quick performance. By the following morning, H.M.S. *Attentive*, H.M. Aircraft-carrier *Nairana*, the French cruiser *Amiral Aube*, some trawlers, and 600 soldiers and marines, were well under way. With this advance-guard, the island of Modiuga, covering the entrance to the port, was to be seized. The remainder of the force was to follow on the 31st.

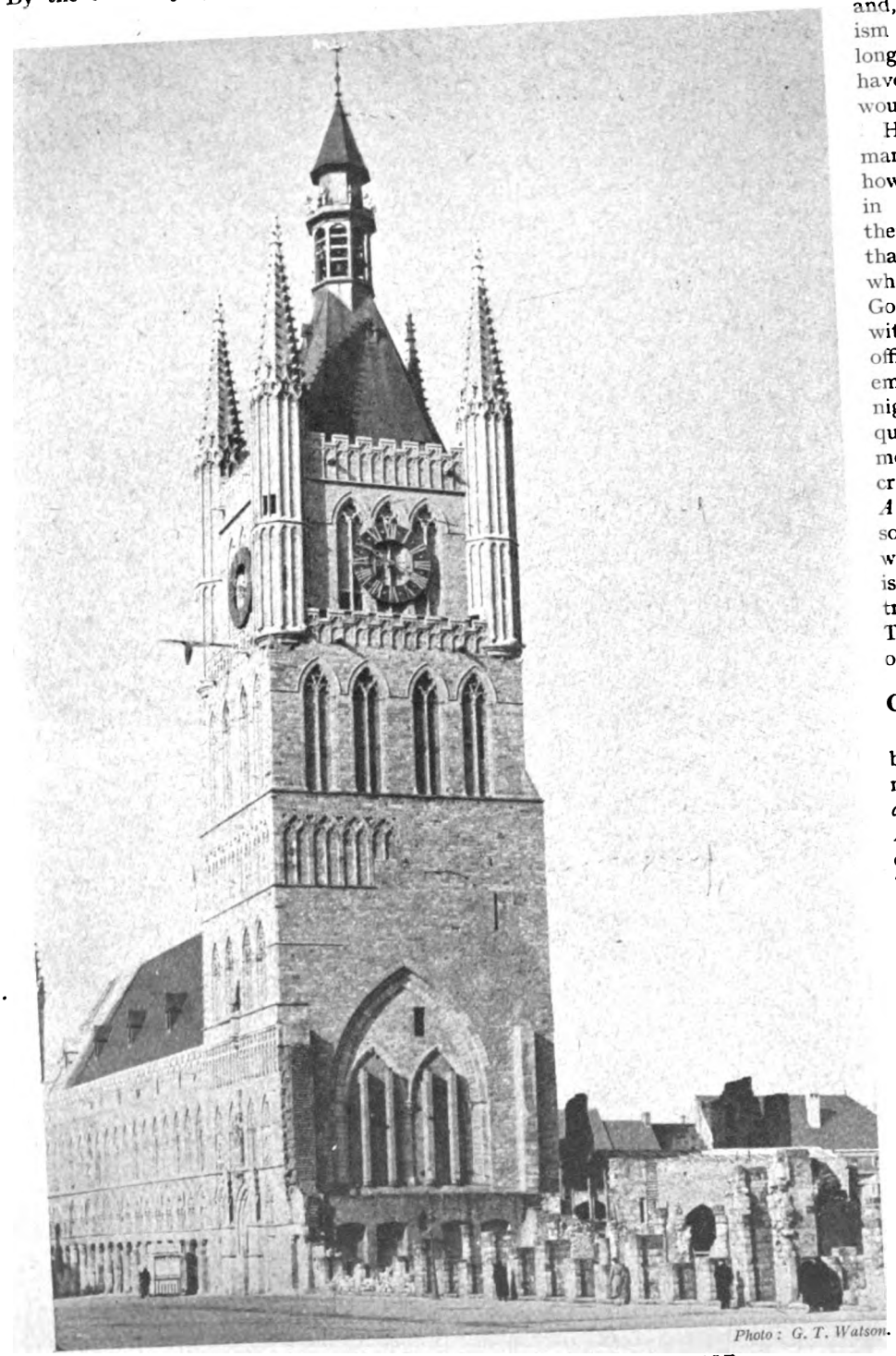

Photo: G. T. Watson.

A NEW CLOTH HALL AND THE RUINS OF THE OLD

In many an old-world Flanders town the belfry is an architectural gem, and the same may once more be said of Ypres. Prior to the Great War the belfry divided the famous Cloth Hall into two equal parts; and a remarkably fine reproduction of the tower, 230 ft. in height, has now been erected, following as far as possible the original thirteenth-century work. Only, the south-west portion of the Cloth Hall has, however, been reconstructed, the wartime ruins of the other part being left that the world may gaze thoughtfully upon them and remember for ever those fateful years 1914–18.

Capture of Modiuga Island

The *Amiral Aube*, with 200 soldiers on board, was delayed by striking a submerged wreck. The *Attentive* and *Nairana*, however, arrived off the island on August 1st, and Altham of the *Attentive* demanded its immediate surrender. The demand was refused, and the shore-guns opened fire. The *Attentive* and the seaplanes thereupon quickly silenced the batteries, and, setting parties ashore, cleared the island, most of the garrison escaping.

The armament was powerful, consisting of four 6-inch guns and one 4-inch; so that it was amazing that so little resistance was offered. Apparently the enemy had been surprised by the suddenness of the stroke, and had not found the time to complete his defence. Or perhaps he was thrown off his balance by the effrontery of the demand for his surrender, and by a lurking fear that the weight of the British Navy was irresistible. The mine-fields were now cleared, and seaplanes despatched to drop pamphlets on the town.

During the night, the Bolshevik Government, having removed the greater part of the store of Allied war-material, decided to evacuate the town.

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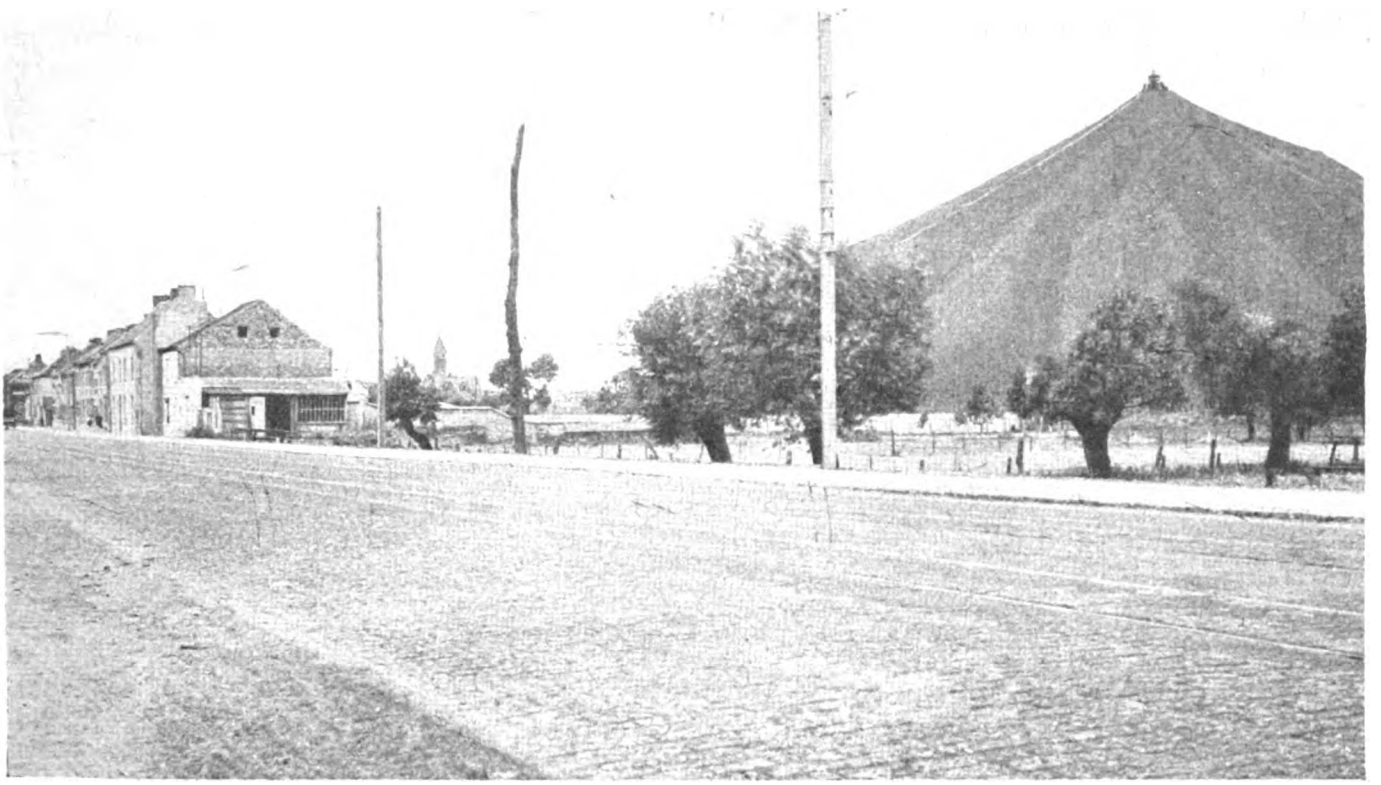

Photo: A. J. Insall.

LOOKING BACK ON JEMAPPES

The War history of the Belgian village of Jemappes, 3 km. west of Mons, belongs to the two extreme ends of the struggle. Here, along the east—west line of the Condé Canal, Sir Horace Smith-Dorrien's II Corps was drawn up on August 23rd, 1914, and hotly contested the crossings; and, more than four years later, the 3rd Canadian Division passed through the village just before it captured Mons a few hours prior to the Armistice, November 11th, 1918. This picture shows the road into Jemappes from Mons. The canal runs parallel with the highway, behind the spoil-heap.

They were hustled out by the Russian supporters of the Allies, who had staged their revolution for 4 a.m. on August 2nd. The new Government proclaimed itself pro-Ally, anti-German, and anti-Bolshevik, and refused to recognise the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk. In the course of the day, the Expeditionary Force made a triumphal entry in "procession up the channel to Archangel, being everywhere greeted with enormous enthusiasm."[1]

In the great Ordnance dump at Archangel a considerable quantity of serviceable war-material still remained, including rifles of Russian pattern manufactured in England and America. They were flimsy in construction, and not too reliable in action; but in the interests of uniformity of equipment among the Allied contingents, and of economy, they were distributed to all parts of the force. It is of interest to note that, at the moment when these Russian rifles were being issued to British soldiers at Archangel, British rifles were being supplied to Russian soldiers in Siberia.

The enemy retreated by boats up the Dwina and by train along the railway, burning all the bridges behind him. Allied forces were at once organised to take up the pursuit—one body under Brigadier-General Finlayson to go up the river towards Kotlas, another under Lieutenant-Colonel Guard to follow the railway toward Vologda.

Tremendous Distances

The objectives given sound a little absurd in view both of seeming possibilities at the time, and of actual attainments later. Kotlas was 300 miles and Vologda 400 miles from Archangel; and, had the two bodies reached their respective destinations, they would have found themselves 400 miles apart. However, any such criticism may well be wide of the mark in a country undergoing disintegration—a country which was then watching the feats of the Czecho-slovaks, and was shortly to see the remarkable advances of Denikin's army.

Guard reached Oberzerskaya—80 miles south of Archangel, but failed against Plesetskaya, 50 miles farther south. Finlayson established his force at Bereznik, near the junction of the Vaga with the Dwina, and, shortly afterwards, broke up a strong enemy concentration south of that point.

When Poole moved to Archangel, he sent Thornhill, his chief intelligence officer, with a small body of Russians and Serbians, to occupy Onega, and to

[1] Despatches, *London Gazette*, 6/4/1920.

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Photo: Imperial War Museum.

ON LAKE ONEGA

Vickers machine guns aboard H.M.S. *Jolly Roger* on the above-named lake, whose northern extremity lies about 500 miles due south of Murmansk, and whose large expanse borders a considerable part of the Petrograd railway. The geography hereabouts demands reference to the map, as the Onega River does not pass through the lake, and the town of Onega is on the White Sea.

strike against Oberzerskaya, with a view to cutting the railway and obstructing the enemy's retreat from Archangel. Thornhill—a gallant and capable officer, who rendered valuable service to the Allies throughout the campaign—was defeated, however, and driven back on Onega, which he held.

Far away on the opposite flank, the Allies occupied Pinega, well up the river of that name. Thus, after a few weeks' fighting, they were disposed in a great horseshoe covering Archangel on the east, south, and west.

Poole had chosen a good season for the opening of his campaign. Conditions, for Russia, were ideal. The temperature was that of a warm English summer. The troops could wear the lightest of garb, could sleep out of doors, and could enjoy a daily bathe in the numerous streams and lakes. Necessary movements could, for the most part, be effected by water-transport. Such roads as existed were for the moment dry. Ponies and country-carts were fairly plentiful. Near the larger villages were clearances sufficiently spacious for use as landing-grounds. The season for mosquitoes had passed.

The Advance on the Dwina

On land, operations, though hindered by occasional bogs and by destroyed bridges, were favoured by the cover to be found in the forests, and by the great length of the days. On the Dwina, which for 100 miles averaged a mile in width, the main drawback from which we suffered was that the enemy in his retreat had naturally removed all the fastest and strongest boats. The vessels he left behind were leaky, slow, and, for the most part, unequal to the strain of gun-fire from their decks. It was creditable that, in spite of this handicap, the river column made such a successful advance.

In October, with the shortening of the days, the scene underwent a startling change. Deluges of rain bogged roads and aerodromes. Much of the country became a morass. Supply and reinforcement, away from the railway or the river, proved exceedingly difficult. It was fortunate indeed that the troops had failed to make any deeper advances; for, as it was, the force was stretched to its administrative limit.

The men had been provided during the rainy season with an issue of one pair of gum-boots, thigh, per man; and the question of the hour, when the swamps had dried, was how to dispose of this bulky equipment.

"Whithersoever the battalions went the gum-boots, thigh, went with them. The men grew to loathe the very mention of gum-boots, thigh. . . . They were a pestilence and a plague among us. Humbly we begged to be allowed to return them to Ordnance. But the reluctance of the department to issue what is necessary is as nothing to its unwillingness to receive back into its fold all superfluous things.

"The men therefore continued to suffer from aching backs, and the

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

"SOMEWHERE IN RUSSIA"

Army Service Corps mule teams drawn up at a base horse-transport depôt in North Russia during 1919. The A.S.C., as one of our forthcoming chapters will reveal, performed yeoman service in this as in almost every other British sphere of military activity, and encountered some strange experiences while engaged on the task.

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quartermasters grew more and more morose. Finally, the strain grew intolerable. We sailed away one afternoon, and left our thousands of gumboots behind us on the Dwina beach. Backs became straight, and the quartermasters praised the High Gods on Olympus, who control the destinies of army dumps." [1]

After the rains came the winter: comparatively mild in November and December, but bitter in January and February, when the temperature might fall to 80 degrees below zero. Happily, as with the Murmansk force, the supply of warm clothing had been admirably organised, and so, ordinarily, the troops did not suffer greatly from cold. But woe betide the platoon or company that had to spend the night in the open!

Unendurable Cold

In every battle, just as in Napoleon's retreat from Moscow, fierce combats raged for the possession of shelter. Accommodation was as a rule heavily protected, and was sited either out of range of gun-fire or where it could be well camouflaged; for even the breaking of a window sufficed to render the nights almost unendurable.

With the freezing of the ground, the army gained in mobility, for the bogs were frozen, skis and snowshoes could be used for infantry, skis for aircraft, and sleighs for transport. Snowshoes were preferred, on the whole, to skis, because of the lengthy training entailed by the latter; and two companies of snowshoe-runners were actually formed and did excellent service. But skiers are more speedy; and, in view of the vital importance of mobility, a few companies of them would, therefore, have been of great value. Fortunately, the Bolsheviks were even worse off than the Allies in this respect.

Sleighs were much used, being plentiful and easily handled. Drawn by reindeer, ponies, or dogs, they could travel 40 miles in a day with a load of 800 lb.; that is, their transport-value was three times that of an A.T. cart, six times that of a camel, and twelve times that of a mule.

In general, the intense cold helped wounds to heal quickly, but wounded men had to be brought under cover at once if they were to survive. One fight took place in "85 degrees of frost—the worst day we had. . . . The enemy came on in white smocks, very difficult to pick out against the snow. This attack failed, and they left a few figures on the ground in front of our blockhouses. . . . Within half an hour . . . all were dead from exposure." [1]

The climatic conditions of the winter exercised a depressing effect on the spirits of the troops. "Splendid fighting men were made weak cowards by the cumulative depression of the unbroken Russian night." [1] It must be remem-

[1] Singleton Gates, *Bolos and Barishynas*, p. 26.

[1] Ironside, "The North Russian Campaign," *R.A. Journal*, liii, p. 310.

[1] Cudahy, *Archangel*, p. 29.

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

RESULTS OF A BOMB

The effects of a bomb explosion on a Bolshevik train in the Murmansk area, 1919. There was at this time, and is still, only one line leading from this Arctic port, whence it travels south past the western shores of the White Sea and Lake Onega to the River Svir, and then turns west round the southern extremity of Lake Ladoga to Petrograd. The latter town was, of course, in Soviet hands.

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

INTERROGATING A PRISONER

Another scene on what is often described as the Railway Front of Northern Russia: Lord Rawlinson interrogates a Bolshevik prisoner captured during the month of September, 1919. One of the functions, and not the least useful, fulfilled by the rolling-stock of the railway at Murmansk was to provide billets for soldiers and civilian refugees.

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bered that the British soldiers sent to Russia were men of a low category, not considered fit to fight in France. Naturally, therefore, they were more than ordinarily affected by the conditions.

An American Tribute

But they must have done rather well, nevertheless; for, according to an American observer, the fact that these "crocked Category B men performed prodigies of fortitude . . . and acted deeds of stirring spiritual courage . . . is a permanent tribute to a manhood that England breeds and imperishable glory to British arms." [1]

There were no trenches as known in France, "for the ground deep down is never unfrozen, and the water cannot drain away. A wooden platform behind a log breastwork takes the place of a trench." [1] The defenders, in their furs and their flaps and their long felt boots, looked soldierly enough, but possessed little power of quick movement. For active work, they were provided with special suits of gaberdine; but when thus clad they had to keep continually on the move to escape frostbite.

Each column was composed, as a rule, of men of several nationalities. "For the good of the troops, it would have been preferable to have kept the various columns homogeneous, consisting of one, or perhaps two, nationalities at the most. Thus matters administrative and linguistic would have been simplified.

"But the small jealousies which occur under such conditions seem to be inevitable. Each column and each nationality conceived the idea that they alone were bearing all the burden of the day, and that the others were either in a more comfortable area or were lounging in Archangel." [1]

This system was the despair of the supply-officer. "The French required their 'pinard' or red wine, while the British demanded their rum. The Americans were dry but demanded both 'pinard' and rum." [2] They liked to have the best of all worlds, in fact. They prided themselves on being soldiers of the United States, until, at a particular review, it was decided that contingents should march past in alphabetical order; and then at once they became Americans.

1 Cudahy, *op. cit.*, p. 29.

1 Ironside, "Snow Campaigns," *R.A. Journal*, li, p. 229. From this article much of the above information concerning winter conditions has been derived.

1 *Ibid.*, p. 230.
2 *Ibid.*, p. 231.

Photo: A. P., Paris.

DISMANTLED

A tragic photograph of the once really fine château at Villers-aux-Érables (the last word means "maple-trees") after the final tide of hostilities had ebbed from it in August, 1918. The village lies just south of the long, ruler-straight Amiens—Noyon highway, on the main road from Moreuil to Roisel, and constitutes a tiny commune of 87 inhabitants.

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Photo: A. J. Insall.

FURTHER DEMOLISHED

So far from having been reconstructed, the great ruin of Villers-aux-Érables Château has suffered further disintegration since the Armistice, at the hands of persons seeking material for the rebuilding of their own shattered properties. The French were responsible for the final recapture, which they effected on August 8th, 1918; but during the March Retreat (29th) the village had lain on the extreme right flank of the British XIX Corps area.

"The Russians required twice the amount of bread that the others did, and a smaller ration of meat. It soon became apparent that each nationality was quick to demand the extras to which they were entitled according to their own ration scale, but were loath to give up any of the extras which were contained in the excellent British ration, and to which they were not entitled. When it is considered that the Force was composed of British, French, American, Polish, Russian, Italian, Czech, and Chinese contingents the difficulties of the administration will be realised." [1]

Frozen Lewis Guns

The cold of winter had disconcerting effects upon modern equipments. Range was reduced; on very cold days, for instance, "the range with 18-pounders was some 600 yards short in 2,500." [1] Buffer and lubricating oils had to be mixed with turpentine if they were to remain unfrozen. Even so, Lewis guns would freeze up, "unfreezing being only possible with boiling water, which naturally could not be obtained out of doors." On a certain occasion, when one "was being fired, the order to cease fire and advance arrived. The gun-number advanced 50 yards and then attempted to re-open, but found his gun frozen up." [2] Water-cooled guns could be used only in blockhouses, and then solely "by employing a mixture of glycerine and water in the proportion of two to one." [3]

In spite of many trials, the health of the men remained excellent during the winter. There was usually plenty of work to be done, and, where that was not the case, physical training was the order of the day, supplemented by skiing, tobogganing, and outdoor games. The War Office deserves a meed of praise in this connection; for its arrangements for the comfort and well-being of the troops could hardly have been bettered.

The winter ended suddenly. The snow disappeared, the ice melted, and vegetation began to grow rapidly. "The rivers broke up with a great deal of terrifying crashing, and all movement either by land or water was at an end for about four days . . . the sight of the great jagged masses of ice going rushing past was a magnificent one." [1]

The enemy might have profited considerably from the fact that the ice melted earlier in the upper than in the lower reaches of the rivers; for it

[1] Ironside, *op. cit.*

[1] *The North Russian Campaign*, p. 319.
[2] *Snow Campaigns*, p. 237.
[3] *Ibid.*, p. 237.

Ibid., p 238.

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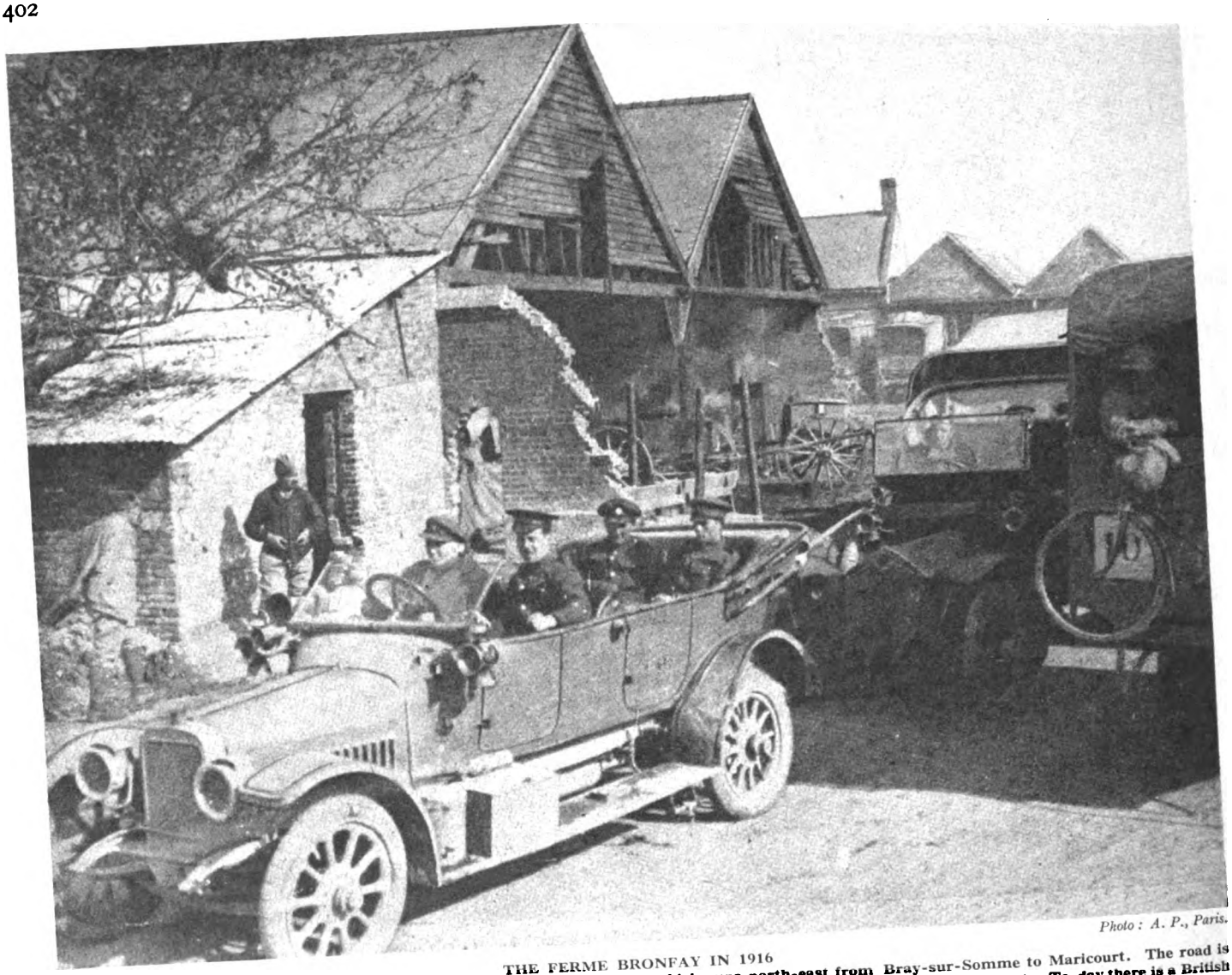

Photo: A. P., Paris.

THE FERME BRONFAY IN 1916

This farm lies just south of the Ferme Billon, about half-way along the lane which runs north-east from Bray-sur-Somme to Maricourt. The road is a high one, and was the scene of desperate fighting in March, 1918, as well as of some brisk encounters the following August. To-day there is a British cemetery named after the farm, in which lie 516 United Kingdom, 15 Australian, 2 Indian, 1 South African, and 1 unknown fallen, who perished between August, 1915, and February, 1917.

offered him the chance of bringing up his gunboats to shell our positions while our vessels were still immobile at Archangel.

Ironside's Forces

On October 1st, General Ironside took over the command from General Poole. He had the following forces at his disposal: contingents of the Allies, other than Russians, 14,000; Russians, 1,500; Slavo-British Legion, composed of refugees of all nationalities, together with some 2,000 moujiks, 3,000; in all, 18,500.

The first task confronting him was the stocking of his base with all the stores likely to be required by his troops during the ensuing eight months, throughout which period he would be almost isolated from the rest of the world. This he achieved satisfactorily, thanks to fine work on the part of the Supply and Ordnance departments in England, and to the cordial co-operation of the Navy.

His second task was to conform to the demands of defence. Here he was confronted with a deadly opponent, in the shape of propaganda. Both sides in the Great War had been using this new weapon with some success as an auxiliary. But it was left to the Bolsheviks to employ it as the main instrument of attack. Their guiding principle in all major operations was not to advance until the seeds of communism and sedition, which they diligently sowed in the opposing ranks, were freely sprouting. When this stage was reached, they would sweep forward confidently, and often cover immense distances before encountering serious opposition.

Here was a device which might well be used with signal effect against the Expeditionary Force. Bolshevik agents had no difficulty in penetrating to Archangel or in enlisting in the Allied or Russian ranks. They then argued as follows. The Allies were invaders. All true Russians should unite and drive them into the sea. The invaders were the agents of capitalists, sucking the blood of the workers: witness the great timber-mills at Archangel, financed entirely by British capital.

The Allied troops were drawn from six nations. It was easy to sow differences among them. Pamphlets to this end, written in six languages, were widely distributed. One such, containing a long and confused personal attack on Ironside, finished with the words: "The mere sight of

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this great hulking red-haired overgrown boy makes one want to spit in his face. Into the sea with the red-headed Feld-Webel (Sergeant-Major) Ironside ! Long live the mighty and steadfast Red Army ! " [1]

Red Propaganda

After the Armistice, the Bolsheviks' appeal was greatly strengthened by their being able to demand of their opponents why they remained in the wilds of Russia while their comrades in the west were being demobilised. It was not surprising that they achieved a measure of success, and caused discontent and even mutinies in the Allied units.

The British soldier for the most part survived the assault. " He treated the propaganda with the kindly contempt which he adopts to all foreigners." [1] But commanders had an anxious time, and were more afraid of the enemy's propaganda than of his superior numbers and fire-power.

Security suffered from an over-extension of the front, yet to have withdrawn would have entailed a great increase of the enemy's morale. All that the commander could do was to sustain his troops by his presence and his advice. This he did, visiting the line often—usually by dropping down in a seaplane on one of the numerous lakes which covered the occupied area.

His third task was so to organise and train his Russian troops that, when Archangel re-opened and the Expeditionary Force withdrew, the local government would be able to continue the struggle alone. The action taken in this connection is thus described in his despatch:

" Mobilisation was ordered in October, 1918, and proceeded quietly, there being few absentees. Training was under the supervision of British officers, and the results achieved were excellent.

" I cannot speak too highly of the young officers sent out from England for this purpose. They raised, organised, and trained the Russian Forces to a total of 25,000 men, and earned the respect of the Russians with whom they served." [1]

Yet some of these lads were to lose their lives, not only in battle, but through assassination by the men they had taught and trusted.

The Reds Nearly Succeed

With the coming of winter, enemy attacks developed and continued almost incessantly against our whole front, which was dangerously long in relation

[1] Ironside, "The North Russian Campaign," *R.A. Journal*, liii, p. 314.

[1] *Ibid*, p. 313.

[1] *London Gazette*, 6/4/1920.

Photo: A. J. Insall.

BRONFAY FARM IN 1937

On March 25th, 1918, the Ferme Bronfay lay in the path of the two remaining front-line divisions (35th and 9th) of the VII Corps, which had now been transferred from the Fifth to the Third Army, its two divisions south of the Somme being amalgamated with the XIX Corps. The farm was finally abandoned, after the 35th and 9th Divisions had held their own all day, in the general retirement of the Third Army at night.

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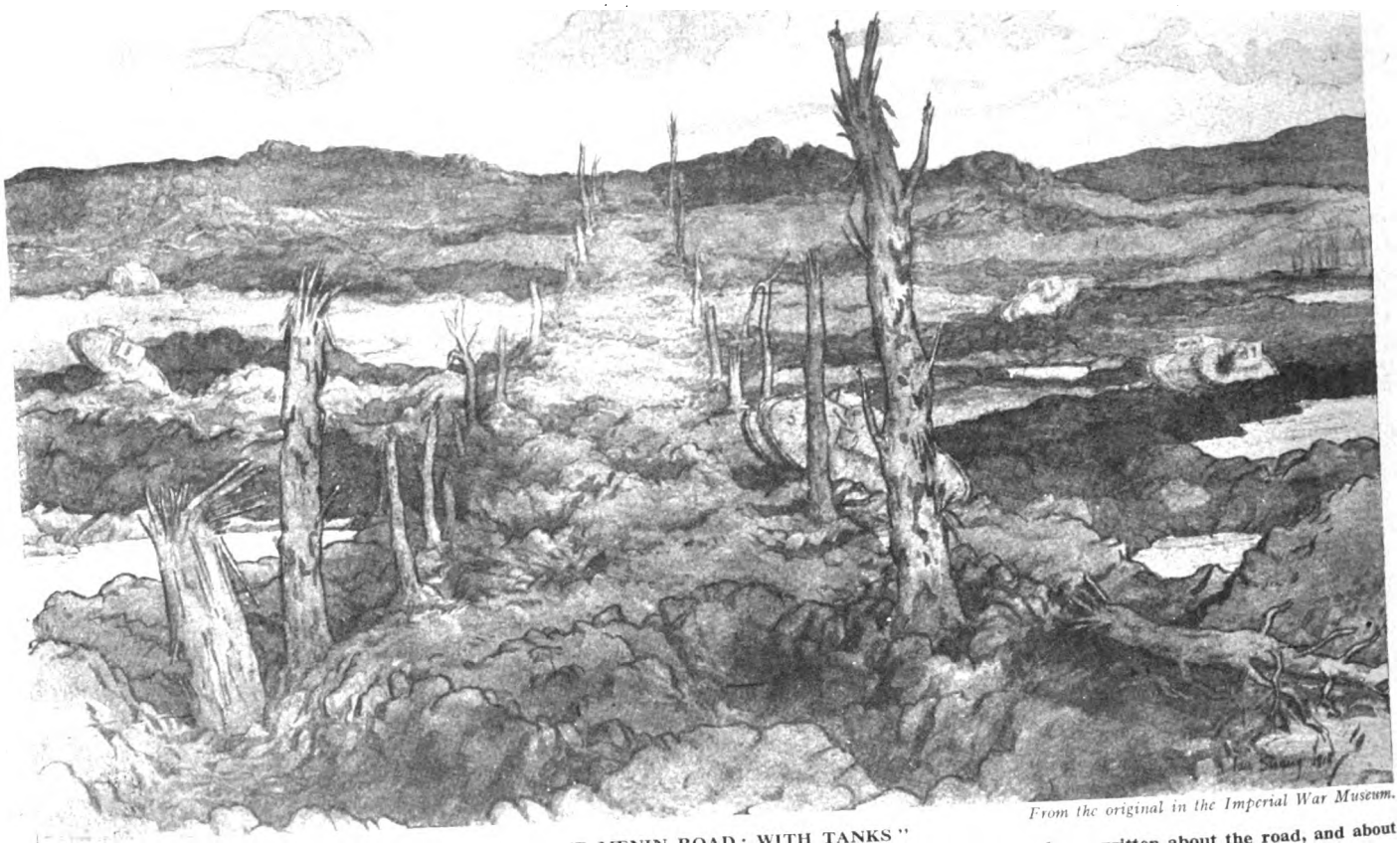

From the original in the Imperial War Museum.

"THE MENIN ROAD: WITH TANKS"

A painting by Ian Strang of this, the most notorious highway anywhere on the Western Front. So much has been written about the road, and about Ypres at the hither end of it, that it may be of interest here to recall a few points concerning the half-legendary town of Menin itself. This place, 18 km. east-south-east of Ypres, and a fairly important railway junction, is to-day a linen, flannel, cotton, and lace-making centre containing some 19,000 inhabitants. During the War it was heavily shelled—so heavily, indeed, that many of its features are of post-war date. It was in German hands from October, 1914, until October 15th, 1918.

to the strength of the defence. They were often within an ace of success; and only the courage and competence of the commander, the valour displayed by the bulk of the troops, the splendid services rendered by the sailors, and the aid sent opportunely by Murmansk, staved off disaster. By the end of April, 1919, the assaults of the enemy had been repulsed, and Archangel was secure.

The enemy delivered his first offensive on the Dwina front. It opened on October 4th, and lasted until November 15th. The critical period occurred at the commencement. In order to prevent our flotilla from being embedded in the ice during the winter, we had sent it to Archangel on October 3rd. This was unnecessarily early. The ice, which travels against the current at the rate of 100 miles a week, did not reach our forward positions until another month had passed.

During this period, our troops suffered from a pitiless and continuous bombardment by the enemy's heavy naval guns, to which they could not effectively reply, having at their disposal nothing more powerful than their 18-pounder field guns, supplemented by one 4·7-inch gun and a Russian 5·5-inch, the latter of which was immediately knocked out by a direct hit. This unpleasant situation might have been obviated had we landed some of the heavier guns from our ships (and we had a 7·5-inch gun on one of our monitors) before they departed.

Nevertheless, though the process to which they were being subjected is one of the most demoralising in war, our soldiers bore up wonderfully, looking always for the opportunity of getting their own back. To achieve this they tried many devices. Here is one of them. A company was being heavily "strafed" in a village in the front line. After a time, the men retired, somewhat ostentatiously. They then made a detour in the forest and concealed themselves on the enemy's side of the village. The Bolos, warned by the inhabitants of the evacuation, approached cautiously, and rejoiced loudly on entering; whereupon the British company, entering behind them, "bagged" the lot.

New World Gallantry

Still, the conditions were such that the Allies had a good many tense moments. On one occasion, a dangerous situation was averted by the gallant action of the drivers of a Canadian battery, who, assisted by the gunners (firing point-blank) and a party of stout-hearted Americans, annihilated a strong hostile party which had worked round their rear and was threatening them with capture.

The second offensive took place between January 19th and March 10th. It was launched against our positions

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From the original in the Imperial War Museum.

A BLACK WATCH RATION PARTY

This painting is entitled, "A ration party of the 4th Black Watch at the Battle of Neuve Chapelle, 1915," and is by one Joseph Gray. The regiment is mentioned in three places during the *Official History's* account of the Neuve Chapelle fighting. A fairly detailed description is given of the 2nd Battalion's contribution to the stemming of the German counter-attack of March 12th; the battalion formed part of the Bareilly Brigade, and was working in close co-operation with the 1/39th Garhwalis. Elsewhere mention is twice made of the 5th Battalion's work in providing carriers, stretcher-parties, and working-parties, notably in the region of the Orchard.

at Shenkursk. This town, which in importance ranks second to Archangel in the northern region, had been occupied rather from political than from military reasons; for it was dangerously far south. The Bolsheviks drove the Allies out of it after bitter fighting, and, by their success, threatened the whole line of the Vaga River, causing grave anxiety.

For the first time they had tasted victory; and, since they were of a mercurial temperament, their morale flamed high for a moment. It was during this anxious period that a demand was made on Murmansk for reinforcements. From the place of their breaking off action in one theatre, to the point of their entry into action in the other, the responding troops—mainly Yorkshiremen—marched 400 miles, and then fulfilled their task gallantly and well.

The third offensive, which opened on January 25th and lasted until April 5th, was delivered from Plesetskaya towards the north-east, with the object of cutting off our force on the Dwina. The enemy managed to capture Tarasov, but was brought to a halt at Shred Mekrenga, before he had reached the river, a perilous threat being averted mainly by the daring and skilful leadership of Colonel Carroll and Major Gilmore.

The final offensive, which started on March 16th, originated from the Onega river. It fell upon the isolated French garrison at Bolshi Ozerki, and overwhelmed it. Fortunately, as was often the case, the enemy did not follow up his success quickly; otherwise he might have seized Oberzerskaya, and have reached Archangel by the railroad before the force on the Dwina could have fallen back to protect it. By April 18th, the situation had quieted down along the whole front.

A Natural Sloven

At this time there were about 14,000 Russian troops on the various fronts, where they were completing their education with a certain amount of fighting. They had proved difficult to train. In the first place, many of them had not got the cause at heart. In the second, the Russian is a natural sloven. In the third, he has an unfathomable capacity for wasting time. The senior officers would issue interminable orders, of which the following is one of three quoted by General Ironside:

"Yesterday, the 10th December, at 10 p.m., I was walking near the Lomonoff school. From the direction of the Cathedral I heard a disgusting flow of gutter language. Going further, I met two sailors, and, approaching one of them, called his attention to the absolute impermissibility of such filthy language in the street. The other sailor went on,

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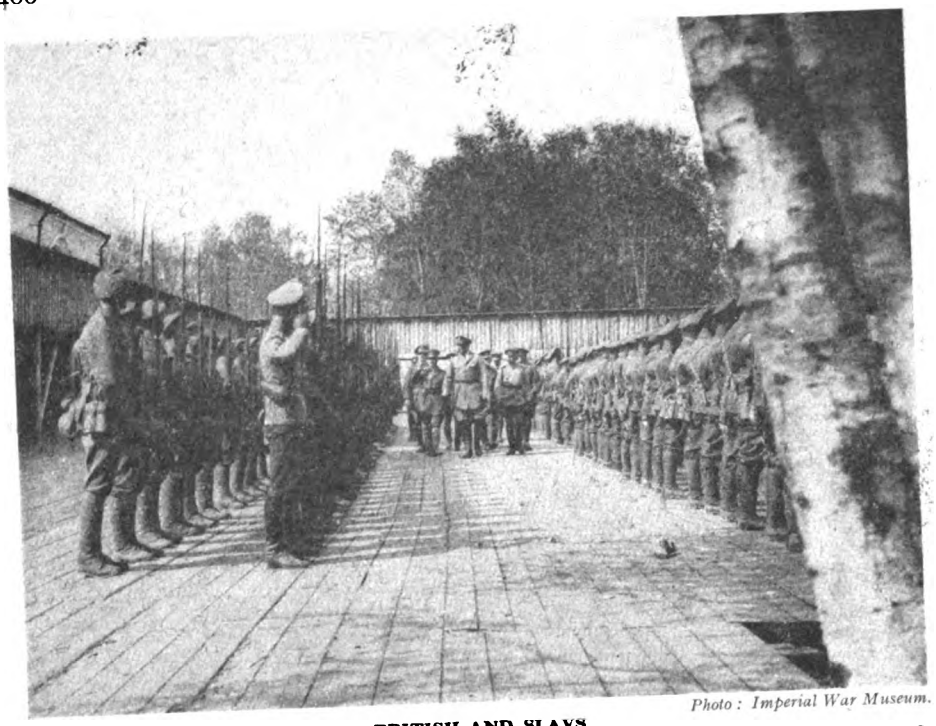

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

BRITISH AND SLAVS

General Ironside inspecting the 1st Battalion of the Slavo-British Legion at Archangel during 1919. General Sir W. E. Ironside, K.B.E., C.M.G., D.S.O., was commander of the Allied forces in the Archangel theatre. This port was connected with Murmansk only by a semi-impracticable and lonely sledge trail across the snow.

but the sailor to whom I addressed myself declared in slovenly fashion that he was intoxicated, and with impudent gesture blew his nose on the pavement.

" Wishing to have a closer view of this representative of our military forces in course of recreation, I directed him to a lightened window. Here I convinced myself that he was without a striped vest and that he had a naked neck. . . ." [1] And the charge against the culprit goes on for another 14 lines in the same vein.

Then, the Russian must shake hands on all occasions. A distinguished French General was making a speech, in the best manner and dressed in beautiful uniform, to about 100 ministers and other representatives of Russian border States. He was doing famously, and had just got to the peroration, when a shoddily-dressed Russian entered the room. The new-comer went up to the speaker, bowed to him, and shook him by the hand. He then repeated the process with each of the hundred members of the audience.

The unfortunate general, ignorant of local customs, kept his mouth open ready to continue, thinking every moment that the intruder would sit down. But not he: not until a hundred bows had been made and a hundred hands had been shaken. By that time, the subject of the talk had been almost forgotten and the brilliant speech came to a lame conclusion. So much time was wasted in hand-shaking in North Russia that notices in Russian had to be posted in all offices forbidding the custom. Another and even worse Russian time-wasting vice is endless speech-making.

[1] Ironside, " The North Russian Campaign," *R.A. Journal*, liii, p. 312.

Straight Talk

The writer had some experience of teaching Russian officers, and found them for the most part lazy and lacking in thoroughness. This is what one of his pupils said to him. " We've been trained both by you and by the Germans. We don't like either of you, for you try to get too much work out of us. The moment you go, we sink into arm-chairs, call for cigarettes and vodka, and say ' Thank God, that's over ! ' "

The faults were, as usual, not wholly on one side. Many Russian officers are cultured and sensitive. How such men must have shrunk from contact with us, if one-tenth of an American opinion of us is true ! " Moreover, they (the British officers) disliked every Russian with a withering aversion, and in their forced association with the Russians, treated them with disdainful condescension and that impersonal, inhuman lack of tolerance which is British beyond all imitation." [1]

Prior to the break-up of the ice in April, 1919, Versailles had decided that the Allied troops must leave Archangel before October, when the ice would reform. Evacuation, especially if the enemy were pressing at the time, was likely to be a difficult operation. Some

[1] Cudahy, *op. cit.*, p. 203.

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

SLEIGHS WITH FUEL

Here is a convoy of horse-drawn sleighs, loaded with fuel, on just such a trail as that which connected Murmansk with Archangel. The picture was taken in February, 1919, on the frozen River Dwina, at the mouth of which Archangel is situated. An idea of the loneliness of the region is afforded.

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15,000 troops had to be embarked, and with them must go a large number of civilians with claims to be transported elsewhere.

The problems which at once arose out of the decision were: firstly, would the Russian troops be equal to covering the embarkation by holding the Archangel front? And, secondly, would they be able to stand alone after our departure?

The latter question could not be answered satisfactorily. There were too many doubtful factors to be considered: the stability of the opposing governments; the loyalty of the troops to the North Russian Government; relative numbers. . . . All that we could do in the matter was to equip and train units to the best of our ability—and this we continued to do until the end.

The Russian Relief Force

As to the first point, no risks could be taken. The Bolshevik Government—well aware of our intentions—might concentrate overwhelming force upon the covering troops during the evacuation; and failure on the part of the latter might well entail disaster to the Allies. The British Government therefore decided to enrol two strong mixed brigades of volunteer troops for service in North Russia and to start at once with the evacuation of foreign contingents and civilians.

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

ROYAL SCOTS AT ARCHANGEL

The 2/10th Royal Scots marching through the streets of the Arctic town on their arrival from the Dwina front on June 10th, 1919, to sail home on the s.s. *Czaritza*. This battalion, which had been in the line since the previous August, had suffered the hardest time and the heaviest casualties of any troops in the sector.

At Park Royal, N.W., the Russian Relief Force was born. The name "Relief" bore witness to its primary purpose of affording relief to those war-worn category B veterans who had borne the stress and the strain of repelling a succession of offensives through a dreary and exhausting winter. Recruits were quickly forthcoming. They had all seen soldiering before. Soon, to the tunes of *Tipperary* and *Good-bye-e*, they were on the way to their ships, and, by the middle of June, were in Archangel.

Sadleir-Jackson commanded one brigade, and Grogan, who had won the V.C. the previous year on the Aisne, the other. Shortly after landing, they moved south to take over the more important fronts. They were greatly surprised at the number of mosquitoes, at the absence of night, and at the ignorance displayed by the inhabitants in face of their best French conversational terms.

At this time Admiral Koltchak, after a spell of resounding success, was falling back, and his failure was having on the North Russians a depressing effect, which the Bolsheviks were accentuating with a new and successful propaganda bombardment. Two serious mutinies resulted. In the first, two companies of the Slavo-British Legion—a body over whose training infinite trouble had been taken—murdered five of their British and four of their Russian officers, and went over to the enemy. The remainder of the Legion was then disarmed and transformed into

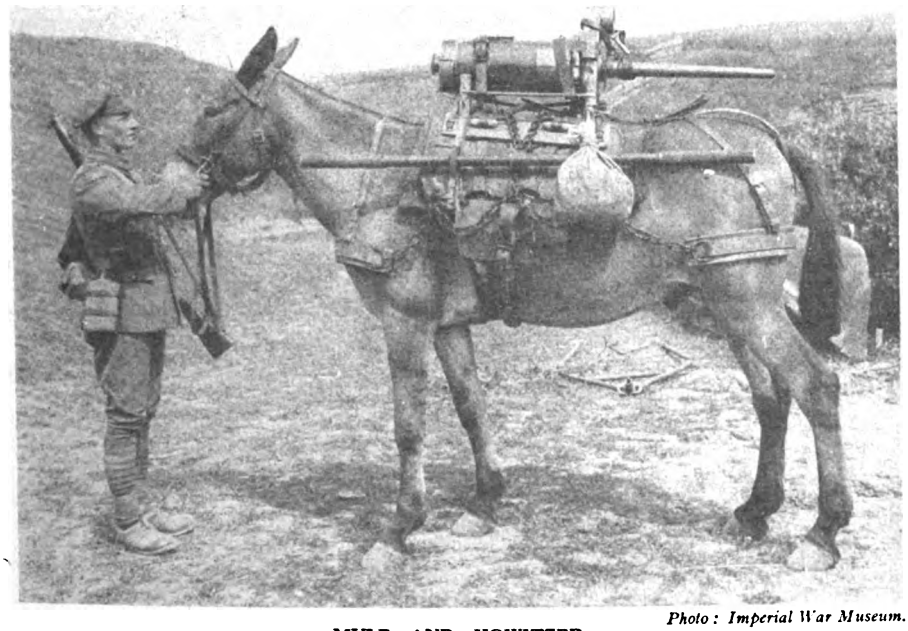

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

MULE AND HOWITZER

A 3·7-inch mountain howitzer strapped to the back of a pack mule at Troitsk, 1919. The animal formed part of the Sadleir-Jackson Brigade, one of the two brigades into which the original Russian Relief Force was divided. The other was under the command of Brigadier-General Grogan, V.C.

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a Labour unit. But the event left a very bitter taste in British mouths.

Mutiny and Murder

In the second mutiny, 5,000 men of the purely Russian force murdered their officers and took possession of the important town of Onega.

While Koltchak was still advancing, hopes of a move up the Dwina to Kotlas had been renewed; for it was thought possible to make a junction there with his right wing. But when he retired, this project, which always seemed to err on the side of optimism, faded out of the picture.

Apart from the two mutinies, the front at this period was remarkably quiet. Sadleir-Jackson's brigade was on the Dwina. In that sector, the only fighting in progress was that between the opposing flotillas. The Bolshevik ships had a great advantage in being up-stream, since this enabled them to float mines towards our craft. They sowed these mines with great diligence, and it was in the process of sweeping them up that our sailors suffered most of their casualties.

With good observation down the river, and many points on the banks registered, it was easy for the enemy to open an accurate fire on our ships as soon as they came into view. Thus, when the minesweepers *Step-Dance* and *Fandango*—the "dancing class" as they were called—"showed themselves beyond the bend of the river, it was only a matter of seconds before a lofty column of spray and a distant boom told that the Bolo was busy.

"But nothing could discourage those sweepers. Time after time the sweep would part, and they would manœuvre, slowly and deliberately in the mine-infested channel, without the slightest regard for the shells falling all round them, join up a new sweep, and carry on. One square hit from a 5·9 would have meant practical annihilation, and they frequently escaped by a matter of a very few yards." [1]

As the channel was swept, our gunboats would advance, either to support the minesweepers in their task, or, perhaps, to gain ground along a bank for the establishment of a pier. A naval battle would then rage. But it was not taken very seriously, for "the chief distraction of those not actually fighting the ships was to stand by with a landing-net to scoop in the dead fish which drifted past, killed by the shell-bursts ahead. There were a great number of them, chiefly pike and bream, and both excellent eating—a blessed relief from the eternal bully-beef and tinned salmon. The excitement was

[1] Singleton Gates, *op. cit.*, p. 59.

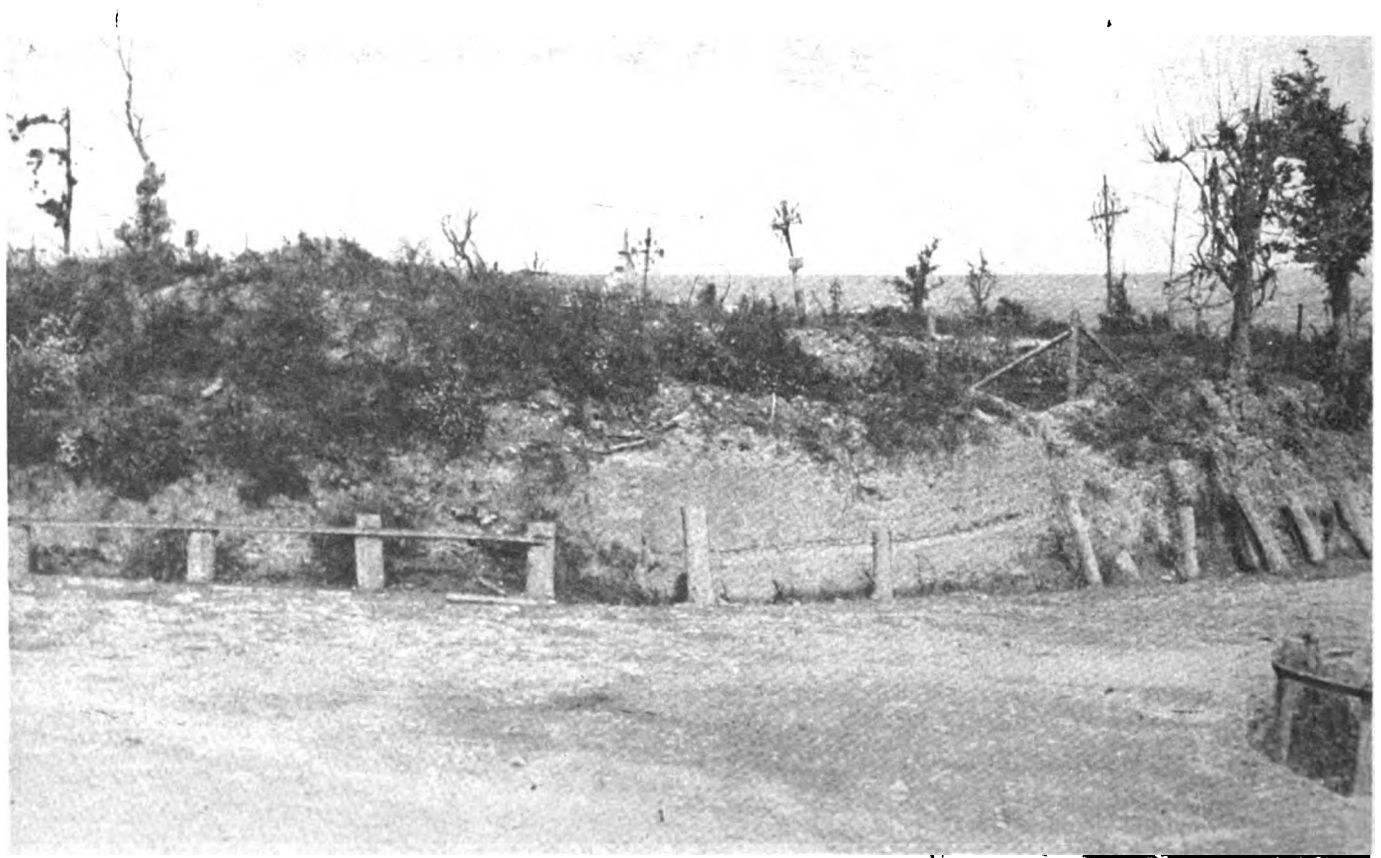

Photo: A. P., Paris.

WHERE MONTAUBAN CHURCH HAD STOOD

This church was more thoroughly razed even than most, and the coating of vegetation quickly completed the work of obliteration. There are five Montaubans in France, of which this, the only one in the battle-area, is the smallest. Its whereabouts has already been indicated beneath the photograph of the ruined village which appeared on page 366; and there remains but to say in this connection that two British cemeteries, together containing more than 1,650 fallen, border on it.

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Photo: A. J. Insall.

WHERE MONTAUBAN CHURCH NOW STANDS

The battered divisions of the VII Corps, after 12 hours' hard fighting, spent the night of March 24th/25th, 1918, on the line Curlu—Montauban. On the latter date they were once more heavily attacked, Montauban being severely assaulted about 11 a.m.; but, as has been indicated elsewhere, the corps gallantly held its ground throughout the day, eventually falling back only in the general retirement. On August 25th the village was retaken by the 7th Buffs and 11th Royal Fusiliers of the 18th Division.

sometimes intense as a good specimen came floating down—men rushing from one side to the other, uncertain which side of the stern it was going to pass."[1]

The Parthian Shot

It will be remembered that Lord Rawlinson, on being appointed to the command of the combined North Russian forces, had insisted that, in order to co-ordinate the withdrawals from Archangel and Murmansk, an uninterrupted retirement and evacuation should be ensured by a powerful blow at the enemy in both theatres just prior to the initiation of the backward movements.

In the Archangel force, the task was entrusted to Sadleir-Jackson's brigade. On August 10th, he attacked astride the Dwina. The most careful preparations had been made. As there were no good maps available, small reconnaissance parties had been exploring and mapping areas of intended attack; and they had performed their task with great skill and bravery, working at times well within the hostile lines.

The enemy's position extended two miles inland from either bank of the river, and the plan of attack envisaged an enveloping movement round both flanks. The reconnaissances had shown the route which must be traversed by the assailants on the left bank to be so difficult that, though distances were short, the march had to be begun on the 8th. The tracks, in fact, proved so swampy as to be almost impassable, and eventually the pack-animals had to be left behind. The columns did indeed reach their assembly positions at the appointed hour, but in an exhausted condition.

On the right bank, the ground was less swampy. The chief obstacle there was the Selmenga river. The leading troops, passing through the ford, deepened it so much that the Russians in rear could hardly be persuaded to attempt the passage, and caused a considerable amount of dangerous delay and noise.

By 11 a.m. on the 10th, however, the troops were in their positions of assembly and there were columns behind the enemy's flanks on both sides of the river. In view of the appalling conditions of ground and weather, this fact testifies to excellent leadership, staff-work, and discipline.

Tough Fighting

At noon, the attack began. It was supported by the bombing of aeroplanes and by artillery fire, the latter afforded mainly by monitors on the river, which were using a kite-balloon for observation. On the left bank (45th Royal

[1] *Ibid.*, p. 60.

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Fusiliers), two out of the three columns encountered a strong resistance, both commanders being killed. One column was held in front of Selso until 6 p.m., when every gun—on shore and ship—that could be brought to bear, was concentrated on the village, and enabled the assailants to win through.

The second column, though successful at first, had to fight hard all through the night, and succeeded in gaining its objective only at 7 a.m. on the 11th. The third column encountered only minor opposition. The sector-commander—Lieutenant-Colonel Davies—and his staff were cut off by the enemy early in the morning and spent the rest of the day and the whole of the night wandering through swamps, being continually fired on by Bolos, of whom the forest was full. They were ultimately saved by catching sight of the observation balloon and making a bee-line for it.

On the right bank (46th Royal Fusiliers), the troops, including two Russian companies which fought most gallantly, were operating on easier ground, and were consequently able to strike with greater dash. "D" Company had some stiff house-to-house fighting in Gorodok, but, with the close co-operation of its Stokes mortar, won the village, together with 300 prisoners. At the western exit, there was a desperate fight for a battery of 4·2-inch guns, which, manned by Germans, repelled several attacks before it was taken.

Thus ended the battle. The British troops had completely surprised the enemy, had defeated him, and had advanced 20 miles from their original positions. Out of the 6,000 Bolsheviks believed to be holding the hostile positions, they had captured 2,300, together with 18 guns, 50 machine guns, and 2,600 rifles, at a total cost to themselves of 120 casualties. The total losses of the enemy were estimated at 3,700, and he had been so severely shaken that he was unlikely to interfere with any retirement that we might make in the near future.

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

RUSSIAN RECRUITS

A photograph, taken at Archangel in 1919, of Russian recruits to the Slavo-British Legion undergoing training. Some units of this force were composed entirely of Bolshevik deserters and prisoners. In most civil wars there is a certain amount of changing sides, but in Russia the constantly veering loyalties formed one of the most formidable complications with which the various leaders had to deal.

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

PRESENTING THE COLOURS

The ceremony of presenting the colours to the 1st Battalion of the Slavo-British Legion at Archangel. The attempt to train Russian troops to serve under British administration succeeded well, for the Russians were agreeably surprised by the British officers' habit of regarding even privates as human beings, worthy of individual attention.

The Indomitable Briton

The behaviour of the British troops was beyond praise. Forced to abandon the greater part of their pack-transport, they were without food for 24 hours. They were wet through from the rain above and the bog beneath, and were physically exhausted by a long night-march through almost impassable country. Nevertheless, they remained doggedly cheerful, and carried out their assaults with a magnificent spirit.

The Bolshevik paper *Our War* gave a somewhat different account of the battle. A translation of it is published in *Bolos and Barishynas*, the author of which thinks that some doubt must be cast on the credibility of the account, as he has "never yet known British soldiers throw away rum, nor heard of anyone who has."[1]

[1] Singleton Gates, *op. cit.*, p. 125.

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Here are some extracts : " On August 10th, the enemy started an offensive on the Northern Dwina. As usual the White Army Mob did not act openly, but did a dirty trick in trying to outflank our troops. . . . The White Guards thought they had already gained a victory, but they were mistaken . . . a cavalry unit pushed forward and followed the White Man. Seeing this, the White Guard, in a panic . . . fled into the wood, throwing away their rifles . . . and a lot of bottles of rum . . .

" In this way two small parties gave the Ginger Englishman and the White Guard Filth a sound thrashing, so that these overseas pigs do not dare show their noses up to now. Let them not think with low-down flanking movements they can conquer us. No ; great is the power and might of the soldiers of the Red Army."[1]

Rawlinson had fixed September 1st for the date on which Ironside should commence his retirement. The Dwina, however, was particularly low in August, and it had become clear that there might therefore be considerable difficulty in withdrawing the whole of the naval flotilla at the end of that month. He therefore decided to postpone action for 10 days.

As, however, the effect of the victory on the Dwina might by that time have worn thin, he accepted a suggestion from General de Millar for an offensive by the Russians against Onega, which was still occupied by the mutineers, against Plesetskaya, along the railway, and against Tarasov. He made clear, however, that he could lend for the operation only a small British detachment, consisting of " details " from the 45th and 46th Battalions Royal Fusiliers, formed by two companies, and a company of the 201st Battalion Machine Gun Corps.

Disarming the " Doubtfuls "

This detachment had been sent up the railway to join Brigadier-General Turner's force at Oberzerskaya. It was at once used to disarm a large number of doubtful Russians in the front line, who were thought to have arranged to desert to the enemy during an attack which he was known to be staging in the near future. After performing this task, the British companies, which contained a large percentage of Australians, remained in the trenches and repulsed the threatened attack.

The Russian offensive took place on August 29th. The main attack down the railway met with a fair measure of success. The British detachment, operating on the right flank, got behind the enemy's right, and, a quarter-of-an-hour before zero, swung inwards with a view to destroying his guns. By this action it facilitated the main attack, and captured eight guns, eight machine guns, and 180 prisoners. A few days later the detachment repulsed a determined counter-attack against Bolshi Ozerki. On September 9th, after rendering gallant and valuable aid to de Millar's operation, it withdrew to Archangel. In the north, a Russian column, operating along the coast, and supported by a monitor, recaptured Onega. But neither Plesetskaya nor Tarasov was taken.

In connection with Onega, it is interesting to note a fine performance on the part of the Mercantile Marine, which took its share in the Russian adventure, just as it did in most other spheres of naval action. Before the War, many of our readers may have seen the *Walton Belle*, often packed to suffocation with passengers, paddling her way along the summer resorts of our eastern coast from Lowestoft, by Margate, to Wapping Stairs.

During the War, after a variety of adventures, she cast up in the Dwina, of all places. She was then used in an emergency to take supposedly loyal Russian troops to deal with the mutineers at Onega. " The vessel was manned by unarmed mercantile marine ratings. The Russian troops were thoroughly equipped, and armed with rifles and Lewis guns.

Exploits of the *Walton Belle*

" On arriving at Onega . . . the First Lieutenant with two men went ashore,

Photo : Imperial War Museum.

ARCHANGEL DOCKS

This photograph was taken in 1919, and shows an already extensive and well-planned port. A modern view would show the place in a state of even greater development and activity, for the Soviet has paid earnest and on the whole successful attention to the opening up of Russia's Arctic resources. An account written at the time of the British expedition describes Archangel as " destitute of any interest . . . a place of exile more than usually tedious." The shortest day in the year there is only 3 hours 12 minutes long, which hardly helps to relieve the tedium in winter.

[1] Singleton Gates, *op. cit.*

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From the original in the Imperial War Museum.

"OVER THE TOP"

A painting by John Nash, showing the 1st Artists' Rifles at Marcoing on December 30th, 1917. On this date the Germans attacked on a two-mile front south of Cambrai, and gained a temporary lodgment in two small salients. John Nash is a younger brother of Paul Nash, and when the War broke out was already gaining himself a name for his landscape paintings and woodcuts.

and with a Lewis gun cleared the village in the vicinity of the docks. The loyal Russians, armed to the teeth, could not be induced to follow. Belaying pins and other persuasive weapons finally resulted in a few going ashore. The First Lieutenant, being in possession of several Bolshevik prisoners, finding the Russians unwilling to follow, abandoned his attack. He realised, and very wisely, that it was hardly possible to capture the town with two other ratings.

"The Bolsheviks, having now recovered from their first alarms, counter-attacked, and the *Walton Belle* escaped from Onega under heavy shell and machine-gun fire.

"On the voyage back to Archangel the four or five Bolo prisoners succeeded in disarming their guard, threw a bomb at the Captain, and proceeded to clean up the ship. They completely subdued the 200 heavily-armed Russians. The situation was entirely in favour of the Bolsheviks, till it was taken in hand by one of the mercantile marine ratings, who appeared on deck with a shot-gun and blew the heads off two of the mutineers, one with the right barrel and one with the left.

"This subdued the state of turmoil till the port was reached. . . . A boarding party from H.M.S. *Fox* finally subdued the excited and mutinous Russians, and it was not to be wondered at that the men from the *Fox* did not discriminate in the meting out of punishment to both the Bolsheviks and the so-called loyal Russians."[1]

On the Dwina front, the sailors were busy laying protective mine-fields across the Dwina and the Vaga, and in lightening their craft to enable them to pass over the sand-bars. Guns and main engines were taken out and placed on barges, and H.M.S. *Humber* even shed her armour—no easy matter—into the river. Eventually, all vessels managed to proceed downstream, with the exception of two monitors which had to be blown up.

In the meantime, the enemy, having himself had his fill of fighting for the moment, had brought up some battalions of Finn Red Guards with which to try to hamper our retirement. The Finns attacked on the 7th, 8th, and 9th. On each occasion they were repulsed, and then heavily counter-attacked by the British troops who, though about to retire, had no intention of allowing the enemy to think that he was driving them from the field.

A Slight Disparity

The result of these combats—the last of the campaign—was a loss to the

[1] *Ibid.*

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From DOMART to SOURDON
Then and Now

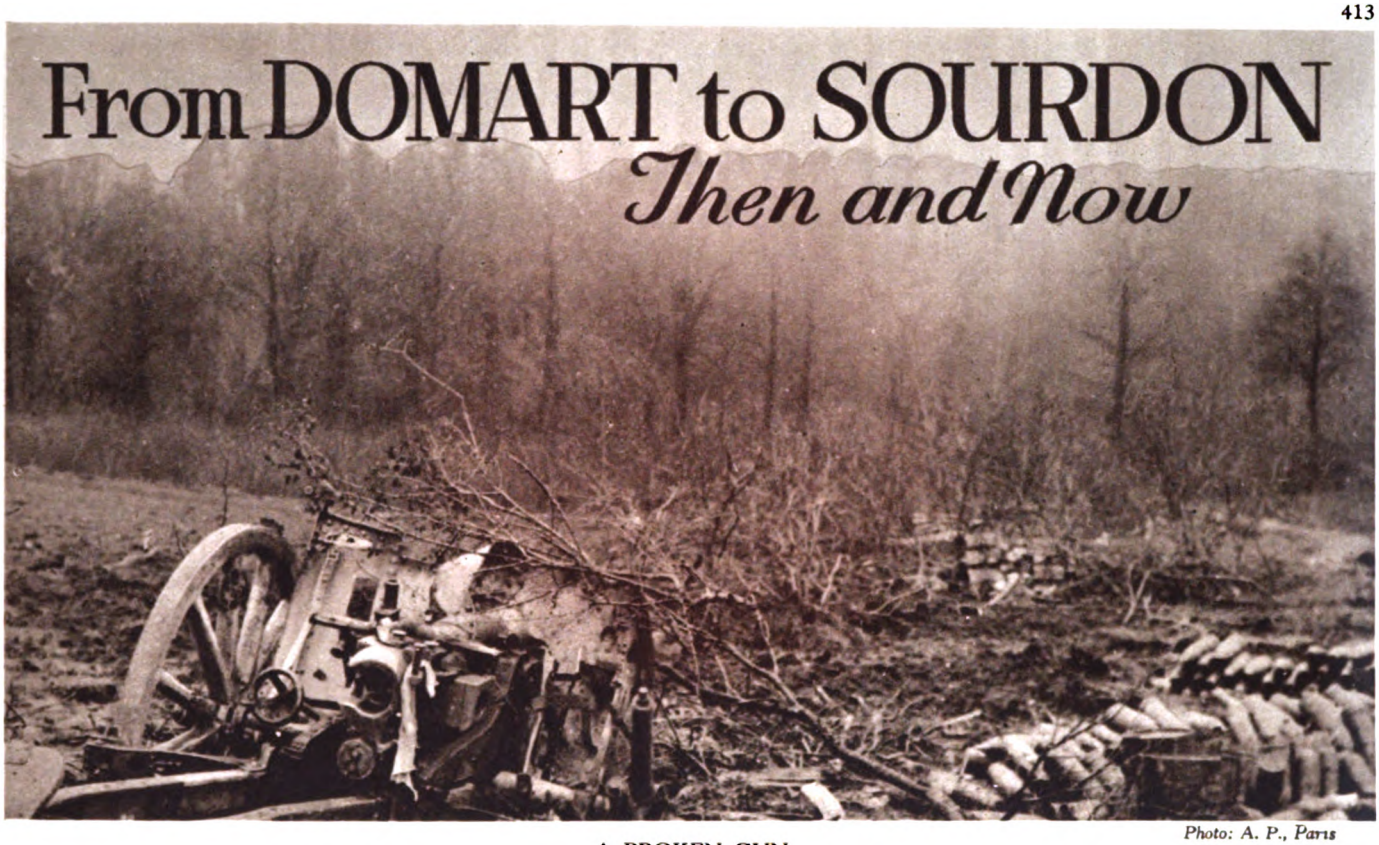

Photo: A. P., Paris

A BROKEN GUN

The derelict British gun here seen with part of its brushwood screen still resting against it, a scrap of rag yet hanging from one of the levers, and the pile of unused shells lying almost undisturbed hard by, was photographed at Domart-sur-la-Luce on April 19th, 1918. The Luce is that small stream which flows westward from near Rosières into the Avre (itself a tributary of the Somme) a few kilometres south of the Amiens–St. Quentin road. Domart lies 13 km. south-east of Amiens, on the main road to Roye.

Photo: A. J. Insall

ON THE WAY TO ROYE

The Germans never quite reached Domart in their spring offensive of 1918, and that they failed to do so in their final attack (April 4th–5th) was largely thanks to the British artillery. The enemy's 25*th Division* was to attack the French troops astride the Luce as soon as the 19*th Division*, on the right, had captured Hangard Hill from the British 18th Division. In the words of the *Official History*, the 19*th Division's* attack failed, and that of the 25*th* consequently never took place, owing to " the British artillery having got the better of the German "

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Photo: A. P., Paris

AT BERTEAUCOURT

Berteaucourt-les-Thennes (so called to distinguish it from Berteaucourt-les-Dames, also in the Amiens area, and also, by a very strange coincidence, near a village named Domart) is the next-door neighbour of Domart-sur-la-Luce, being 2 km. further down the stream. The above photograph was taken on March 27th, 1918, at a time when the XIX Corps, some miles to the east, was being pressed by eleven German divisions.

AILLY-SUR-NOYE

We have taken a considerable stride here, for Ailly, althou
Domart and Berteaucourt, is some 10 km. south-west of
south-east of Amiens. A large village, as even the pictur
it stands on the east bank of the River Noye, which flows
the Avre near Boves.

THE SELF-SAME STR

Probably many, even of those who were not acquai
wartime, know a little of Ailly-sur-Noye from the fac
on the journey between Boulogne and Paris. Both
show the Rue Sadi Carnot—in the modern version,
1937; in the War view, as it appeared duri

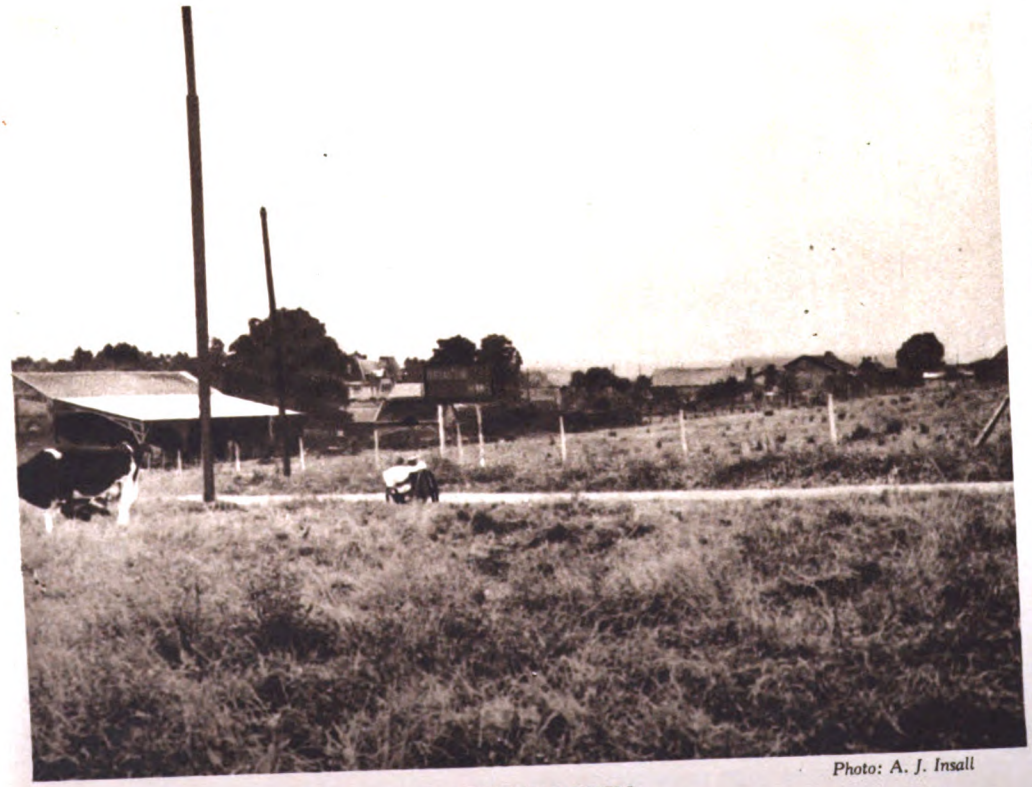

Photo: A. J. Insall

PASTURES GREEN

On April 5th, 1918—that is, at the very end of the offensive—the British front line was established on the bank of the Luce opposite to Berteaucourt, while the enemy was entrenched approximately along the line of hills faintly discernible in the background (left-hand side) of our wartime view. Considerable fighting was again seen in this region in August, 1918, when open warfare really began here, and the infantry found little or no cover available.

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UR-NOYE

r Ailly, although approximately in line with outh-west of the latter, and 15 km. south- ven the picture of its ruins makes apparent, which flows north-north-east until it enters ar Boves.

Photo: Imperial War Museum

Photo: Imperial War Museum

COMING FROM THE STATION

Above we are shown the junction of the Rue Sadi Carnot and the Rue Damour (note the discreet spelling), with Ailly-sur-Noye station away to the right. The place was not reached by the Germans in 1918, their final objectives, let alone attainments, missing it by several kilometres; and its War history is confined, as in the case of so many other villages, to a record of long-range bombardments. British dead lie in the Communal Cemetery.

ME STREET

ot acquainted with the Somme country of m the fact that one passes through it by rail is. Both the photographs here reproduced version, as it looked during the summer of ared during the summer of 1918.

Photo: A. J. Insall

Photo: A. J. Insall

SWEEPING UP

Once more a contemporary photograph of the exact scene portrayed in the "Then" view. Although during the last year of the conflict it must have sheltered many thousands of British troops, Ailly was really in the French zone, which, except for a short period when it ended at Moreuil, extended northward to Hangard. The modern village houses an industrious community of 1,500 persons, and is prettier seen at a distance than from within.

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Photo: Imperial War Museum

CHURCH AND WELL

Ruins of the church and main street of the village of Sourdon, 5 km. south-south-east of Ailly-sur-Noye, on the road from Moreuil to Breteuil. Once again this falls just outside the area of the enemy's 1918 advance, and once more the village comes within the French sector. The above photograph was taken on May 28th, 1918, during the lull on the Somme front which followed the end of the enemy's drive, and preceded the beginning of the Allied counter-offensive.

Photo: A. J. Insall

A GLIMPSE OF MODERN SOURDON

This excellently-matched pair of pictures was not easily come by, for no less than four well-heads are to be found near Sourdon church. There can, however, be no mistaking the identity of this one with the battered relic in the older picture; and despite the brand-new roof and the very modern barn, the scene forms a delightful rural tableau. Note, by the way, how the windlass-handle—which our photographer denies having touched—happens to be at exactly the same angle in both views.

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enemy of 511 men, together with much equipment, as against British casualties numbering 11. A mounted infantry company, recently formed from the Royal Fusiliers, had the pleasure of putting the finishing touch of pursuit to several of the counter-strokes.

After this rough handling, to which the R.A.F. made a considerable contribution, the Bolsheviks made no serious attempt to interfere with our movements. The embarkation of the Dwina Force took place on the night of the 10/11th. All bridges, piers, and pontoons were destroyed prior to departure. " It seemed a great tragedy to leave the ground we had fought for to the enemy, but it was imperative. All we left behind of material value was the white cross on Troitsa heights that marked the resting place of our dead comrades."[1]

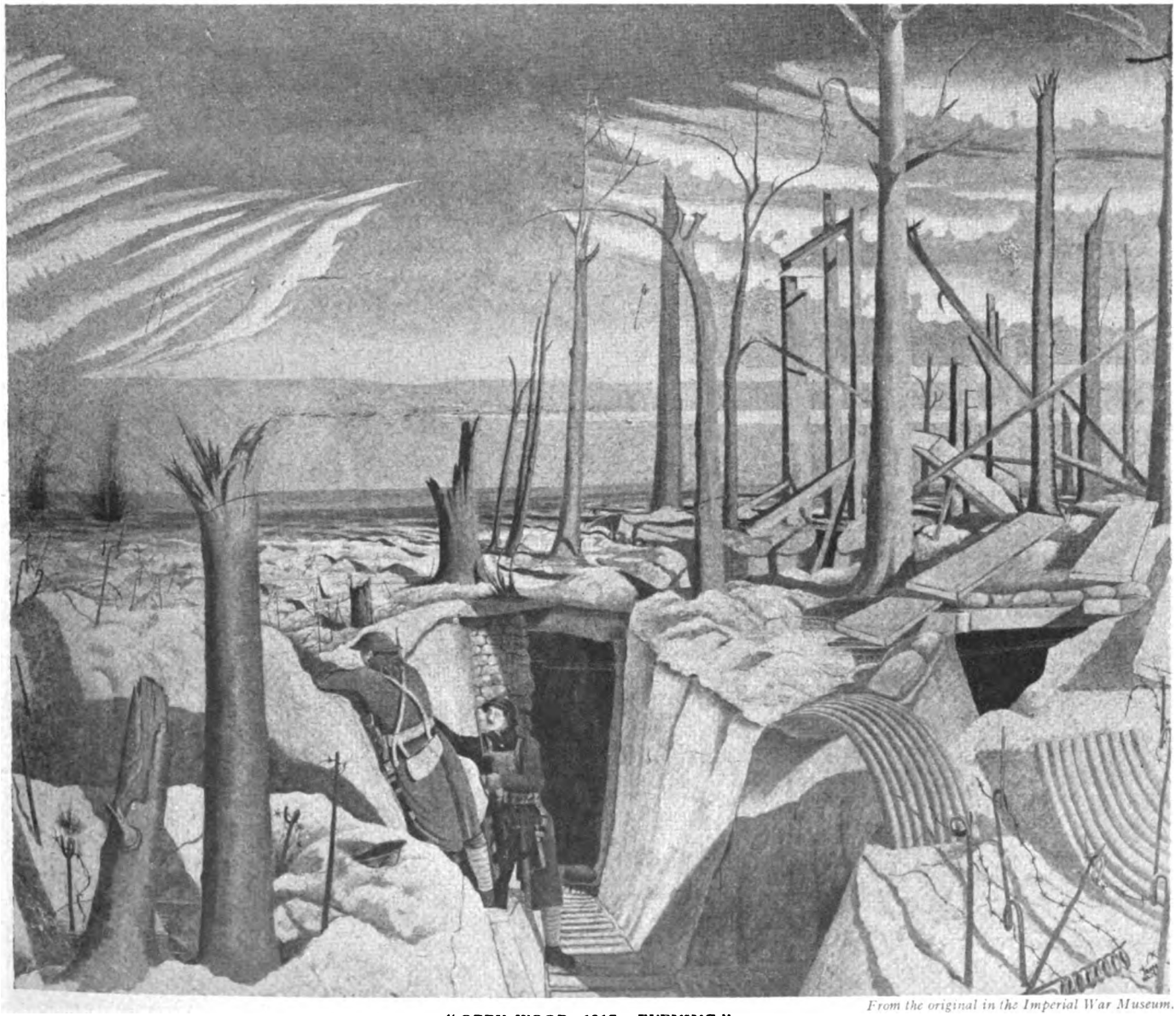
As the column passed Bereznik, where the Vaga falls into the Dwina, shots were fired into one of the barges and 11 men wounded. The Russians left in charge of the line of the Vaga had allowed the Bolsheviks to drive them back to the junction of the rivers, and the Bolos therefore found a congenial occupation in machine-gunning the passing vessels from the shelter of the banks. They were, however, quickly dispersed by gun-fire from another of the barges, and the retirement was continued without further interruption.

[1] Singleton Gates, *op. cit.*, p. 161.

By the 22nd, all British troops had reached the inner defences of Archangel, and the withdrawal was complete.

A large quantity of food, arms, and other military equipment, including two tanks, was left with General de Millar. All Russians who had actively assisted the British in Archangel, and might therefore become the victims of Bolshevik reprisals, were offered passages in British ships to the Baltic States or to South Russia. They accepted to the number of 6,500.

By 2 p.m. on September 17th, the evacuation of Archangel had been successfully completed by the simultaneous embarkation of 8,000 men—the last of the fighting troops. " By 6 p.m. the



From the original in the Imperial War Museum.

" OPPY WOOD, 1917. EVENING "

Another study by John Nash, showing how he shared his brother's taste for modernistic treatment. John Nash was not commissioned to paint for the Imperial War Museum until 1918; but, as examples of his work show, he had not neglected the opportunities previously afforded him by his service on the Western Front. Since the War his work has shown a tendency to revert to naturalism.

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same day, all transport had left the Dwina homeward bound."[1] Both Lord Rawlinson and General Ironside paid glowing tributes to the splendid services rendered by the Navy in this difficult operation.

The Adventure Ends

Less than four weeks later, Maynard's force, as has already been related, left Murmansk, and the North Russian adventure was at an end. It had cost us 983 casualties—killed, dead from illness, wounded, and missing—of whom 327 were killed in action. Militarily, the expedition furnishes a brilliant page in our annals. It was conducted, indeed, against second-rate troops, but it had to overcome unparalleled difficulties of country and climate.

That it was successful in overcoming these obstacles was due to exceptional competence in command and in staff work, which was fortunate in receiving unfailing assistance from the War Office. Moreover, the ceaseless assault by enemy propaganda against the discipline of the Allied troops surged vainly against the cheerful contempt of the British soldier. He alone, among the warriors of many nations, stood firm in the severe and many-sided trials of the campaign.

It is a pleasant duty to record that the collaboration of the three Services of sea, land, and air was that of a happy and united family. Reference has already been made to the co-operation between the Navy and the Army. Seldom in history can relations have been so intimate as between Altham's flotilla and Sadleir-Jackson's brigade on the Dwina.

Of the airmen, Lord Rawlinson reported that—"Their indefatigable energy and daring, under conditions which were hazardous, and sometimes attended with almost insurmountable difficulties, were not only valuable to the General Officers immediately concerned, but were in complete accordance with the high reputation and great traditions of the Royal Air Force."[1]

Politically, the results were far less satisfactory. The soldiers, however, could not be blamed for that. Even the Government, driven to distraction by a large number of conflicting conditions, and urged to the pursuit of equity, liberty, and humanity, when those principles appeared to be continually in conflict, probably chose the only possible path in the discharge of its obligations.

Churchill's Pungent Views

"Safety was provided for every Russian man, woman, or child who wished to leave. Those who remained to continue the civil war did so of their

1 Despatches, *London Gazette*, 6/4/1920.

1 *Ibid.*

Photo: Imperial War Museum

VANDALISM AT MONTDIDIER

Ruins of the historic 15th-century Church of St. Pierre in this old town, as the camera found them late in 1918. Montdidier, a fairly important townlet of between 4,000 and 5,000 inhabitants, lay in the French sector during the March Retreat, and was the object of a fierce and successful German thrust on the 27th. Altogether von Hutier's troops succeeded in driving back the French VI and II Cavalry Corps through a depth of more than 10 miles on this day, a pronounced salient resulting.

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Photo: A J Insall.

A CULINARY HERO

The statue here seen in front of Montdidier's rebuilt Church of St. Pierre is that of Antoine Augustin Parmentier (1737-1813), the man who introduced the potato to France. (Needless to add that he was born at Montdidier.) Despite his great advance on the day of the town's capture, the enemy did not get far beyond it in 1918, and the end of his offensive found the French line still within a mile of the western suburbs. Our allies recaptured Montdidier on August 10th.

own free will. Short of remaining there and waging war indefinitely against the Russian Soviet, no better solution was possible; but nevertheless, the sequel was melancholy. In a few weeks General Millar's resistance was extinguished; the Soviet Government re-established its rule on the shores of the White Sea, and mass executions, in one case of 500 officers, quenched the last hope of Russian life and freedom in these regions.

"I can now see"—it is Winston Churchill who is speaking—"the pale faces and staring eyes of the deputation of town folk from Archangel who visited me at the War Office at the end of July, 1919, to beg further British protection, to whom I had to return 'a dusty answer.' All these poor work-people and shopkeepers were soon to face the firing party. The responsibility for their fate rests upon the mighty and resplendent nations who had won the war, but left their task unfinished."[1]

Among the lessons to be learnt from our experiences in North Russia is that it is almost impossible to limit the scope of a campaign once it is undertaken. It will be remembered that we had opened the war in Mesopotamia with the landing of two small brigades, and that then magnet after magnet had operated with irresistible force until the number of men drawn into the country numbered 900,000.

Similarly, in North Russia, we landed 150 Marines at Murmansk in April, 1918, then another 400 in May, and then a tiny expeditionary force, numbering 600, in June. From these small beginnings, the army grew to a strength of 50,000, and, accompanied by imposing naval and aerial establishments, advanced, without any very definite object, some hundreds of miles into the heart of Russia.

It will be seen in the succeeding chapters that, where we limited our aid to the despatch of military missions and of military equipment, we were able to keep within the bounds originally prescribed. Where, however, national prestige and the lives of our soldiers are at stake, emotions are roused which are liable to burst through all restraining bonds.

The study of such affairs should ensure that, whenever international knight-errantry is on the tapis, we instinctively take the foot off the pedal just as we do on seeing the notice—"YOU HAVE BEEN WARNED."

[1] Winston S. Churchill, *The Great War*, p. 1452.

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CHAPTER XXV

THE Y.M.C.A. AND THE CHURCH ARMY

The organisation known as the Young Men's Christian Association was founded as far back as 1844 by George Williams, who at that time was an assistant in a drapery house in St. Paul's Churchyard, London. In company with eleven other young men Williams, who fifty years later became Sir George Williams, was responsible for the beginnings of a movement that is now firmly established in nearly every part of the world. During the Great War the familiar sign of the Red Triangle was to be seen on every battle front, and the Y.M.C.A., together with the Church Army, rendered services to the troops that will not soon be forgotten.

SOCIAL service of the most humane and generous kind was rendered by the Y.M.C.A. and Church Army during the War. Its spiritual significance was expressed by the Rev. Canon T. Guy Rogers, Rector of Birmingham, in an address delivered at a Memorial Service at St. Martin's-in-the-Fields for Sir Arthur Yapp, the Association's national secretary, who was the leader and inspirer of its vast War organisation :

Spiritual and Material

" We thank God that in a time when we were all compelled to live in an unchristian way and to do unchristian acts, some remnant of Christianity was preserved for us, and that through the Y.M.C.A. there came to the men who were engaged in the tragic task of fighting their opposite numbers in war a sense of humanity, of comfort, of fellowship, and of ministry to their need."

The purely social boon conferred may be measured by the ensuing facts showing the extent of the work in every department.

On the outbreak of war, Sir Arthur Yapp resolved to appeal for £25,000 to organise Y.M.C.A. centres. " You could not possibly get £3,000 at a time like this," his president, the late Lord Kinnaird, told him. Undaunted, he made the appeal, raised the £25,000 in a very few days, asked for more, and got it. The time came when he was demanding a million. Lord Kinnaird admitted generously : " Your faith was stronger than mine, and you have been justified."

Within ten days 250 recreation centres for troops had been opened in various parts of the country. At places such as Codford, a small Wiltshire village near which 34,000 recruits were dumped without uniforms, rifles, or tents, the Y.M.C.A. marquee came as a godsend.

In November the organisation was extended to France, and in a comparatively short time 100 centres were at work in the base-camps at Havre, Rouen, Calais, Boulogne, Dieppe, and Étaples, and the advance base at Abbeville.

Our troops found the welcome Red Triangle everywhere : at the depôt where they enlisted, at training-camp, port of embarkation, base, advance base, even support trenches and front-line dug-outs. It meant for them rest, comfort, warmth, shelter—cakes, tea, chocolate, and all kinds of small luxuries to supplement the rations. It was their dormitory, club, library, writing-room, school, church and chapel, concert-hall, enquiry bureau. It subserved their leisure, helping to keep them away from questionable haunts.

In his book *In the Service of Youth* Sir Arthur recalled visits to Y.M.C.A.'s in " the pig-sty, in a camp outside Weymouth ; the cow-house, among the trenches round Harwich ; the cellar, at Meroc ; the convent, at Aire ; and the old ruined house at Mazingarbe where I watched our gunners firing a huge howitzer, and then welcomed them at the Y.M.C.A. in the château."

Anywhere and Everywhere

There were Y.M.C.A.'s in schools, estaminets, town-halls, stables, private houses, theatres, cinemas, shelled churches—all manner of buildings, even cellars and shacks : at the one extreme, in Ciro's night-club, London, after it had been placed out of bounds ; at the other, at Montauban on the Somme in the " Little Grey Home " constructed of odds and ends of material collected from the battlefield.

Others were in a Trappist monastery in Flanders, and in cellars and dug-outs around Ypres. By March, 1918, the monthly turnover of canteens in the Salient alone was 260,000 francs, and 5,000 to 6,000 hot drinks, chiefly cocoa, were given away every week.

Y.M.C.A. activities were limitless. A " Snap-shots from Home League " provided thousands of troops in the line with photographs of their home folk. On Sunday mornings a service would be held by every denomination in turn, from C. of E. to Presbyterian, R.C. to Jewish. Preachers in France included Dean Welldon, Dr. Kelman, the Rev. R. J. Campbell, the Rev. Campbell Morgan, and Gipsy Smith.

Impressive and consoling indeed was the intimate Communion Service sometimes held in hut or dug-out before men went into battle : in many cases the soldier's last earthly tryst with his God.

Sports gear for cricket, football, hockey, tennis, boxing, racquets, quoits, and badminton, were provided at a period when the military authorities had no time to devote to games ; and fixtures were arranged.

A special committee spent over £140,000 on educating the troops, enrolling over 70,000 students from May, 1918, to the end of the following year, and providing lectures for 670,000 —114,000 alone during November—and 25,000 lantern slides. More than a million library books and magazines were sent out, and over £50,000 spent on new books. The late Mr. Hornung, author of *Raffles*, ran a Y.M.C.A. book-shop for many months in an Arras cellar, and after the Armistice in Cologne. The boon of being able to settle to a book, even in the front line !

Concerts, Shows, and Cinemas

Free concerts given by professional artistes, including Miss Lena Ashwell's famous company, exceeded 150,000, many of the principal theatres and music-halls co-operating. Cinemas were opened in many camps. Every ex-Serviceman can recall the pleasure these gave, especially in the days before khaki concert-parties were organised ; how the huts and halls were packed to the

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door with men who were not only enjoying an entertainment, but in many cases seeing their own countrywomen in places where they could be seen but rarely.

Work at Headquarters was directed by a committee with Sir Sturmy Cave as chairman and Sir Henry Procter, Lord Askwith, and Sir Henry McMahon as colleagues, the Earl of Derby presiding over the munitions committee. In France and Flanders Mr. Oliver McCowen, and later Mr. Harry Holmes, were responsible. Voluntary workers bore the brunt of the work; at one time they included 40,000 women under the leadership of Princess Helena Victoria and others prominent in society.

Large institutes were opened for Navy men at all the ports, dockyards, and depôts, from Rosyth and Invergordon in the north, to Portsmouth and Chatham in the south; over 100 huts for R.F.C., R.N.A.S., and Independent Air Force men in France; and for munition works and other factories and depôts, 200 centres, staffed by 7,000 women helpers, where 50,000,000 meals were served approximately at cost-price to workers who would otherwise have found it difficult to obtain proper food.

The work was extended to internment camps for British prisoners of war, notably at Mürren, Leysin, Seeburg, Interlaken, and Geneva, in Switzerland, and at big centres in Holland. The men, mostly tuberculous cases, had been freed from Germany in exchange for German prisoners similarly afflicted.

Officers were served as well as rank-and-file. A hostel was opened near Victoria Station, followed by others in Eaton Square, Berkeley Square, and Bena Gardens. Two officers' clubs were opened at Le Havre, a hostel for relatives of dangerously wounded officers at Le Touquet, and centres for officer cadets in various parts of England. Many huts, "strafed" buildings, and dug-outs up the line, were opened for the use of officers. Shortly before the Armistice Lord Brassey lent his Park Lane mansion as a club mainly for overseas officers.

Thronged Night and Day

In London, the central headquarters, Tottenham Court Road, teemed with soldiers day and night, hundreds being billeted there at the outbreak of war. At the White City 5,000 would be gathered together for recreation; and the galleries at the Crystal Palace were crowded at all hours by Royal Naval Division, and later R.F.C., men.

Something like £250,000 was spent

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

NEAR WYTSCHAETE

Two officers and orderlies of the Australian Medical Corps at an advanced Y.M.C.A. canteen near Wytschaete on August 11th, 1917. This date fell in the "slack" period between the Battles of Plickem Ridge and Langemarck. Fighting was, of course, going on all the time, but the area east of Wytschaete was for the while fairly quiet.

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in providing station huts and hostels; from December 1st, 1918, to August 31st, 1919, no less than 1,359,494 men were put up at the London hostels, and 1,068,913 at those in the provinces. From January, 1916, to November, 1919, nearly 5½ million men slept in hostels in the United Kingdom.

An International Hospitality League served the interests of Overseas soldiers and others visiting London. Kiosks were opened in twenty different areas, visits arranged to places of interest, theatres, etc., enquiries attended to, countless strangers to the Metropolis helped when they got into difficulties, and 170,637 shown round the city by guides. Not far short of a million Service men on leave were conveyed free from station to station by the Volunteer Night Motor Transport—numbering 254,000 after the Armistice—apart from similar service in other parts of the country.

In addition to the hosts of huts serving big concentrations of troops, many served isolated units in lonely, inaccessible parts of the country, especially on the remoter coasts.

When the Armistice came, 894 men and 635 women were working for the Association in France and Flanders. The great retreat in the spring of 1918 involved the destruction of 198 Y.M.C.A. centres, the loss of £90,000 in huts and equipment, and of over £68,000 in stores. Many of the workers behaved with conspicuous resource and bravery in this disaster.

In April, 1918, the roof of the headquarters at Bailleul was blown off by shell-fire during the bombardment which destroyed the town. On the morning of the fight for Mt. Kemmel, the two Y.M.C.A. workers in charge, Hill and Scrimageour, took refuge in a dug-out at 2.30 a.m. and remained there seven hours, isolated from the outside world, until they saw the guns returning after the battle. When the Fifth Army fell back on Amiens, the hut outside the central station never closed its doors, day or night; more and more stores were rushed up in lorries from the base to cope with the rush of harassed, hungry troops.

12 V.C.'s—and Others

During the War 12 members of the Y.M.C.A. won the V.C.; many were killed; 19 received the C.B.E., 62 the O.B.E., 106 the M.B.E., and Princess Helena Victoria, President of the

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

ENTRANCE TO A FAMOUS HAUNT

A photograph taken in June, 1917, showing the entrance to the famous Y.M.C.A. canteen in the cellars of ruined Ypres. The well-known triangle is seen on the left, but the entrance is by the packing-cases on the extreme right. Contrary to the belief of many, the Y.M.C.A. is not of 20th- or even late 19th-century origin, but was founded by one George Williams—later knighted, but at the time an unknown clerk in a drapery establishment—as long ago as 1844.

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Photo: Imperial War Museum.

THE CHURCH ARMY AT "POP"

French and British soldiers in the Partridge Bacton Hut of the Church Army at Poperinghe, photographed on May 10th, 1918. The Church Army, a mission of the Church of England, was founded in 1882 by Prebendary Carlile, for the benefit of the working-classes. There are two sides to the organisation: one for training (free of charge) suitable persons to be "Church of England evangelists"; the other for helping outcasts, criminals, and the homeless by giving them work, shelter, and other assistance.

Women's Auxiliary, the G.B.E. The workers consisted almost entirely of men over military age or unfit for active service, clergy, and women. Miss Betty Stevenson, killed in an air raid, received the "Croix de Guerre avec Palme." Many workers on the Near Eastern and other fronts were mentioned in despatches.

No branch of the fighting services was forgotten. In France, 124 huts were set aside for Chinese coolies, 1,600 of whom were enrolled in educational classes in the Vlamertinghe area alone; and a monthly paper in Chinese was issued for their use. Indian troops were similarly catered for, both at the base and in army areas.

Three hostels for men on leave were opened in Paris, and 69,300 men—mostly Canadians and Anzacs—slept in them. On lines of communication there were 300 centres; and at each big base, from 30 to 50 huts. Over 50,000 concerts were given free of charge, in addition to more than 1,000 dramatic performances; while 35,000 men in France used 77 cinemas nightly, over 20 of them with accommodation for 1,000 to 1,500 troops.

Prior to a big battle, arrangements were made, in co-operation with the R.A.M.C., to provide the walking wounded with refreshments and comforts without charge. At the Battles of Messines and Wytschaete 35 improvised Y.M.C.A.'s in the field were devoted to this purpose.

Great service was rendered to the relatives of dangerously wounded men, summoned urgently from home; 14,000 were entertained as guests in France, and a large number, passing through London, in the hostel in South Audley Street, Mayfair. At the French ports Y.M.C.A. motors met every boat, and conveyed relatives to their destination free of cost. There were hostels for relatives at Étaples, Camier, Rouen, Le Tréport, Boulogne, and Le Touquet. A train journey would often have meant long delay, and arrival . . . too late.

After the Armistice, Y.M.C.A. centres followed the men whose grim job it was to clear up the battlefields, exhuming, re-burying; and huts were converted into hostels for relatives visiting graves.

The Y.M.C.A. on Other Fronts

The Red Triangle was comparably in evidence on other fronts. In the Cairo district there were 15 centres; the Bourse was opened as a hostel; the

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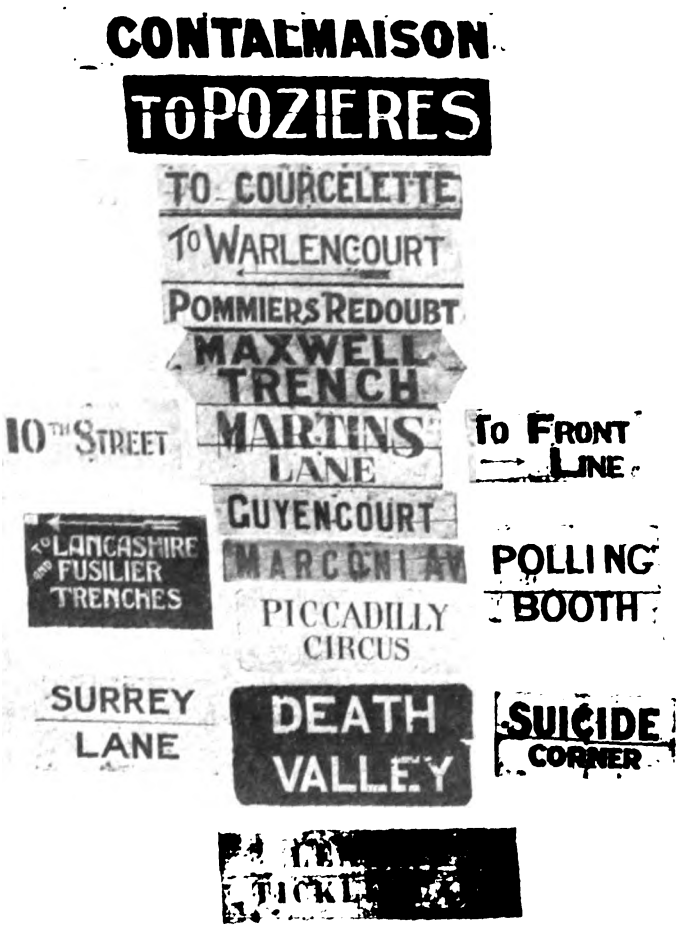

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

ROAD AND TRENCH SIGNS

It is not unlikely that some of our readers first set eyes on one or more of these signs while they were actually on service, for they are all genuine boards brought home from the Western Front and now reposing in the Imperial War Museum. The lettering is in many cases of a high order.

Esbekiah Gardens became a popular rendezvous at night for thousands of men. The Canal Zone had 35 centres, Alexandria 6, and there were others in Cyprus, Suez, Port Said, Khartoum, and Port Sudan.

On Gallipoli, centres were opened at Cape Helles and Anzac Bay. There were 35 in Palestine towns, and 25 in the front line, for Allenby's men; 65 on the Salonica front, and others on the adjacent islands and Mediterranean lines of communication. In bare, uninhabited hinterlands of the Balkans and Near East generally, the Y.M.C.A. hut was a welcome comfort.

With the co-operation of Lord Nunburnholme, the s.s. *Nero* was despatched to the Dardanelles in December, 1915, with comforts and little luxuries for the troops, but arrived after the evacuation and was sent on to Mudros, where her cargo was much appreciated.

In Italy there were 82 centres, including 27 on the Piave and 13 at Asiago; while after the Armistice an additional 12 were created in rest camps. Malta and "Gib." were served. In India, during the five years from 1914, 115 branches were opened—74 for British troops and 41 for Indians, staffed in all by 412 paid workers. In Bangalore the troops themselves built and equipped the Iggulden Park centre, named after the General who raised the money. By October, 1918, 66 centres had been opened in Mesopotamia; and two launches served hospital ships on the Tigris.

In distant East Africa there were 51 centres for British, Indian, and African troops, while the Y.M.C.A. was responsible for the Army dry canteens. Even the North Russian E.F. was served by 35 centres in the Archangel area, including four railway coaches equipped as mobile Y.M.C.A.'s, and by 15 in the Murmansk district.

Long after the Armistice the Y.M.C.A. work continued at pressure. Repatriated prisoners from Germany, most of them half-starved, found a welcome awaiting them at Y.M.C.A. centres immediately they crossed the frontier. In Brussels alone over 7,000 were fed, and large numbers were dealt with at Mons and a score of other towns. On this service more than £50,000 was expended.

Y.M.C.A.'s followed the British Army of Occupation into the Cologne zone, where by June, 1919, 90 centres had been opened; 12 concert-parties were organised, and several dramatic companies, besides lectures and educational programmes. As late as the end of March, 1919, 22 Anglo-Belgian centres were operating in Belgium.

In the Farthest Corners

Y.M.C.A.'s were to be found wherever British troops were garrisoned: at Constantinople, in a former German club; at Batoum, Tiflis, and Baku, in the Caucasus; with Denikin's forces in South Russia; at Chanak on the Dardanelles; even on the Danube, along the Anatolian railway, and in Serbia.

A Y.M.C.A. Labour Exchange was opened in London, together with seven large hostels there, and others in the provinces, to help the "demobbed" soldier back to civilian life. Training schemes were instituted; the Employment Bureau found jobs for over 29,000 men.

Sir Arthur Yapp recorded many of the intimate human incidents behind this vast organisation. When 100,000 eggs were being collected each week at the Bailleul headquarters, men would sometimes follow the egg lorries for a mile. A Birmingham lad wrote home from the Egyptian desert: "The hardships we have to endure are almost unbelievable; but whenever we come across one of the Y.M.C.A. tents it is like a little bit of heaven in a land that otherwise is all hell."

At a T.F. camp a young Tommy, with a face as white as a sheet, begged Sir Arthur to recover two letters he had posted three hours before. "I have made an awful mistake," he said. "I wrote one letter to my mother and another to my girl, and I put them in the wrong envelopes."

Sir Arthur told this poignant story of a young Canadian who lay in a Havre hospital where men too ill to be evacuated were detained: "In the next cot was a young English soldier, also desperately wounded, but who looked as happy as the day was long, because at his side sat his mother, who had come over as one of our guests.

"The Canadian boy watched the other, as a cat might watch a mouse; then suddenly turned over on his side and burst into a flood of tears. When they asked him what was the matter, he made no reply. 'Is the pain worse?' 'No, thank you, it's not that.' 'Then what is the matter?' Then the lad replied, pointing to the boy in the next bed, 'It's all very well for him, he's got his mother with him; my mother is more than six thousand miles away.'"

Eating a German Dinner

Dr. Francis, serving in Arras, wrote Sir Arthur from a dug-out which had just been captured from the enemy, and instantly opened as a Y.M.C.A.; the dinner which had been prepared for

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German officers was actually before him on the table as he wrote!

Not far from Reninghelst, in the Second Army area, where all the Y.M.C.A. huts were destroyed in the German advance of 1918, one at a cross-roads was smashed by a direct hit. The secretary, carrying on with his big field-boiler and stores, noticed a badly wounded soldier on a stretcher, who wanted to speak to him.

"I wonder why I am allowed to suffer like this," he whispered.

"If it were not for your suffering," the secretary replied quietly, "and the suffering of tens of thousands of others, two women I love, my mother and my sister, would not now be living safely in the north of London."

Later the soldier signalled to him again. "I am content to go on suffering," he said. They were his last words.

One evening the leader of the huts at the Rouelle Camp in the Harfleur valley called for a volunteer to sing, play, or recite. At last one fellow staggered up to the platform, drunk.

"What's the matter, boss; won't anyone help you?" he called out. "Never mind, padre, if no one else won't help you, I will. I can play, or I can sing, or I can recite, or . . . I can pray."

Chuckling at this, he raised his hand and with a solemn gesture called for prayer. He had not got far before he broke down and sobbed like a child. "I had a good mother once," he cried. "I have been a damned fool . . . may God forgive me!"

From that moment he was a changed man—never touched liquor again, and went out of his way to help his comrades. Four days later he was sent up the line; three days after that, over the top . . . never to return.

On New Year's Eve, 1916, Dr. Kelman conducted a Watchnight service in the Ridgewood dug-outs in the Ypres area. He was praying that the New Year "might bring us nearer peace and home," praying for the safety of the men grouped round him and for their home folk, when the enemy began strafing the wood, and shells fell in and around it. "The men glanced up to see how the shelling would affect the padre, and when they found he carried on just as if nothing out of the common were taking place, his impressive words carried double weight."

"The Cash was Safe"

Many a Y.M.C.A. service in the line was conducted under such conditions. Sir Arthur mentions a little dug-out in the Bois Carré beyond the Brasserie, a famous landmark in the sector, where men in the trenches would get small luxuries as in a camp. A Y.M.C.A. orderly there was horribly wounded. As he was being carried away on a stretcher, he saw Mr. Harry Holmes, the Association secretary for the Second Army, smiled, and whispered that "the cash was safe."

On a later visit to the Ridgewood dug-outs, Sir Arthur found very little left of the Brasserie, but in the cellars was a tiny R.A.M.C. casualty station, and beside it a Y.M.C.A. one for walking wounded. On his way up thither from Dickebusch he met Sergt.-Major Moodie, who had spent the night there, but could get no sleep owing to the rats. At first he scared them away with a flash-lamp, but they soon got used to that. "Then I lit a candle," he said, "hoping that would scare them away; but one of the rats ran off with my candle, and I was left in the darkness."

One night a Jock strode into one of the huts near the front line and demanded a glass of whisky. "I'm sorry, but you've come to the wrong shop," the leader explained; "you can't get whisky here."

In injured tones he again demanded a wee drappie. Refused a second time, he exclaimed angrily: "Do you call yourself a Christian, and won't give me a glass of whisky? It's the first time I've ever been ashamed of my religion!"

Sir Arthur heard a story of a gas victim who suffered from delusions and wrote a letter beginning "Dear Lord," and ending: "Unless you send me £10 and send it quick, I don't know what on earth I am going to do." He addressed the envelope to "The Almighty," and posted it in a pillar-box. Eventually it reached the War Office, and the clerks there generously collected £7 in a "whip-round" and sent it to him.

Overjoyed, the soldier wrote another letter to "Dear Lord," expressing thanks and concluding: "But if you are ever going to send me any more money, please don't send it next time through the War Office, because they pinched £3 out of this lot. . . . If you send any more, please send it next time through the Y.M.C.A."

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

FROM PALESTINE

Some of the old biblical names look very strange in this guise. A variety of substances were chosen on which to inscribe these notices, but in the great majority of instances, as many will recall, and as the rest may perceive by studying the photograph, the boards were taken from packing cases. Note the Arabic signs at the bottom.

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Inadvertent Advertising

Sir Arthur remembered a volunteer worker who was eager to hand out spiritual literature to drafts going up the line. "Here, friend," he would say, "is something for you to read when you get up to the trenches." Unfortunately he was short-sighted, and did not observe that he was distributing an advertisement leaflet for malted milk!

Hut helpers found some of their customers disconcerting. Miss Ella Sykes, at the famous Tartan Hut in France, told of an occasion when she did not know that "bawbin" meant a reel of cotton, and the Jock in question said to her reprovingly: "I spoke to ye in plain English!" On another occasion, in a case of "dolly cakes" sent from Dublin was a note from a girl-packer offering marriage to the soldier who found it.

Miss Sykes wrote of the men she met on their way to the line:

"One who was only just seventeen had lost two brothers at Gallipoli and was very home-sick. At the end of our talk he pressed his badge into my hand as a keepsake, and I cherish it along with the pink satin heart given me by another boy who insisted that the little I had done for him when ill saved him from being left behind while his comrades went off."

The equally admirable work of the Church Army was on similar lines. One of its first recreation tents for troops was at Bedford; others were erected at Woolwich in October, 1914, where they remained until destroyed in a storm early in 1915. By the end of the War there were 2,000 centres on the various fronts, with their welcome sign: "Open to All." Before 1916 it was estimated that the centres served 200,000 men daily.

Many huts came under fire. One superintendent recorded: "I was sleeping at one end of the hut when the shrapnel hit the other end. The first shell came through the roof and buried itself a foot deep in the ground under the floor. I jumped up to see what was the matter; the second shell burst at the side and came through the wall, and a bit of it gave me a great slap on the thigh."

A Primitive Chapel

The annual bill for stationery for the troops exceeded £20,000. Prebendary Carlile wrote of one hut on the Western Front early in 1915: "Just adjoining was a little chapel, made of thick oilskin and laths, to fold up and move. Inside there were rough seats and an old biscuit box reverently covered with linen, and with a brass cross. In some C.A. huts there is a daily Communion in the morning, and an informal evensong with popular hymns for twenty minutes every evening, during which, in the rest of the hut divided off, a respectful quiet is always maintained."

In the March Retreat, 1918, the C.A. lost 100 huts; but when the counter-offensive was launched, more huts and tents followed our armies right into the Cologne and other occupied areas. "Bar-cars," resembling coffee-stalls, rendered great service to walking wounded. Some 500 parcels a week were sent to prisoners in Germany.

Reviewing, twenty years after, the prodigious scope of the work of the Y.M.C.A. and Church Army, one can but bow the head humbly in deep gratitude. It was one of the few redeeming features of the years during which so many million men, intended by their Creator to live in amity, nation with nation, were committed to slaughter and racked by suffering.

Photo: Imperial War Museum

CHEERING THE WOUNDED

A Y.M.C.A. stall at St. Jean-lès-Ypres supplying hot drinks to New Zealand "walking wounded" as they make their arduous way down from the line on October 5th, 1917, after the capture of Gravenstafel. This hamlet (also spelt Grafenstafel) had been captured by the New Zealanders the previous day. The action formed part of the Battle of Broodseinde.

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CHAPTER XXVI

WITH THE GUNS AGAIN

In this, the third and last chapter of TWENTY YEARS AFTER *to be devoted exclusively to the work of the gunners during the Great War, attention is paid to the many difficulties and perplexities that arise in actual practice on a modern battlefield. It was not an uncommon thing to hear the infantry thinking aloud when, as sometimes happened, shells burst short, or when an apparently adequate bombardment appeared to fail to achieve its purpose. As will be shown in the following pages, the gunner had his own share of problems to contend with, problems the nature of which was for ever changing.*

IN earlier chapters we dealt with the guns, ammunition, and carriages used in the War, the methods of laying, observing, and ranging the action of heavy guns in moving warfare, and the assistance lent by "Survey" in map-shooting, sound-ranging, and flash-spotting. In this chapter, it is proposed to deal with the technical application of artillery fire.

Doctrines Prior to 1914

Our tactical doctrines prior to 1914 were founded on the expectation of a war of movement in which infantry—the Queen of Battles—would advance covered by its own fire, and by all the fire which the artillery could bring to bear. The artillery was to conform entirely to the action of the infantry.

Gunners expected that they would be able to obtain direct observation of hostile guns either from their battery-positions or from observation-posts within voice-control. Where observation proved difficult, or an emergency arose, they would gallop up in close support, and hurl lead and iron at the enemy over the heads of the advancing infantry.

They imagined that the near presence of guns would prove a moral support to the rifleman, even if the trajectory of the shell could not clear him. Thus at Le Cateau there were guns within 500 yards of the front line. For such action, they did not need a long carry.

The French, who were perhaps more "mobile mad" than we were, dispensed even with howitzers. They believed in the "preponderating power of manœuvre," and hoped to apply fire effectively through the quick movement of batteries to the appropriate spot.

The Germans realised better than the French that movement depends on fire. That, and their fear of the famous "seventy-fives" led them to a wide employment of heavy ordnance which might destroy the latter at long range, and of howitzers which could obtain concealment from them. But they, too, expected a war of movement.

The appearance of the machine gun in large numbers on the battlefield swept these doctrines right away. Guns could not survive in the open. Infantry could not advance without a measure of support which did not exist. Consequently, mobility vanished, and stalemate ensued.

It was recognised, however, that, if the War was to be won, mobility must be restored. Ceaseless attempts were therefore made to enlarge the support afforded to infantry.

Napoleon Out-of-Date

When Napoleon, fighting on a narrow front, wished to give support to his infantry, he massed his guns into a huge battery and fairly blew the enemy from their muzzles. Such procedure was possible neither on a wide front nor in the face of modern fire. The necessary supporting-power had to be applied by the same means, but by other methods.

Guns cannot be placed wheel to wheel, for the cost of the numbers involved would be prohibitive, and a perfect target would be offered to aeroplanes. A certain amount of dispersion is therefore necessary.

Now dispersion with guns is not a handicap if their fire can be concentrated. This is largely a matter of three things: centralised control, efficient signal-communication, and range. As regards range, it would be easy to increase it by increasing muzzle-velocity, were it not that the greater pressure in the bore necessary to produce the required effect tends rapidly to wear out the gun. My own 4·7-inch weapons had a high velocity (about 2,100 feet per second). They lost range so quickly through wear that I had to use a large part of my exiguous allotment of ammunition in calibrating them. One of the larger German types, which had a muzzle-velocity of 5,250 feet per second, had a life of only 60 rounds.

The normal methods of increasing the range were by altering the carriage to enable a greater elevation to be given, and by so shaping the shell as to reduce to a minimum the resistance offered to it by the air. The range of the 18-pounder was increased by these means from 6,200 yards in 1914 to 9,300 yards in 1918—that is, by just 50 per cent.

As regards control, a division controlled its own guns and any guns attached to it; a corps controlled the medium and heavy artillery; and an army, spread along a front of perhaps 30 miles, controlled the super-heavy guns. It would have been equally absurd to have placed a gun with a range of 12,000 yards under a brigade-commander, and one with a range of only 6,000 yards under an army-commander.

All-important Signals

The essential part played by signal-communications in artillery-control was a main factor in the creation of a special branch of the Army to deal with signals. The preservation by the defenders of signal-lines and exchanges became a matter of great importance, and their destruction by the assailants became one of the major tasks assigned to the artillery.

Our first carefully-staged offensive in static warfare was that of Neuve Chapelle—a battle full of interest for the gunner. The initial attack was delivered on a front of 2,000 yards. Of this, owing to the converging nature of the attack, the guns—282 field and 72 heavy—occupied only 1,200 yards. That is, they were spaced at four yards—a degree of concentration not again effected until the Third Battle of Ypres. Every endeavour was made to effect surprise; and, accordingly, the registration of guns was distributed over several weeks, whereas the preliminary bombardment was limited to a hurricane of fire lasting 35 minutes.

The operation opened most successfully, especially in the centre, but eventually failed. It was made the subject of careful study afterwards, and the

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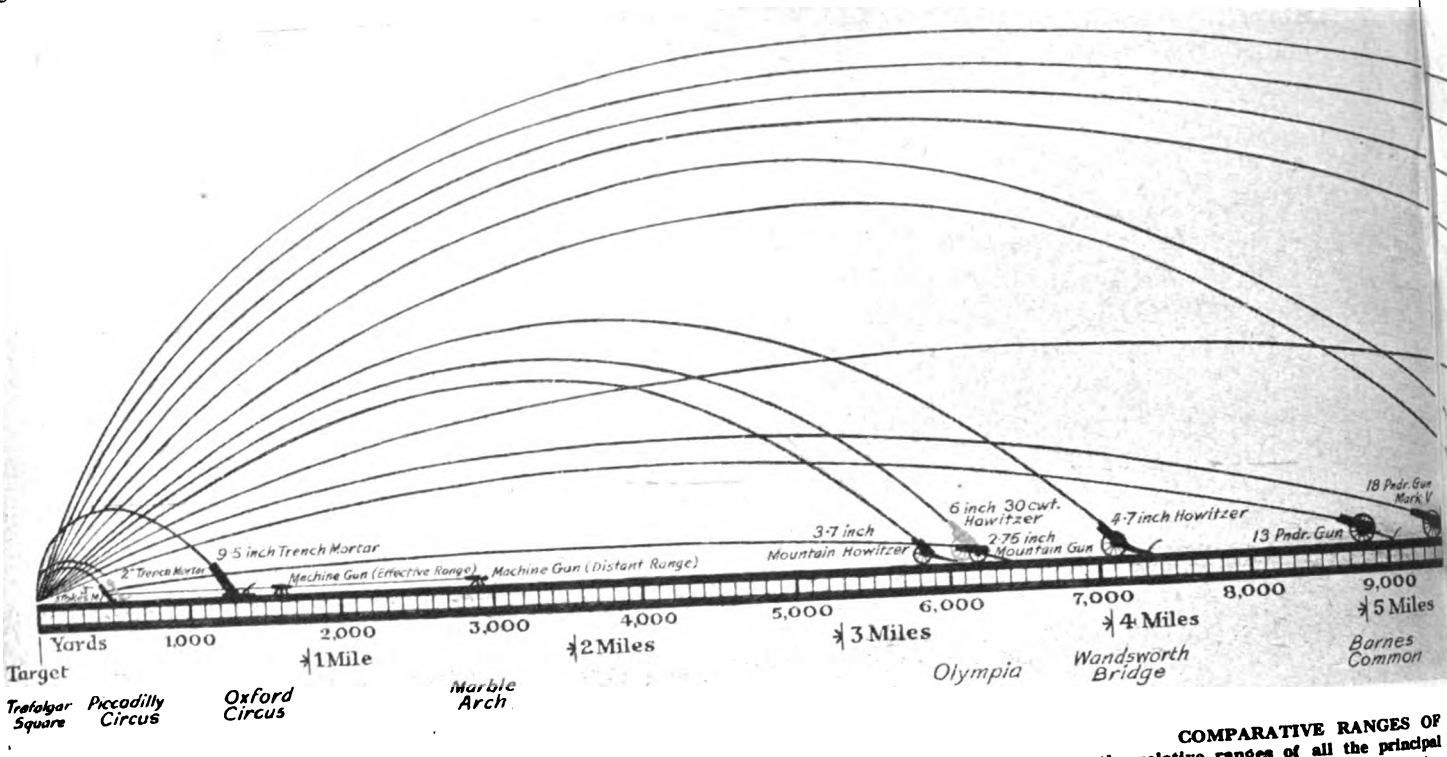

COMPARATIVE RANGES OF

In this interesting two-page diagram, which was specially drawn for *Twenty Years After*, readers are shown the relative ranges of all the principal assumed to be Trafalgar Square, and the weapons, placed at their maximum effective distances, are compared on the scale with various familiar localities Stokes mortar; the longest, the 6-inch gun Mark XIX. An interesting point is the short range of a howitzer compared with that

conclusion was reached that the insufficient destruction of trenches had been a principal cause of failure. Two 6-inch howitzer batteries had arrived too late to be able to register, and their fire had, in consequence, been ineffective. The stretch of trench allotted to them had been undamaged, and there the assault had been repulsed.

It was, perhaps, a small matter from which to draw serious deductions; but thereafter, right up to, though not including, the Battle of Cambrai, a continually growing attention was paid to the destruction of defences: long bombardments, lasting not only days but weeks, being employed for this purpose.

Such procedure had the unfortunate effect of eliminating surprise—the cardinal factor in victory. It afforded the enemy both the opportunity and the time either to organise counter-attacks or to construct fresh lines behind the bombarded area.

Copying Neuve Chapelle

The Germans, when they took the offensive in 1918, achieved their successes largely by the means which we employed at Neuve Chapelle. They fired a short hurricane bombardment, not with a view to destroying our defences, but rather with the idea of pounding the defenders into a state of stupor, thus paralysing them and preventing them from manning their posts at the critical moment of the assault.

It is thus possible, as Lieut.-Colonel A. F. Brooke points out,[1] that we misread the lessons of our first offensive battle, and, in doing so, seriously handicapped ourselves in our later attacks. Should we destroy material, or should we neutralise personnel? This was a question repeatedly posed by gunners during the War. That it was ultimately answered in favour of neutralisation cannot end the argument; for the victories gained in the final stages owed much to such factors as the accuracy of unobserved fire, tanks, gas, and smoke which were not in operation to any great extent prior to that period.

At Loos, we attacked on a frontage of 16,000 yards, and our guns were spaced at intervals of 23 yards. Bombarding for four days, we endeavoured to achieve results not through density, but through persistence of fire; and we were hoping much from gas. We suffered defeat; and among contributory causes was our failure to silence the hostile artillery. Counter-battery work at this time was in many hands. "Everyone was doing it"—airmen, "Survey," divisional artillery, heavy artillery. The necessity for co-ordinating all their activities became for the first time apparent.

The First Battle of the Somme was preceded by a bombardment lasting seven days, trenches and wire being well pounded until the infantry were satisfied that sufficient destruction had been wrought to give reasonable prospects of success to an assault.

Hard-learnt Lessons

The opening day was a ghastly failure. Afterwards, the battle continued, with varying success, for five months. We managed to win a few acres of ground, and we wore down the enemy to a certain extent; but at a terrible cost.

In the process we learnt a number of artillery lessons. The urgent need of carefully organised counter-battery work was again brought to the fore, since it was from the hostile guns that our infantry had often suffered their heaviest casualties. Just as they were forming up, crowded thickly in their assembly trenches, down would come a deluge of shell upon them.

Accordingly, after the battle, a counter-battery staff officer (C.B.S.O.) was appointed to work, under the

[1] To whose articles on the evolution of artillery, and to those of Lieut.-Colonel C. N. F. Broad on the development of artillery tactics, both series published in the *R.A. Journal*, I would express my debt.

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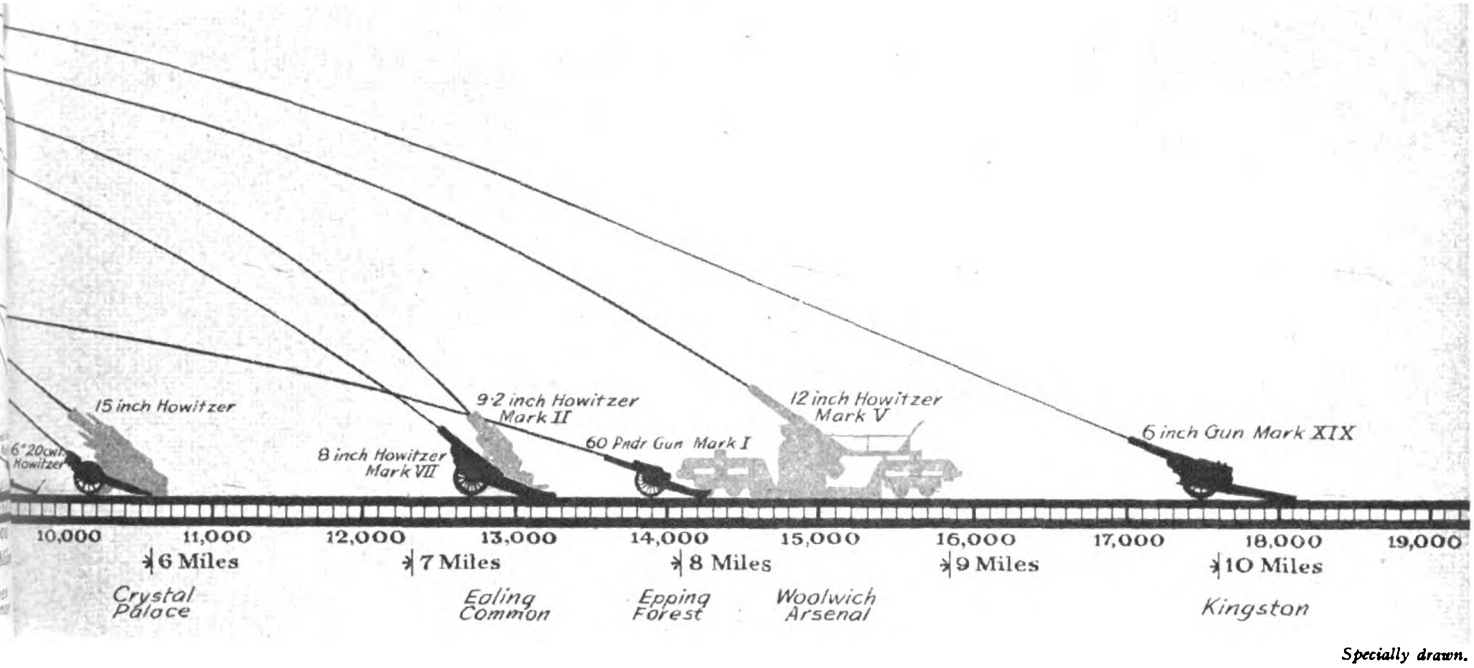

Specially drawn.

DIFFERENT TYPES OF ARTILLERY

weapons in use by the British Army during the Great War, between the sizes of a machine gun and a 15-inch howitzer. The target (extreme left) is —the latter, it should be noted, in reality situated at various points of the compass relative to the target. The shortest-ranged weapon shown is the 3-inch of a gun of similar calibre; and another is the apparent lack of consistent relationship between the range of a "how" and its size.

officer commanding the artillery of the corps, at effecting either the destruction or the neutralisation of the hostile artillery, as the situation might demand. His duties, and the organisation of his office, will be treated in detail later.

In this battle, it became for the first time more or less the accepted practice for the artillery to conquer the ground and for the infantry to occupy it. Though difficult to avoid, such procedure had certain evil results. The infantry could not advance beyond the range of their guns, and were unable, therefore, to exploit any success gained. On reaching their objective, they were subjected to a fierce bombardment in every instance where the hostile guns had not been neutralised by our artillery. They were to suffer, later on, when moving warfare set in, from the loss of independence and initiative involved in so limiting a procedure.

Behind the battle-line there was a busy scene. The country was covered with light railways, for the roads proved unequal to the task of supplying the vast quantities of ammunition expended. The tracks were often cut by shell fire, and were under continual repair. Ordnance workshops, empty for the day of battle, moved to points in proximity to the battery-positions, ready to effect the innumerable repairs rendered necessary by the destruction and strain of battle. Guns themselves were wearing out under the stress of long and continuous firing, and were being sent back in large numbers to be relined.

"Harassing" Fire

It was about this time that "harassing" fire came into vogue. It was based on the reports, received from airmen, agents, and observers, of enemy activities on roads and railways and in villages and buildings. These reports, closely studied by the Intelligence Branch, gave indications of when and where fire would be most disturbing to the work and habits of the enemy. Guns, especially long-range guns, would then be directed upon the appropriate spots at the appropriate hours.

Many devices were tried. For instance, slow fire might be directed against particular communications for a long period, in order to persuade the enemy to use an alternative communication. Then, just as the latter was probably undergoing its maximum use, a rain of shells would descend upon it. Enfilade fire against long, straight stretches of road, such as are so common in France, was particularly effective; and the positions of guns were sometimes chosen expressly to enable them to bring such fire to bear.

As the necessity for co-ordinating all our resources to the common end became generally recognised, harassing fire took its place in battle-tactics. Super-heavy weapons were directed on divisional and corps headquarters, detraining, embussing, and debussing stations, and main roads, in order to interfere during battle with the issue of orders and the transport of reinforcements.

One example of the successful application of harassing fire may be quoted here. As a German battalion detrained at Bapaume, two of its carriages were hit by a 12-inch shell. During its march along the Bapaume—Pozières road, it was shelled by 6-inch and 60-pounder guns. On dropping into a communication-trench, it was dosed with 18-pounder shrapnel. Finally, on the same day, the whole battalion was captured—and, by that time, consisted only of the C.O. and 40 men.

Our Artillery on the Somme

Although it seemed to many of us that our efforts on the Somme provided us with nothing better than a long succession of bitter experiences, they were not without their effect on the enemy. The German General Staff reported that the British artillery fire had been overwhelming in its results, both in causing casualties and in lowering morale. More-

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Photo : A. P., Paris.

THE OLD CHURCH, RIVIÈRE

Rivière is a middle-sized village on the Crinchon, 8 km. south-west of Arras and 2 km. east-south-east of Beaumetz-les-Loges. It is an inconspicuous place, off the main and even the secondary roads, being reached from the east by a lane turning off the Beaumetz—Basseux route, and from the west by another leading off the Arras—Foncquevillers thoroughfare. This photograph of the dismembered church is dated June 30th, 1917.

over, the heavy losses incurred, and the repeated expulsion of their troops from strongly fortified positions, could not be concealed from the German people, and were depressing them greatly.

Some modification to tactics was necessary to nullify the advantage now enjoyed by the British in their superior guns.

The pursuit of the Germans, as they fell back on the Hindenburg line in March, 1917, disclosed a great lack of elasticity in our system. Instead of decentralising command to junior officers, commanders endeavoured to retain control through the vast net of telephone communications. Battery and brigade commanders, who had yet to learn the elements of tactics in moving warfare, found their activities restricted at every turn. On the day on which we captured Bapaume, I myself had two 6-inch "hows." in action beyond that town, and had to maintain communication with my immediate superior who was 20,000 yards back.

At Arras, in spite of the fact that the enemy was then greatly in the ascendant in the air, and was thus able to interfere considerably with our observation of fire, our attack proved more successful than any we had previously delivered. It had been prepared with meticulous care. The slow bombardment began 20 days before the assault. Two rounds were allotted to each yard of trench, and one to each yard of wire.

The 106 fuse having made its appearance, the "heavies" were able to demolish the wire covering the more distant trenches. Hostile batteries, O.P.'s and signal exchanges were systematically destroyed, and trenches and dug-outs pulverised. Into the village of Thélus alone, 24,000 rounds were fired. On the day of attack, the hostile artillery was successfully neutralised. Away to the rear, our ammunition columns, 10 miles long, filled the roads to the battery positions, and had to vanish before the short summer night gave place to dawn.

An Ironic *Impasse*

Almost everywhere the assailants won their way to their final objectives in the course of the first two days. So intense had been the artillery fire, however, that the ground was broken to an extent which rendered supply and the forward movement of guns exceedingly difficult, and interfered greatly with any further advance. It was sad indeed, and it was to be sadder still in the later battles, that the power which made tactical success possible also created barriers of its own against exploitation.

Moreover, the long notice given to the enemy of the intention to attack had enabled him to make effective counter-preparations. We stuck to our method, however. We were practically sure that our prolonged bombardment would enable us to capture a limited objective, and we were not prepared to sacrifice that definite advantage to the possibility of effecting a deep penetration.

At Messines, we repeated the process,

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and on this occasion complete success attended our efforts. The enemy challenged us to a definite artillery duel, in which, owing to the great improvement in our counter-battery organisation, he suffered decisive defeat.

The Third Battle of Ypres (including Passchendaele) marked the climax of the destructive method. "Soil could not have been better chosen to bring out the evils of over-bombardment." The drainage-system was obliterated, and a wide area churned into mud over which the unfortunate foot-soldier could barely crawl, and which absorbed thousands of tons of road-metalling intended for the construction of roads for the guns. Misguided attempts to push 8-inch howitzers right forward, to enable them to deal with the more distant of the hostile batteries, resulted in the few available roads being blocked by guns and caterpillars sunk deeply and immovably in the mire.

Our choice of ground for this great offensive was dictated by motives of high policy and strategy. It was, however, particularly unfortunate from the artillery point of view. The salient in which we lay afforded the enemy all the advantages of enfilade and reverse fire, and facilitated his harassing fire against our communications. Moreover, he held all the high ground, and consequently our guns in the flat and open country had no flash cover and, in some cases, no cover at all.

A Bad Battle for the Guns

On the top of Pilckem Ridge was to be seen the absurd spectacle of six great 8-inch howitzers in a row in full view of the enemy. Such cover as existed was to be found mainly in the Broombeek and Steenbeek valleys, which were accordingly packed with guns. Our opponents knew that as well as we did, and of course simply drenched those areas with mustard gas, causing the very names Broombeek and Steenbeek to stink in the nostrils of gunners for many a year to come. For the first time in the War, casualties among the artillery were, over a long period, higher than those among the infantry. It was, in fact, a bad battle for the guns.

During the early part of this struggle, our infantry often won success in their attacks, rather easily at first, only to find themselves driven back shortly afterwards to their starting-line. This was because the Germans had altered their tactics without our realising the fact. They were occupying their forward area lightly, largely by machine guns distributed chequer-wise in pill-

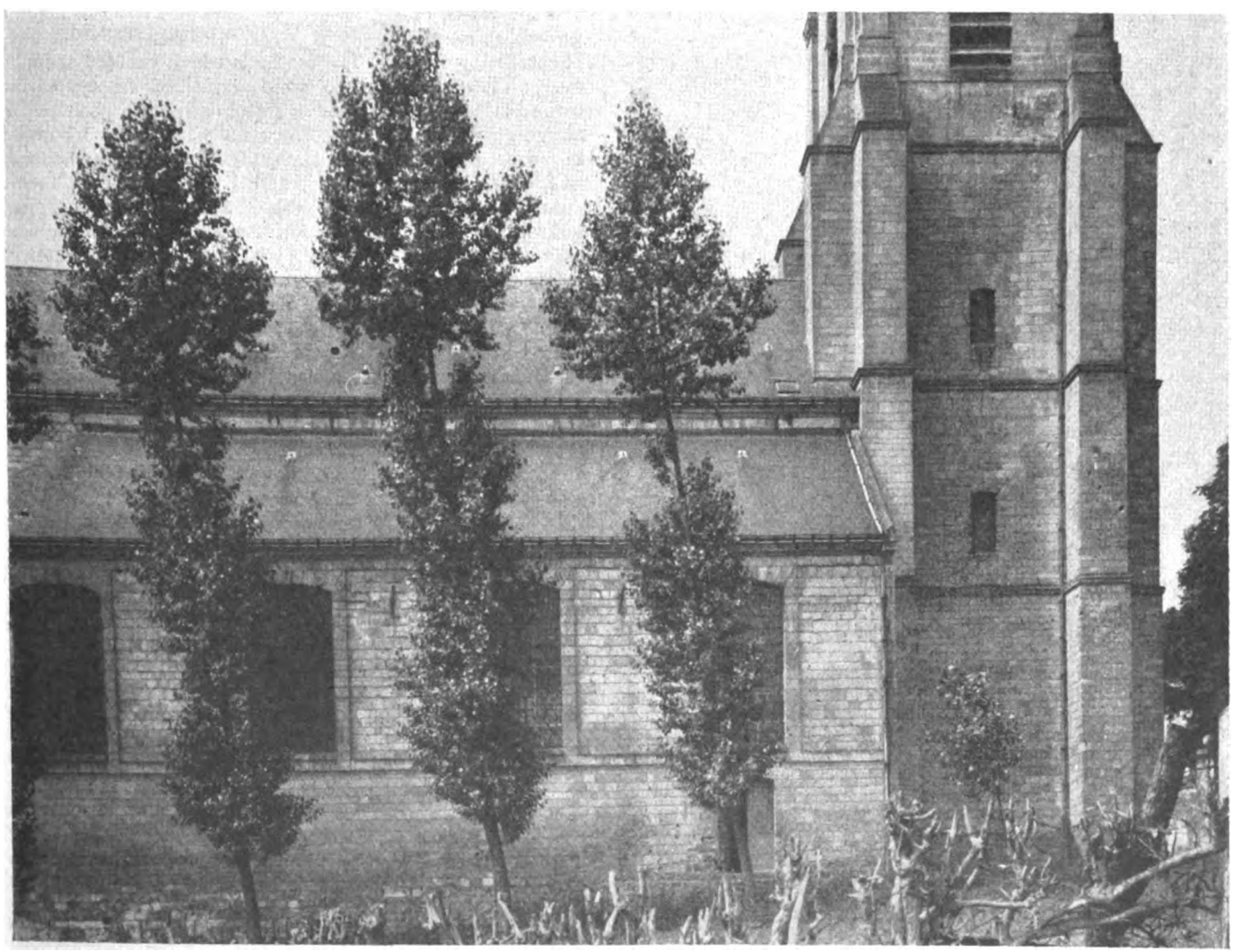

Photo: A. J. Insall.

PART OF RIVIÈRE'S NEW CHURCH

Rivière was never in the fighting zone, and owed its battering to bombs and medium-range shells. To-day it is chiefly of interest to the ex-Serviceman for its British cemetery (Bellacourt Military Cemetery), which was used principally by the 46th (North Midland), 49th (West Riding), 55th (West Lancs.), and 58th (London) Divisions, and by the Canadian Corps. 259 United Kingdom, 173 Canadian, 117 French, and 1 German burials are recorded.

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boxes. Beyond our usual bombardment area their divisions were concentrated in places sheltered from aerial observation, and moved forward to the counter-attack as soon as our assault started.

Once we discovered the new methods, we set to work to circumvent them. The infantry advanced in greater depth, and so were better disposed to meet the hostile counter-attack. Long-range guns dealt with bivouacs, hutments, and roads. The enemy having given up shelling our assembly-positions, we were able to thicken our barrage with guns normally devoted to counter-battery work.

Moreover, as the enemy counter was a set-piece, we were able to lay for it. We reduced the depth of our advance, and halted on ground of our own choosing well within the covering-power of all our guns. Finally, we gave the enemy less notice of our intention by shortening our bombardment. These methods proved eminently successful in the major assaults of September 20th and 26th.

Check and Counter-check

Then, on October 2nd, our opponents reverted to their old Somme methods, and baulked us for a bit until we did the same. Later in that month, they introduced an elastic outpost-system, which we had to find means of combating; and so the play of wits went on, giving the advantage alternately to one side and to the other. But no decisive effects were achieved.

By the end of the battle, doubts as to the value of the destruction of hostile guns had grown very strong. Violent and continuous counter-battery action was apt to cause the enemy to change the positions of his batteries prior to an anticipated attack, with the result that they could not be neutralised on the day of battle and were beyond the range of probable capture. It entailed, moreover, an immense expenditure of ammunition, and, in consequence, great wear in guns. It is a noteworthy fact that during this battle far more guns were disabled through wear than through enemy action.

It took about 100 6-inch howitzer shells to destroy a single gun-pit; and, though it was the custom to drop a few salvoes on view-points adjacent to the target in order to catch interested onlookers, these deliberate shoots had, as a rule, but little man-killing effect.

Whatever method we employed, we found that the rate of advance of the infantry was governed entirely by the possibility of moving guns forward in support—because, so long as the morale of the enemy was sound, his machine guns could repel us every time unless we could bring heavy and accurate concentrations upon them. Yet the very bombardment which appeared essential, hindered the advance of the guns. Clearly, a radical change of system had become necessary.

Nevertheless, so slow are we to alter our habits, that we might have long continued on our former course had not a decision been reached to attempt an attack with tanks at Cambrai. Surprise was essential if the tanks were not to be destroyed in their initial advance, and surprise could not be effected unless the preliminary bombardment were eliminated. But covering fire was still necessary; so the guns had to open fire at zero hour without registration, although the bulk of them were new arrivals from other fronts.

Firing Without Registration

The methods which enabled them to do so were explained in an earlier chapter. Put briefly, the positions of the hostile guns were found by aerial photography, flash-spotting, and sound-ranging; and, those of our own having been fixed by "Survey," there remained to complete the solution of the problem only the task of applying the "error of the moment" to the measured distances between the antagonists.

The success of the enterprise as a whole, the accuracy of the barrage, and the efficiency with which the hostile guns were neutralised, determined the authorities to adopt this system as a model for future operations.

Cambrai constituted the high-water mark of our artillery tactics in the War. We never improved upon them, though we gained in efficiency in their practice. On the 8th August, for instance, our fire was so accurate that many hostile batteries were never able to fire at all, and some were actually captured with their muzzle-covers still on.

Whether or not, prior to Cambrai, and before tanks became available in large numbers, we could, without previous registration, have destroyed the acres of wire which covered the Hindenburg line and other great German defences, and thus taken the enemy by surprise, must remain for ever unknown. In their first great offensive in 1918, the Germans, using our latest artillery methods, but without tanks, won their principal success where our wire was particularly weak. Their second success was mainly due to the failure of the Portuguese to offer a serious resistance.

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

ANOTHER DUMMY TREE

We have illustrated one or two of these clever "fakes" in previous volumes, but take the opportunity of a gunnery chapter to reproduce in picture form a clever model showing exactly how the valuable observation-posts were entered and occupied. The steel cylinder inside the sham trunk may readily be observed through the cut-away portion.

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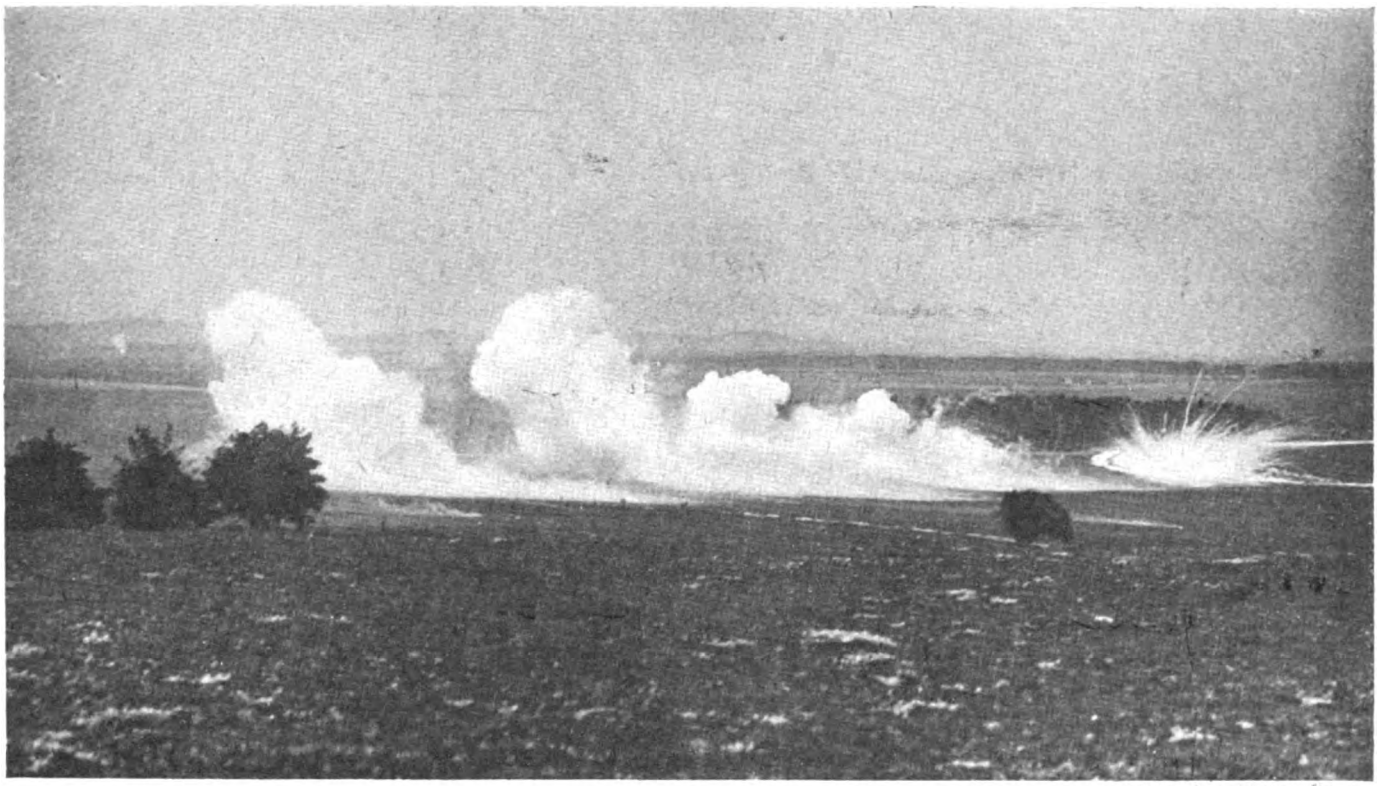

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

MASS-EXPLOSION

A smoke barrage being formed by the simultaneous bursting of ten 4·5-inch howitzer shells. The scale of the smoke-screen may be gathered by observing the isolated trees in the foreground, the small coppice in the rear, and the semi-circular trench to the right of the picture.

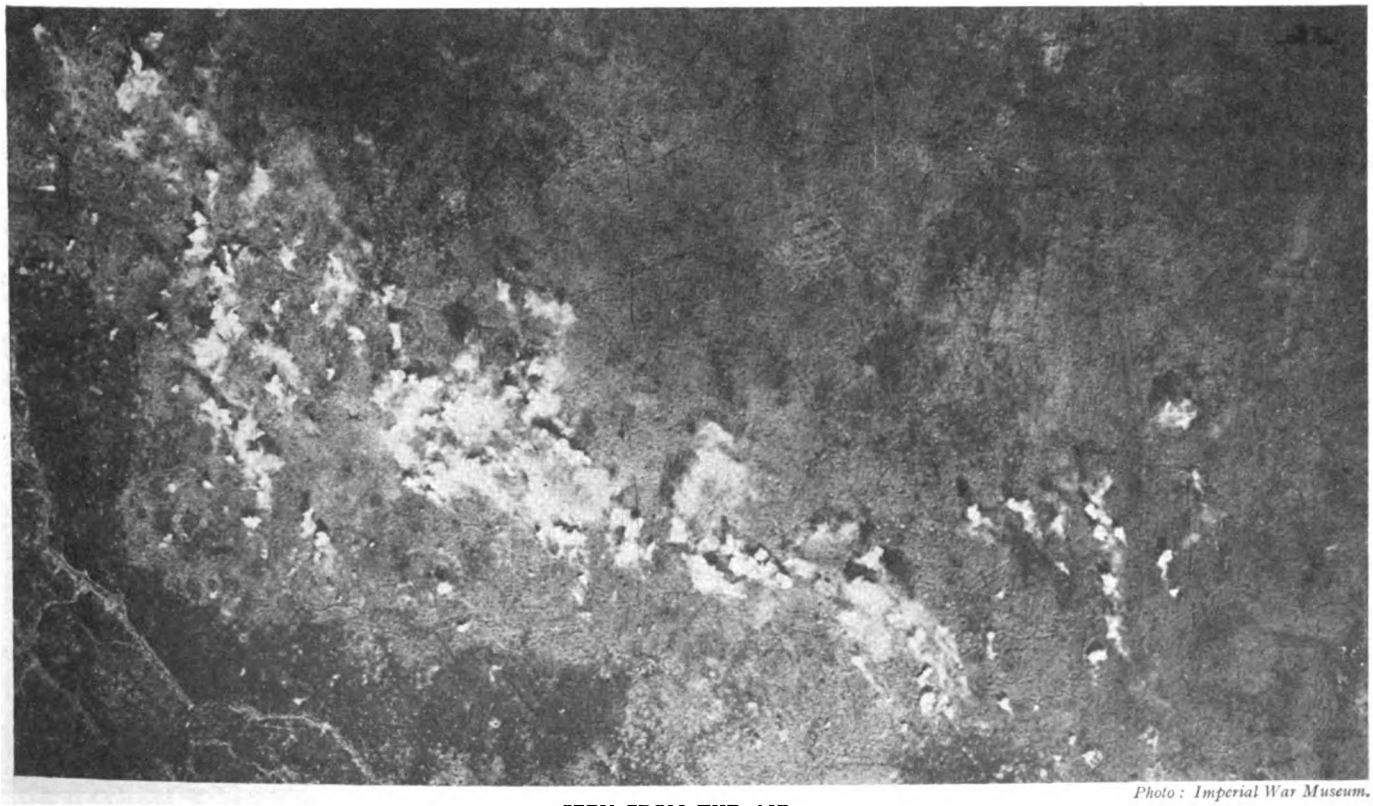

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

SEEN FROM THE AIR

An aerial photograph of barrage fire in the neighbourhood of Wytschaete, which may be compared with the illustration on page 228. To take the present view the pilot ascended to a considerable altitude, as may be gathered from the size of the trenches. The North is toward the left of the scene.

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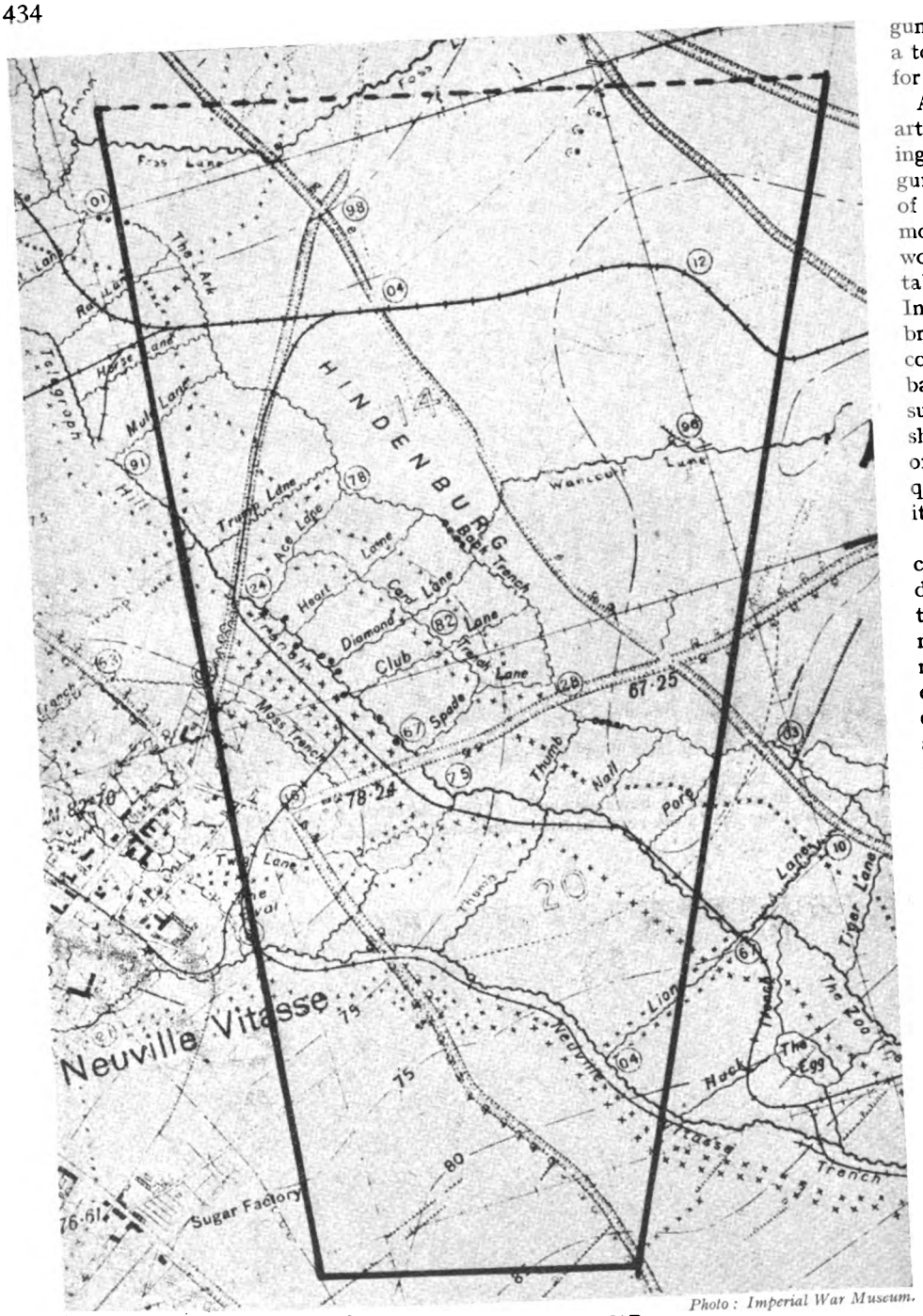

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

SECTION OF A TRENCH-MAP

This photograph of a portion of map Sheet 51b S.W.1 is to be studied in connection with the aerial picture on the opposite page, which shows part of the same scene. The area comprised includes a section of the newly-constructed Hindenburg Line running north-west—south-east past the eastern side of Neuville-Vitasse. The scale of the original map was 1-10,000.

Their victories against the French in Champagne do, however, support the view that a surprise hurricane bombardment could enable penetration to be effected in spite of good wire.

It is of academic interest that, just as neutralisation triumphed over destruction in the war of artilleries, so it did in the War as a whole. The German Army was never really destroyed. It was neutralised by the blockade, by propaganda, and by the general effect of world opinion.

Artillery *v.* Machine Guns

Right up to the Armistice, the fire of machine guns in the hands of determined soldiers enforced the employment of great masses of artillery. As late as the 1st November, 1918, the 10th Canadian Brigade, attacking near Valenciennes, had to be supported by 296 guns firing 700 rounds per gun—that is, a total of 2,140 tons of shell, or 1½ tons for each foot-soldier engaged.

A serious trouble, common to all artilleries in the War, was short shooting. It was a hateful affair both to the gunner and to the rifleman. The bond of mutual confidence, built up by months of close and cordial co-operation, would be broken in a second by a mistake in gunnery or a fault in material. In the Dardanelles, where the steep and broken nature of the country rendered covering fire particularly difficult, a battalion commander whose men had suffered on several occasions from our shelling, sent back his adjutant to the offending battery to say that he was quite prepared to surrender to it if only it would stop firing.

In Houthulst Forest, where signalling connections of all kinds were under direct observation and were being continually destroyed, a battalion commander told me that he was practically never in touch with his brigade headquarters. I asked him how, in that case, he knew when he was to make an attack. His reply was that when our shells began bursting on his concrete hut, he guessed that it was zero hour and ordered his men forward.

Among the worst offenders were the "four-sevens." I had heard of their evil reputation before I took over a battery of them, and, believing myself to be the "compleat gunner," was determined that my weapons should never fail in that respect. Nevertheless, they dropped a lot of shell behind our front line during the Second Battle of Ypres. Heavy guns were then very scarce, and consequently we were being worked day and night; and it was certainly maddening to the weary battery at such a time to get complaints from the troops in front of us that we were shooting them up.

A Callous Injunction

We traced the fault to a brand of American ammunition, manufactured during the South African War, of which some ten per cent. sped on their way with a roar like a railway-train. Clearly the driving-bands were being torn off in the bore, and the projectiles, having no spin, were turning over and over in flight, losing much range in the process.

I asked permission not to fire them, but was told that, if ten per cent. were falling into our lines and ninety per cent. into German lines, I was to go on firing. So, much as we hated it, we had to continue. Eventually my captain—

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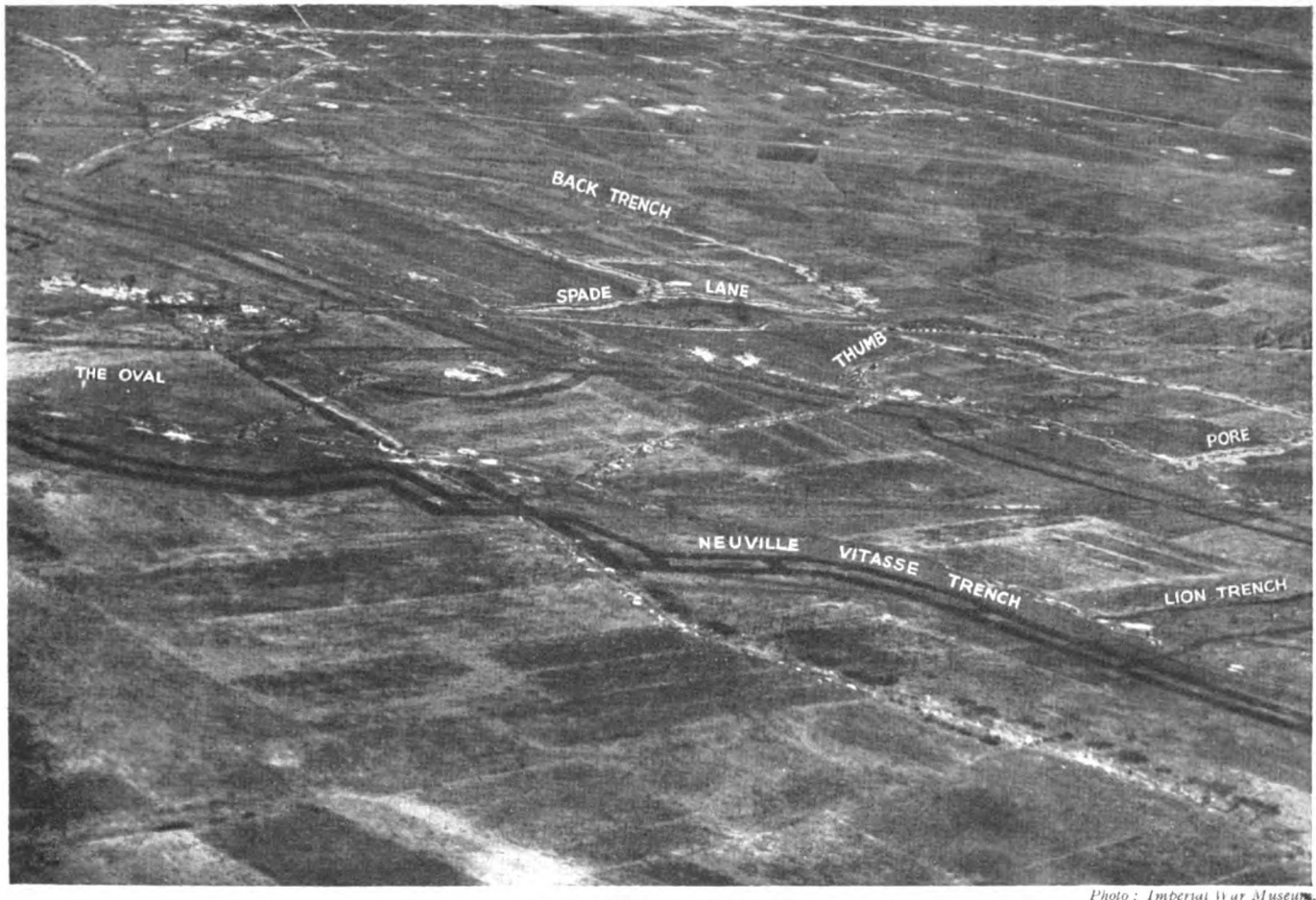

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

THE CAMERA'S VERSION

The present aerial illustration was taken three weeks after the issue of the map, being dated March 24th, 1917, as against the map information: "Trenches corrected to 4—3—17." All the names painted on to the photograph may be read on the map—as is, indeed, but natural, seeing that such charts were compiled by means of the aerial camera. It should be realised, too, that the area was not yet in British hands, Neuville-Vitasse itself falling to us at the outset of the Battle of Arras, April 9th, 1917.

Octavius Fane—found a simple cure: reduce the charge. We therefore took strands of cordite out of the cartridge, with steadily improving results, until we got no more short shooting. Then we compiled a range-table for the reduced charge, and our troubles in this respect were over.

Infantry were apt to complain of short shooting when in reality subjected by the enemy to enfilade or reverse fire, or when German trench-mortar bombs fell among them. A certain amount of short shooting is inevitable; but, in the interests of mutual confidence, it is important that the gunner should not be charged with more of it than is his due. Therefore, on receiving any complaint on this subject from the infantry, I used to proceed at once to the spot and make investigations.

On one occasion, a battery of 9·2-inch "hows" was said to be the culprit. I told the battery-commander to check his calculations, to stop firing until I had arrived at the trench where his shell had been reported as falling, and then to lengthen his range by 200 yards and re-open fire. The first of the new series fell into the trench close beside me.

A further check revealed no mistake. The second round fell 100, and the third 300, yards behind me, in spite of further increases in the range. We never discovered the cause. The temperature that day was the lowest recorded in a particularly bitter winter; and the cold may have affected the cordite. We sent away for examination all the cartridges of the brand used, but never heard the result.

H.Q. Apologises

On another occasion, on receiving a report of short shooting, I stated that none of my batteries had been firing at the time mentioned. I was given the lie direct. I went at once to the spot, and there dug up an unexploded 6-inch shell, evidently fired from a French battery to our right. I extracted a written apology.

We may now return to counter-battery work, and study the methods which made it so effective. In charge was a Counter-Battery Staff Officer (C.B.S.O.) with three assistants, the whole being commonly known as the "counterblasters." They had two tasks to fulfil: the collection, collation, interpretation, and record of all information concerning the hostile artillery; and the issue of orders for its defeat.

They adopted two lines to effect the latter object: the first, a continual attack on the moral and material artillery resources of the enemy by the process of pounding at him without ceasing—battle-days and non-battle-days—from one end of the front to the other; the second, the attack during battle delivered with the immediate object of helping the infantry forward.

The first course was dictated by our possession of superior resources. We had more guns and more ammunition than the enemy. We could therefore afford to wear down his gun-power

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by continual bombardment, and yet have sufficient strength in our hands to assist the infantry on the day of battle.

The policy of the French was different from ours in this respect, for their munition factories were unable to supply them so liberally as did ours. Consequently, between them and the Germans there was but little shooting, except just before and during important operations. A visit to a French battery-position would normally show gun-pits, ammunition-recesses, and dug-outs, all in apple-pie order, with hardly a shell hole in their vicinity. Even in their O.P.'s, it was possible to sit all day in comfort and safety.

A Vivid Contrast

With British batteries, the picture presented, even on an idle front, was very different: ground shell-torn and gassed; dug-outs blown in; shell scattered in small dumps; O.P.'s continually strafed. However, our persistence did achieve a considerable measure of success. In one particular month, according to German reports, we destroyed no less than 13 per cent. of the guns actually opposed to us. At that rate, and not counting the large number of weapons rendered useless by wear, we were forcing the enemy to replace the whole of his artillery once in every 7½ months.

The C.B.S.O. was well equipped. For his eyes, he had the battery O.P.'s, the flash-spotters, the air-observers, the air-photographists, the balloonists; for his ears, the sound-rangers; for his brain, his staff; for his weapons, the guns. Information poured from all sources into his office, where it could be checked and either confirmed or rejected. If, for instance, the flash-spotters had spotted a new battery during the night, an airman would go out on the following morning to photograph the supposed position.

In one way and another, towards the end of the War, it became exceedingly difficult for a battery on either side to escape detection. Its camouflage might be perfect, and it might have removed all traces of traffic and blast-marks; but report or flash was certain to disclose its position. Actually, owing to the great skill developed by gunners in the art of camouflage, "Survey" discovered far more batteries than did the aviators.

Attempts were made to deceive the enemy by means of dummy guns; but only by the exercise of the greatest skill and care did this device prove successful, and then never over a long period. On

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

IN THE HEART OF BÉTHUNE

In the previous volumes of *Twenty Years After* we have reproduced photographs of the famous belfry of Béthune, the Girls' School, and the general view of the town to be obtained from the Annezin road. Here we offer contrasting pictures of the Place de la République, looking toward the centre of Béthune. The view is dated May 20th, 1918, and shows some of the results of the enemy's advance on the Lys. He threatened, but never actually captured, the town.

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Photo: A. J. Insall.

A BUSY CORNER

This view of the Place de la République is dominated by the belfry in the background; and for the benefit of the curious we may say that the belfry photograph which we reproduced on page 49 of Volume One was taken from a street leading off to the left of the one shown here, the turning being situated just behind the horse and cart. There is only one British cemetery at Béthune, on the northern outskirts. It contains 2,941 United Kingdom, 63 Empire, and 6 French graves.

one occasion, I was ordered to place a couple of 60-pounder guns in a position dangerously far forward. Knowing that they were almost certain to be discovered soon and heavily strafed, I camouflaged them with the utmost care, and made the usual arrangements for the concealment of blast-marks and tracks and for the watering of the emplacements against indication by dust.

Then I placed two dummy guns on a road about 500 yards in rear, in visible sites, covered them with large and obvious camouflage nets, and simulated blast-marks. The fact that the guns were on a road obviated the necessity for making tracks. Whenever a forward gun fired either by night or during a period of aerial activity by day, an electrical contrivance fired a cartridge from one of the dummies.

Germans Poor at Sound-ranging

Good sound-rangers would have discovered the deception, but the Germans on that job were always rather lacking in skill, and, as a result, the forward guns remained in position for some weeks, during a period of intensive bombardment, without receiving a single projectile in their emplacements. On the other hand, the dummies were repeatedly shelled, and had to be replaced several times—much to the joy of the forward detachments.

It is now time to examine the internal organisation of the counter-battery office. A most important item was a C.B. map compiled for the use of airmen, showing all known battery-positions as they appeared from the air, and giving them numbers. The moment a battery shown on this map was seen to fire, its number could be sent down, and one of our own batteries detailed to engage it. The map could be used either from an aeroplane or a balloon.

It was a pleasant summer evening's ploy to sit in a balloon, with the map spread out towards the enemy, and with a battery, attached by telephone, taking on any of the hostile guns which opened fire. Provided the map was good, the task was easy, and battery after battery could be attacked with the detachments working on the guns.

There were a number of other valuable compilations—books, maps, lists, and card-indexes. A "suspect" map showed all batteries whose positions awaited confirmation. A list indicated the number of guns in action in each of our batteries. Fighting maps contained the arcs of fire of our batteries and the positions of those of the enemy.

There were plotting-boards, wireless

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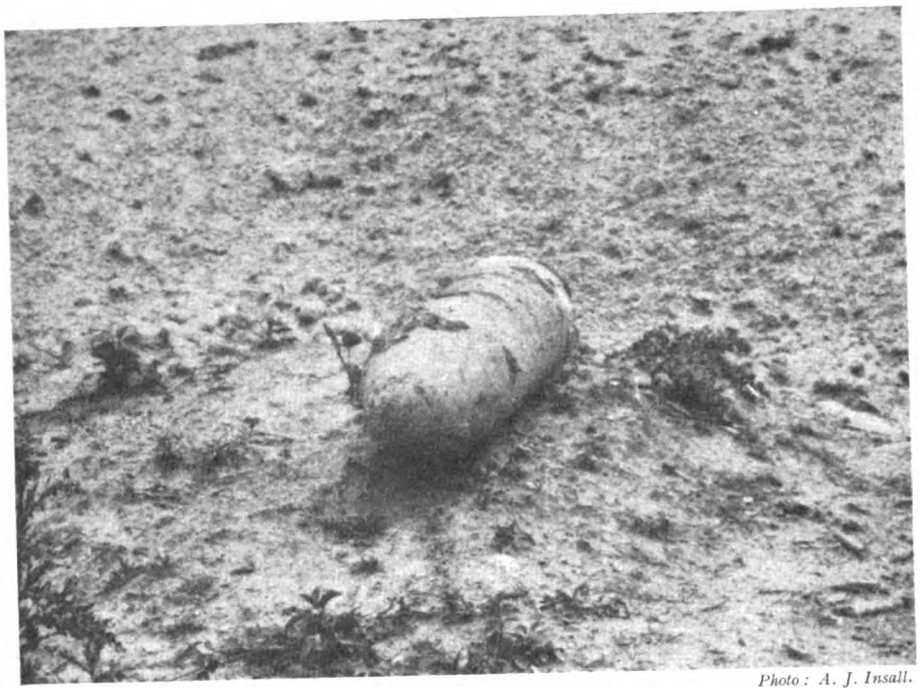

Photo: A. J. Insall.

IN THE BOIS DE LOGEAST

This wood between Achiet-le-Grand and Ablainzeville was illustrated on page 208 of the present volume. Above is one of the "souvenirs" periodically brought to light here, as elsewhere. A "dud" German shell, unearthed by woodcutters, lies on the ground awaiting removal. On the very day of writing these lines, the newspapers contain word of five casualties caused by the explosion of a shell disinterred near Roye after 21 years.

masts for the reception of messages from aircraft, telephone connections to all artillery brigades . . . in fact, every device for receiving reports quickly, and acting on them by selecting the guns to fire and the targets to be engaged. The collection and record of information mounted to a climax just before an offensive. As zero struck, a well-run counter-battery office had every hostile gun taped.

Problems of the Moving Battle

The system as it stood was of no great value in the moving battle; for, at each change of position, fresh maps and lists had to be compiled, fresh photographs taken, and posts for flash-spotters and sound-rangers established, all of which took up hours that sometimes ran into days. Then, perhaps, when everything was at last working, the enemy would move again.

Yet the stabilising effect of modern fire is so great that commanders should be ready to produce some form of counter-battery organisation at short notice. The best plan when operations were fluid was for aeroplanes on artillery patrol to send messages giving the position and nature of targets seen. The latter would then be engaged by the appropriate batteries.

In addition, mobile balloon-sections, moving closely behind the advancing infantry, and attached by cable to artillery brigades, in the fashion adopted by the Germans in 1918, might, through continuous observation and direction of fire carried out from them, prevent the enemy from building up positions afresh.

We may now turn to the subject of barrages, which have been mentioned hitherto in connection only with other forms of artillery fire. The word "barrage"—borrowed from the French—means barrier, and was used by us at first in that sense. "The —— R.F.A. Brigade will place a barrage across the southern exits of B—— to prevent a counter-attack developing from that village."

It continued to be employed in that sense in regard to smoke-barrages, but otherwise, the term was commonly applied to the covering-fire afforded to infantry by field guns—fire which acted as a protective curtain, stationary in defence, and in attack moving just ahead of the infantry. In the latter case it developed into a succession of short, regular bounds according to a time-programme based on the predicted rate of advance of the infantry and then became known as a "creeping barrage."

Much has been written as to the authorship of this form of fire.[1] Actually, like many other innovations, it was evolved in the front line, and received its first official blessing from G.H.Q. after a certain degree of perfection had been acquired in its practice.

Advent of the Creeping Barrage

Prior to the First Battle of the Somme, and in the early stages of that stupend-

[1] The subject has been summed up by Major A. F. Becke in "The Coming of the Creeping Barrage," *R.A. Journal*, lviii.

Photo: A. J. Insall.

IN MODERN AMIENS

The observant pilgrim to the Western Front may discover many a relic of War days, even in reconstructed villages and towns. Here, on the wall of one of the principal hotels in Amiens—the Carlton-Belfort, opposite the station—is an old British Army notice to lorry-drivers.

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Photo: A. J. Insall.

ON THE RIVER SELLE

A contemporary portrait of the hamlet of Douchy—not to be confounded with Douchy-lès-Ayette—3 km. south of Denain, on the Cambrai—Valenciennes route. The Selle passes under the road at the base of the dip seen here. The highway is one which must have been familiar to many who took part in the operations of the third week of October, 1918, in this sector.

ous struggle, covering fire had been lifted from trench to trench. The enemy, however, to circumvent that method, had been placing some of his machine guns and rifles in shell-holes in the open, and had caused us considerable loss by these tactics. It thus became necessary to sweep the ground between the trenches; and it was this need that brought the creeping barrage into existence.

It had previously been employed almost by mistake by the 15th Division at Loos, and had come next into prominence at a Fourth Army conference assembled on the 16th April, 1916, to consider artillery co-operation in the forthcoming Somme battle. Rawlinson, the commander, who no doubt was voicing the views of Budworth (his C.R.A., and one of the ablest gunners of the day) laid down that the "lifts of the artillery time-table must conform to the advance of the infantry." This was the vital principle; but, unfortunately, no official instruction ordained "creeping," and consequently on July 1st a great variety of covering-fire was provided.

For instance, the VIII Corps orders, issued on June 11th, were to the effect that—"At the commencement of each infantry attack, the divisional artillery will lift 100 yards, and continue lifting at the rate of 50 yards a minute to the objective, firing three rounds of gun-fire at each step."[1] And later,—"The rate of the infantry has been calculated at 50 yards to the minute," and they must make "their pace conform to the rate of the artillery lifts."

[1] Becke, *op. cit.*, p. 33.

The first mention of the word "creep," and, at the same time, the best enunciation of the principle involved, were made in the orders of the XIII Corps—"The field artillery barrage will creep back by short lifts. . . . The lifts have been timed so as to allow the infantry plenty of time for the advance from one objective to the next, on the principle that it is preferable that the infantry should wait for the barrage to lift than that the latter should lift prematurely and thus allow the enemy to man their parapets."[1]

Vindicated in Practice

The 7th Division issued somewhat similar orders, and in addition warned its infantry to keep close to the barrage. In consequence, it won a considerable success at comparatively small cost on July 1st. On the other hand, another division, which started its covering fire with a lift of 500 yards, followed, 15 minutes later, by a lift of 250 yards, was driven back with heavy loss.

As in the case of other fire, the barrage needed accuracy. If it fell too near the assailants, it caused them casualties; if too far away, the enemy had time to man parapets and repel the assault. It was not sufficient to register the previous day, for "meteor" conditions changed overnight. The "error of the moment"

[1] *Ibid.*, p. 27.

Photo: A. J. Insall.

VILLERS-TOURNELLE

A charming scene in front of the church of this pretty little Somme village, which stands on a quiet by-road 8 km. west of Montdidier. Its rustic charm became well-known to a number of British formations in 1918, when the enemy's advance stopped some kilometres short of it.

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had to be applied, and it was long before that point was fully recognised.

A correction had also to be applied to the burning of the fuse. This was another subject which had worried me prior to the War. I had come to the conclusion, from the study of a number of records of shrapnel-shoots along measured ranges, that the burning of fuses was affected, both by barometric pressure and by temperature, to a degree which could be accurately ascertained. I wrote to the Ordnance Committee on the subject, and, getting no answer, went to see them.

I was told that, if I had any cranky ideas, I had better work them out myself: a little difficult without the necessary appliances, which the Committee alone possessed. However, after the War had been running about two years, fuse-corrections at each range for variations from the normal of 10° in temperature and one inch in pressure were inserted in the range-tables.

Accuracy was important, not only for the destructive effect of the barrage, but also to give confidence to the infantry who had to advance close behind it; and another matter of importance in the same respect was the standard of accuracy of the particular piece employed. It was pointed out in an earlier chapter that the gun is not a weapon of precision, and that, for each type and calibre, a table is compiled showing the length and breadth of the rectangle into which 50 per cent. of its shell should fall at the various ranges. The 100 per cent. zone, which should contain all the rounds fired, is four times the size of the 50 per cent. zone—a fact very important from the point of view of the infantry.

A Mathematical Formula

If we suppose the length of the 50 per cent. zone as shown in the range-table to be 50 yards, that of the 100 per cent zone will be 200 yards. It will be unsafe then for the infantry to be nearer than 100 yards to the barrage. On the other hand, the length zone, which will contain 96 per cent. of the shell, is only 3 times that of the 50 per cent. zone, i.e. in this case, 150 yards. Thus, if the infantry were moving 75 yards behind the barrage, they would be receiving 4 per cent. of the shell in their ranks.

This was an inconvenience they were quite ready to accept, in view of the fact that the distance gained through their acceptance—in this case 25 yards—might just enable them to be on top of the enemy before he could climb out of his dug-outs and man his machine guns. In many cases, the men had not

From the original in the Imperial War Museum.

"A HOWITZER FIRING"

A vivid representation, by the celebrated War artist Paul Nash, of the awnings employed to conceal howitzer and other batteries from aerial [illegible]vation. One of the principal tasks of the aircraft of both sides was to assist the artillery in the location of targets; and naturally the guns of the enemy were among the most important of these. It was surprising, however, what a meagre amount of camouflage would suffice to deceive the airman.

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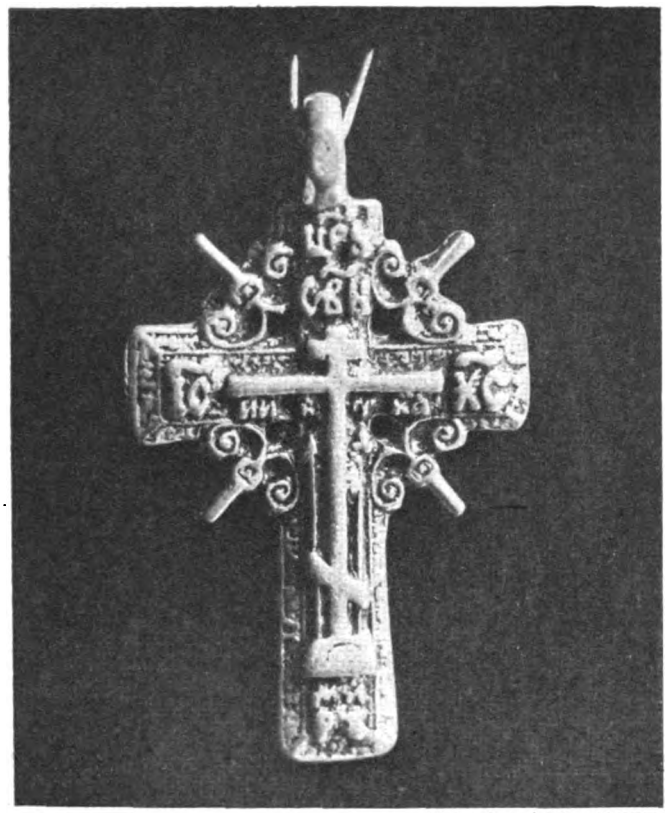

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

AN ORNATE CROSS

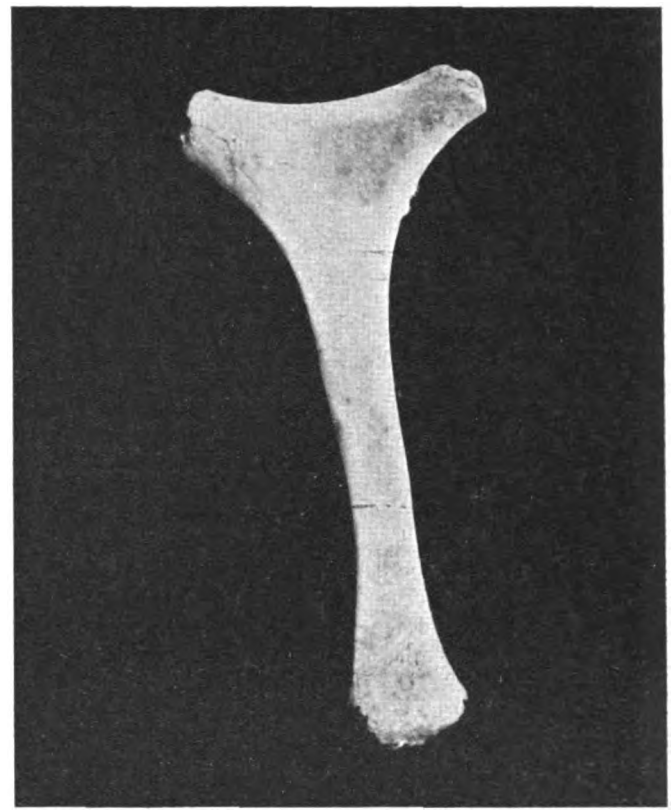

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

A BATTERED BONE

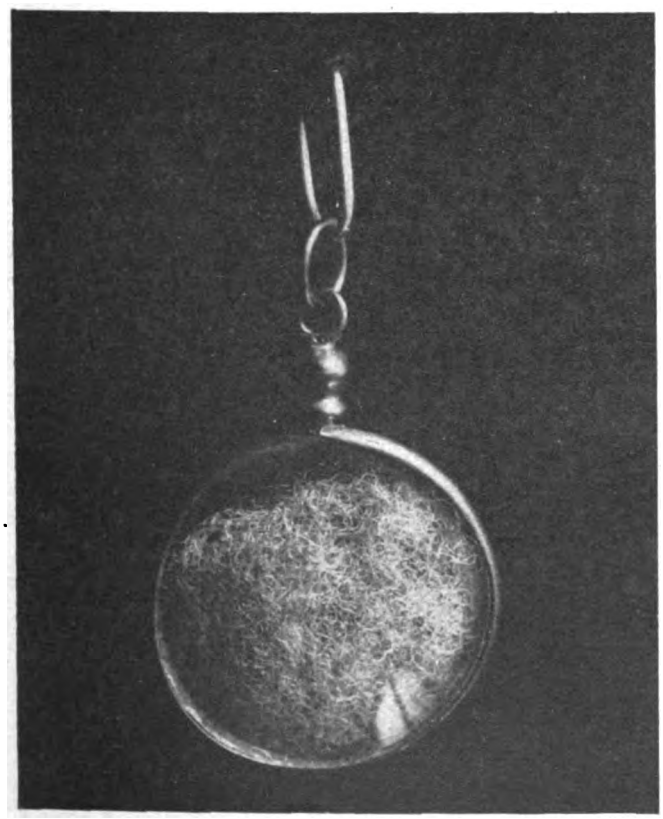

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

A LOCKET

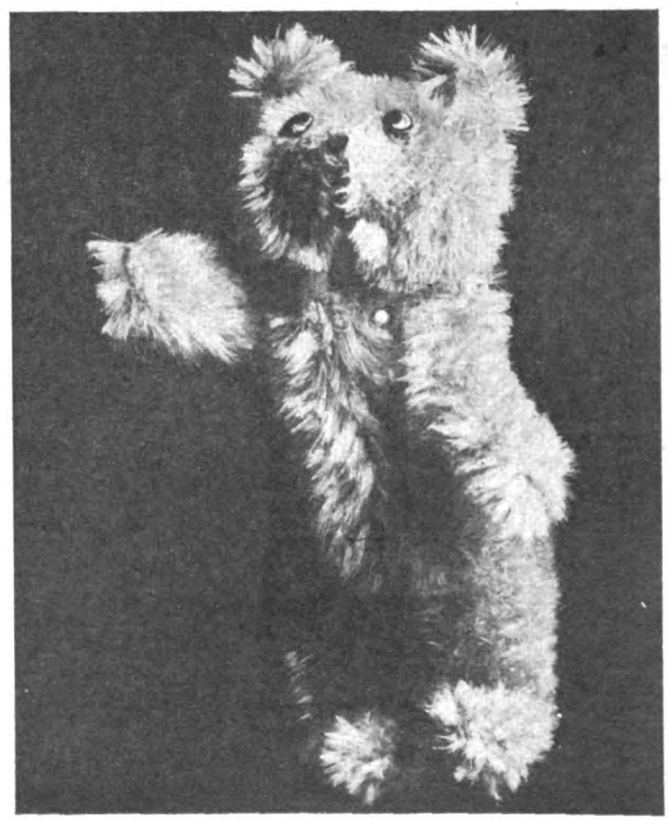

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

A MINIATURE TEDDY-BEAR

Above are four characteristic mascots worn by British soldiers and sailors during the Great War. Many a man, who in peace-time would have scorned the treasuring of such trivialities, discovered, when he had left home and never knew which day might prove his last, that the wearing or carrying of a charm was not without its comfort.

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Photo: Imperial War Museum.

THE DÉBRIS OF HAMELINCOURT

The well-known village of Hamelincourt lies just west of the Bapaume—Arras road, 10 km. north-north-west of the former town. The outset, and for that matter the close, of the First Battle of the Somme in 1916 found it well within the enemy's lines. He vacated it during his withdrawal the following year, but regained it on March 25th, 1918, and was not finally driven forth until August 23rd. The above picture is dated June 30th, 1917.

to be ordered to be close up; they insisted on being there. As a general rule, in view of the heavy loads they had to carry across shell-torn ground, it was dangerous to their chances of success to be more than 70 yards behind the barrage.

Shrapnel had been falling out of favour prior to the First Battle of the Somme; but on the institution of the creeping barrage it became popular again. The variation in the burning of its time-fuses slightly lengthened the 100 per cent. zone, but otherwise it was a more comfortable projectile behind which to shelter than H.E., whose splinters were much more erratic than shrapnel-bullets.

An unfortunate heritage from the system of trench-to-trench lifts was the "piled-up" barrage. The ordinary barrage, on reaching a trench of irregular form, was piled up on it—that is, shaped to it. The infantry detailed to assault the point of the salient lay down and did not attack until the whole trench was under fire. This caused considerable complications, and was eventually abandoned in favour of barrages which moved continually across country by equal lifts.

The barrage was further simplified when the infantry agreed to allow the artillery to choose the forming-up line. It could then take off from a road, trench, or other straight line—natural or artificial—thereby facilitating greatly the calculations of the gunners, and, no doubt, also improving the accuracy of their shooting.

One Gun per 25 Yards

The burst of an 18-pounder shrapnel shell effectively covered a width of 25 yards. For an attack, guns spaced at that interval along the front sufficed for the main barrage. The remaining 18-pounders, and all the field howitzers, were employed on other tasks, which often included additional barrages required to prevent the enemy from firing from distant trenches through the main barrage.

A barrage of "heavies" was not lifted back by regular distances, but from trench to trench or from strong-point to strong-point. In this connection, it is doubtful if our shooting was ever sufficiently accurate for the effective bombardment of strong-points with unobserved fire. We tried it often enough, but neutralisation by smoke, in that it required a lower standard of accuracy, might have been sounder tactics.

The pace of the barrage needed, of course, close attention. Too fast, it ran away from the infantry and became practically useless; too slow, it took the sting out of the assault, and afforded the enemy time to recover from surprise. 50 yards a minute was the usual rate at first. It was later reduced to 100 yards

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Photo: A. J. Insall.

THE OLD WORLD AND THE NEW

On March 25th, 1918, Hamelincourt lay in the VI Corps area, approximately on the line of junction between the 31st and Guards Divisions. It was thus in the extreme northern sector of the German front of attack, and was chiefly important for the fact that a switch ran from Gomiécourt into our Green Line just east of Hamelincourt. The latter was evacuated, not as the result of any direct attack, but during the Third Army's general retirement of the 25th/26th.

in three minutes, or where the ground was sodden, 100 yards in five minutes. Excessive speed was a much more dangerous fault than excessive slowness.

The barrage, even at its best, was by no means a perfect instrument. It was mechanical in application, paying no attention to the local situation. Where anticipations were not fulfilled, or failures occurred, a long time usually elapsed before it could be brought back and reorganised.

The defensive barrage, which was a curtain of fire dropped in front of the assailants during a pause in the attack, or in front of a position when the defenders had signalled by an S.O.S. call that an attack was imminent, had a considerable value, and was much liked by the infantry. In defence, however, it was often misused.

The S.O.S. might be sent up (and this happened fairly often in the early months of 1918) on the appearance of a German patrol, or some similar minor excuse, causing a great waste of ammunition, and an impression of "wind up." A much better method of dealing with attacks or expected attacks when, as at night, observation was not possible, was counter-preparation, that is, the bombardment of all the enemy's likely assembly-places.

Machine Guns to Help in Defence

The defensive barrage was quite effective in the case of small attacks, because it could be thickened by batteries on either flank. Where, however, the attack was delivered over a wide front, the troops in the trenches could rely only on the batteries immediately behind them. The support obtainable from them was weak; for whereas, in an offensive battle, field-guns were spaced at about 20 yards, on a defensive front the intervals between them might amount to 300 yards. Machine guns had to be brought in to help the barrage and to take over the defence of the less important sectors.

The "box" barrage was a useful type of defensive bombardment. It consisted of three stationary barrage lines enclosing the area to be raided, one to the rear of the enemy, and one on either flank: the object being to isolate the garrison of the "box" during the operation.

Tricks were played, of course, with barrages as with other forms of fire. For instance, bayonets would be displayed over the top of trenches, soldiers would cheer, a barrage would drift over a trench, remain stationary on it for a while, and then drift on. The enemy would dash up from his dug-outs to man his machine guns, and the barrage would then be brought quickly back on to the trench.

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On the whole, we adhered too rigidly to the barrage in both attack and defence. However successful a warlike device may prove, it needs to be changed before the antidotes appear. The soldier should never rest satisfied with temporary success. The key may have been found; but the enemy is continually making new locks. We might well have attempted more manœuvres with our fire-power: hurricane bombardments; field guns following the infantry closely to render support through observation (the German method in 1918); advances, irregular both as to time and place, but all part of a concerted plan—each advance being preceded by a tremendous concentration of fire on the sector attacked; various combinations of the powers of wire-cutting by the 106 fuse, with neutralisation by both gas and smoke and the armoured and mobile fire of tanks; in defence, the systematic destruction of supports and reserves, infantry and trench mortars being entrusted with the defeat of the forward lines. In general, it is perhaps fair to say that our artillery might have been employed more to cause casualties and to lower morale, and less to destroy material.

Unorthodox Success

We may give at this point an example of profitable departure from our usual rigidity of plan. In August, 1918, the 18th Division had to attack a strong position on a wide front. A direct assault, say with two brigades in line and one in reserve, might have been successful, but only at heavy cost. Major-General Lee—the commander—ordered an attack by one battalion only, giving it powerful fire-support, and utilising the rest of his fire-power for masking the remainder of the front.

The leading battalion—the 8th East Surreys—won its objective. Two battalions following immediately behind pushed through the gap, and, turning northwards against the enemy's rear, met with complete success.

We may close this chapter with a few statistics which show the immensity of the artillery effort in the War. At the outset we possessed 72 field and 6 heavy batteries. At the Armistice we had 568 field and 440 heavy and siege batteries. At the Third Battle of Ypres, 120,000 gunners were in action. They carried out a bombardment for 19 days, firing, in the preliminary period, 4½ million shells weighing 128,000 tons. On the first day of the battle one six-gun 18-pounder battery fired over 6,000 rounds, a 4·5-inch howitzer battery 3,500 rounds, and a four-gun 9·2-inch howitzer battery 902 rounds.

During these great battles, gunners were kept in the line often for three months without relief, sometimes suffering, during that period, over 100 per cent. of casualties both to personnel and material.

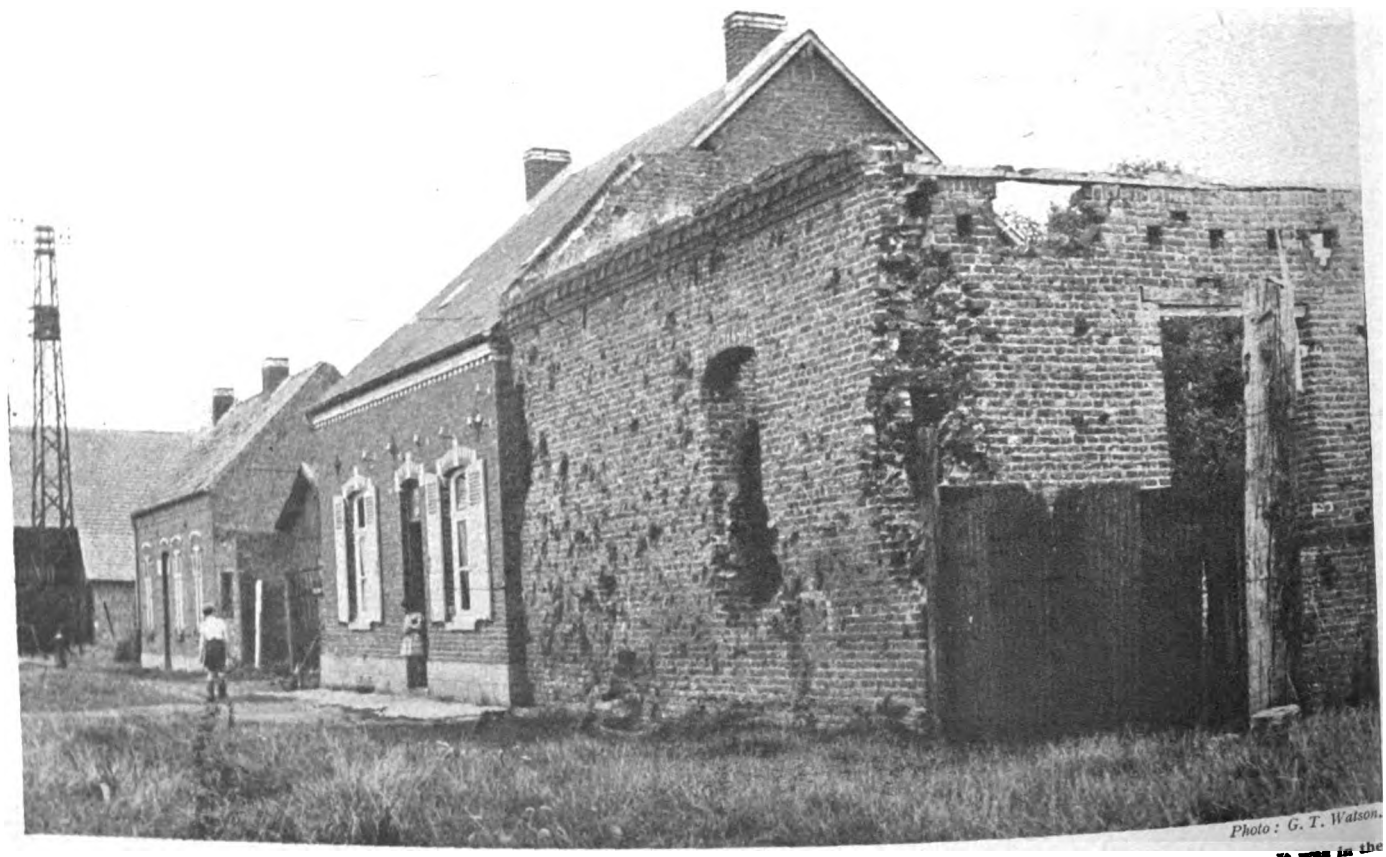

Photo: G. T. Watson.

A BATTLE-SCARRED RELIC IN HALLU

Hallu, the scene of this interesting survival, stands on the Chaulnes—Roye—Montdidier railway, 3 km. south of the first-named place. It was in the thick of the Somme fighting of August, 1916 (when it was brought inside the French area), and again in that of spring and late summer, 1918. On March 25th of the latter year the 24th Division of the XIX Corps retired to a line which passed through Hallu, and abandoned the village on the 26th. On August 10th following, the 78th Canadian Battalion, which had pushed forward to this point, met with some very heavy German counter-attacks hereabouts.

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CHAPTER XXVII

MEMORIES VI.—MYSTERY SHIPS

Necessity, they say, is the mother of invention, and perhaps the Great War period was productive of more ideas than ever before took concrete shape within so comparatively brief a space of time. In practically every case such ideas were born when one or another of the combatant nations was confronted by some direct threat to her safety. The tank, for example, appeared as a reply to barbed wire and the machine gun. In like manner, the menace of the submarine called forth the "mystery" or "Q" ship. The story of the "mystery" ships is one of the romances of the Great War, and here Vice-Admiral Gordon Campbell, V.C., D.S.O., tells of exploits that will for ever enrich the story of the Royal Navy.

ON looking back twenty years to the time when the anti-submarine warfare was in full swing one is apt to think only of the successes and to forget all the time and labour spent in organisation and training before these successes could be obtained.

The *Farnborough*

The first mystery ship that I commanded, which was known as the *Farnborough*, was fitted out in October, 1915, but it was not until March, 1916, that a success was obtained by her.

The *Farnborough* was an ordinary tramp steamer which had come round from Cardiff to Plymouth, and the only orders I received were to fit her out as a decoy ship. This was done by placing guns on board and concealing them in such a way that to the outward appearance the ship looked just like an ordinary tramp steamer. One of the guns was placed in a specially-built house erected on the stern of the ship and looked for all the world like a steering engine house, but if a string was pulled the house would collapse and out came the gun. On either side of the main deck the ship's sides were cut and fitted with hinges so that by giving the sides a push they would fall down, disclosing guns. On the upper deck two of the cabins, which normally should have been used for officers, were converted into gun houses; on the removal of a safety-pin the cabins collapsed and the gun came into action. Either side of the bridge there was another gun, and the sides of the bridge were made collapsible. Finally, in the middle part of the ship there was what looked like a hen-coop, but when this collapsed quick-firing guns were revealed inside.

Now, however good a ship may be it is not much use unless it has an efficient crew on board, and to obtain such a crew and train them to the ordeal they had to face was one of the most important and difficult problems of mystery ships. The crew was composed of men from the various Reserves, fishermen, and one might say all kinds of odds and ends. I happened to be the only naval officer on board the *Farnborough*, but I was fortunate in having as my first lieutenant, Lieutenant W. Beswick, a very fine seaman belonging to the Blue Funnel Line, who had served with me in destroyers. For chief engineer I had Engineer-Lieutenant L. S. Loveless, who had already served for two years with the ship as second engineer, and so knew the details of her. The senior rating in the ship's company was a fine old pensioner called Truscott.

As the outward appearance of the ship had to resemble a merchant ship, so had the outward appearance of the crew. In other words, we had to dress up in plain clothes, and the Admiralty, with that generosity which is common to all Government departments, was graciously pleased to allow each officer thirty shillings and each man fifteen shillings to supply himself with what their lordships called "an outfit of plain clothes."

Admiral Sir L. Bayly

When finally fitted out, we were fortunate enough to be sent over to Queenstown to serve under Admiral Sir Lewis Bayly, who was Commander-in-Chief there. We soon learnt that he was as fine a commander-in-chief to serve under as anybody could wish for, as we trusted him and he trusted us, and so we were able to get on with the War without wasting too much time on red tape and writing letters. Although he was what people might call a hard taskmaster, yet his personal sympathy, interest, and help, supported as he was by his niece, Miss Voysey, C.B.E., made it a pleasure to carry out any orders he might give, however arduous. He knew his job, and we knew that he knew it.

The *Farnborough* spent the winter of 1915–16 out in the Atlantic to the west of Ireland. During that period there was very little submarine activity round the British Isles, as the Germans did not wish to be embroiled with the United States of America, but they were sending submarines from Germany out to the Mediterranean, and it was with the hopes of intercepting some of these that we cruised on the west coast of Ireland.

We saw no U boats, however, although our time was by no means wasted, as I soon realised that to obtain success in this particular sort of job one required almost ideal discipline and at the same time it had to be very severe. The number of officers carried was very limited, and so the crew had to be relied on to do their job, even in the most dangerous circumstances, without being continually supervised. Discipline at first was not too easy to obtain because, wearing, as we did, plain clothes and carrying out "tramp" routine instead of man-of-war routine, we lacked those various aids to discipline which means so much in the Service, such as saluting, standing to attention, and so forth. However, we rigged up a part of one of the coal bunkers as a sort of quarter-deck where prayers and inspections could be held daily out of sight of the rest of the world.

We always had to live in the state of saying to ourselves, there may be a submarine commander watching us through his periscope, and he can see us but we cannot see him, so that all movements both of the ship and ourselves had to be carried out with that idea always in mind.

A "New" Ship Overnight

Another point that had to be considered was the fact that if a U boat saw a ship operating in the same vicinity for several days it might become suspicious of her. For that reason we

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Photo: G. T. Watson.

MONCHY-AU-BOIS: THE CHURCH

Monchy-au-Bois is situated on the shorter of the two principal roads from Arras to Amiens, and is 15 km. south-south-west of the former town. The wood referred to in the title lies east of the village, between it and Adinfer, and is, indeed, known as Adinfer Wood.

carried on board the means to enable us to alter the appearance of the ship during the night so that each day we could look something different from what we had done the day before. To attain this object we carried dummy funnels, dummy masts, dummy derricks, dummy boats, dummy everything, and, of course, different coloured paints were also invaluable.

When cruising during the day our normal routine was to have half the men closed up to the guns and waiting for any emergency. In addition to one or two on the bridge, a few men would be standing about the fo'c'sle smoking their pipes and representing the men off duty, whilst a couple of stewards stood about the midship part; the remainder of the men would be down on the mess deck. These latter were able to run through concealed passages inside the ship to their guns, so that they could go from where they lived to where they had to fight without being seen. It will be realised that life aboard mystery ships was a pretty strenuous one, but perhaps the greatest trial of the lot was the amount of patience required, for one would go on day after day and night after night always hoping to meet a submarine and finishing up by being disappointed.

People imagine that to find a U boat is a very easy matter, but if, say, at 8 a.m. a ship sends out a submarine S.O.S. and gives a position, by half-past eight the submarine may have gone off north, south, east, or west, and you are left guessing.

Our first action took place on March 2nd, 1916. Daylight found us steaming up the west coast of Ireland in the hope of meeting a submarine which we had reason to believe was coming south. Suddenly the look-out reported a suspicious object on the horizon, which submerged, leaving no doubt about it being a submarine. The alarm bell was at once sounded and all the crew went to their stations whilst the men on deck remained in their positions of inactivity. This was our first test of discipline, for we were about to be attacked by an invisible enemy and were going to make no attempt to escape it. Whether he intended to torpedo us or not remained to be seen, but as far as the crew were concerned they had to sit concealed at their guns or stand about the decks smoking their pipes as if nothing extraordinary was likely to happen.

Missed by a Foot or Two

After a wait which seemed interminable, but was really only twenty-five minutes, the track of a torpedo was seen approaching us, and we took our chance as to whether the torpedo hit or not. It so happened that the bubbles of the torpedo passed close under the stem of the ship, which means to say that the torpedo had missed us by a foot or two. In accordance with pre-arrangements I had passed word through a voice pipe connecting the bridge to all parts of the ship, "torpedo coming." Now when it missed us I said "torpedo missed." This meant waiting in the same attitude to see what the submarine would do next.

A few minutes after the torpedo missed the submarine came to the surface astern of the ship and then steamed up on to our port side. The conning tower was opened, the gun manned and a shot fired across our bows, an order for us to stop. We obeyed, blew off steam and sent away the "panic party," the name given to the men who filled the boats pretending the ship was being abandoned. This was done by the men standing about the decks and also another party who were waiting down below to rush on deck.

While this pantomime was being carried out and the men were scrambling to the boats shouting for help, the submarine, which had submerged after firing his shot, came to the surface again, no doubt thinking we were not being quick enough. He opened fire on us and a shot fell just short of our magazine. Naturally we did not want that to explode, so I decided to open fire. The submarine was on the surface about eight hundred yards off, but formed a bad target owing to distance, poor light, and choppy sea. However, having

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decided to open fire, I blew a whistle, the White Ensign was immediately broken at the mast-head, and the sides of the bridge, steering-engine house, ship's sides, and hen-coop all came down with a clatter and off went the guns.

The crew had been waiting some months for this occasion and did not waste much time in firing their guns. The submarine on his part, as soon as he saw the White Ensign, realised that we were a man-of-war and submerged as quickly as he could, but not before we had fired twenty shots, some of which hit and some not. We were unable to tell whether we had destroyed the submarine, and so, to make quite sure we steamed at full speed—eight knots—to the place where the submarine had submerged, and started dropping depth charges over our stern. Almost at the same moment the submarine appeared out of the water in very nearly a perpendicular position, hitting our bottom as she did so. Her periscopes had been shot away and she also had a big rent in her bows. As we steamed ahead the gun in the stern opened fire again, two more depth charges were released, and *U68* went to the bottom for the last time.

Prayers and Cheers

The crew were greatly excited at their first victory and came rushing to the bridge enthusiastically, wishing to shake hands. I therefore mustered them under the bridge and, after reading the prayer of thanksgiving for victory, gave three cheers for the King. We then went back to our cruising stations ready to engage another submarine.

Our next action took place on April 15th, when at 6.30 p.m., in misty weather with a heavy swell, a submarine appeared half-way between us and a Dutch steamer which was steaming in the opposite direction. She hoisted a signal to send our papers over. We had rehearsed such an occasion as this, and Engineer Sub-Lieutenant Smith, assuming the rôle of master, as well as my hat, collected "his papers" ready to get into the boat which was being lowered. While this was being done the submarine fired a shot which, owing to the stillness of the air, sounded extremely close, with the result that one of our gun's crews, thinking I had given the order to open fire and that the order had not been heard, opened fire prematurely. I was therefore obliged to give the general order to open fire. As on the previous occasion, many shots hit the submarine before she disappeared, but on this occasion when we proceeded to drop depth charges we saw nothing more of her although we waited in the vicinity till after dark.

Shortly after this action the Admiralty decided to give mystery ships the letter Q, and we became H.M.S. *Q5*, which

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

REDUCED TO RUBBLE

At the outset of the First Battle of the Somme Monchy-au-Bois lay just inside the enemy lines, and remained so until the retirement to the Hindenburg Line. After that the invader never again quite reached the village, his nearest approach during the spring of 1918 being to the outskirts of Douchy-lès-Ayette, 4 km. east of Monchy. The date of the above photograph of the wrecked church is June 30th, 1917.

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made it far more difficult to maintain our secrecy than had been the case before.

We continued to look for submarines, but they greatly reduced their activities for several months.

However, early in August we sailed across the Atlantic with the hopes of intercepting the long-distance U boat *Deutschland*, which was on a voyage to New York. We had no luck, but on the 18th August at 8 p.m., when steaming southward off Ireland on our thirteenth day at sea, we sighted a submarine. She was too far off to engage, but by turning round after dark we hoped to see her in the morning. This we fortunately did about 6.15, but she made no attack on us, so when we got to the position where she had submerged we let go a depth charge without any result. A course was now set with the hopes of seeing her again at night time; and during the day, when I judged that we were out of her range, the appearance of the ship was altered. Sure enough, at 5.50 in the evening we again sighted her, and fifty minutes later she fired a torpedo at us which missed. We continued to try to track her during the night, and the following day at dawn we thought we saw her ahead but too far off to engage her. It transpired that this submarine was homeward bound and fired her last torpedo at us.

"Stuck" Over in Quebec

It was a long time before we saw another submarine. The cargo of coal which we carried had taken fire, and this, combined with other reasons, sent us over to Bermuda to discharge the coal, and then to Quebec to embark a cargo of timber, which was far more suitable for the job. However, we got stuck over there owing to the presence, or suspected presence, of submarines, and it was not till early 1917 that we returned to Queenstown again.

By this time the Germans had declared what they called an intensified submarine warfare, and I also appreciated that the work of the mystery ships was becoming more difficult, and so decided that the best way to decoy a submarine now would be to get deliberately torpedoed first. I therefore gave orders to my officers that should they see a torpedo approaching the ship they were to increase or decrease speed as necessary to ensure it hitting, and when we sailed out to the Atlantic on February 1st, 1917, it was with this intent. The losses of ships which were taking place at this time were something colossal, being over 600,000 tons a month; day after day ships were being torpedoed, and we knew that it was only a question of staying out long enough when our turn would come, and sure enough it did on February 17th.

The strain during those seventeen days had been very great, especially for the men down below, because they knew that at any moment we were deliberately going to get torpedoed, which gives people a far different feeling than being on board a ship where they know the officer on watch will avoid a torpedo if possible. When at 9.45 on this morning we saw a torpedo approaching us it only required one order to have avoided it, but we let it hit and it got us on the engine-room bulkhead, one of the only

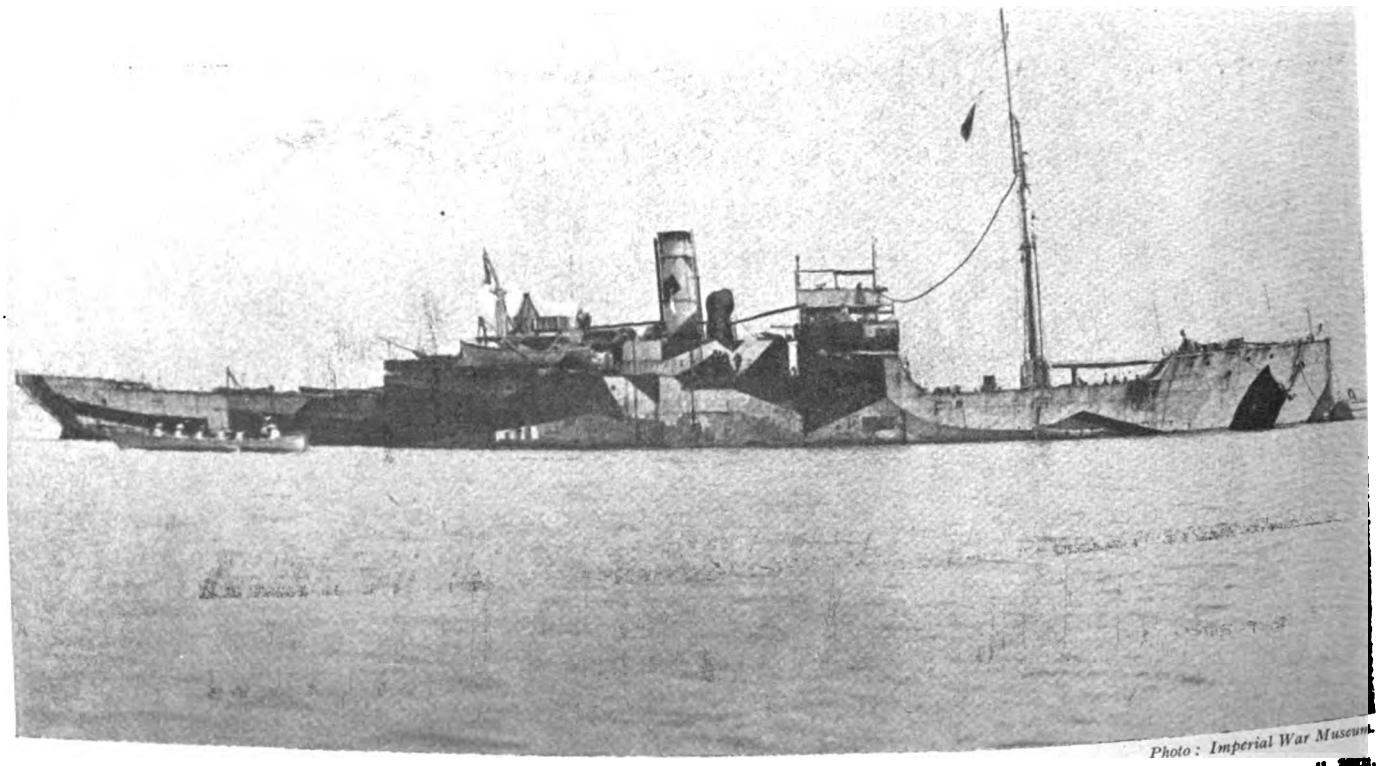

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

H.M.S. *COREOPSIS*

The Q ship *Coreopsis* was a drifter before her conversion to naval uses. Her most successful exploit took place in the Irish Sea on April 30th, 1918, when she succeeded in sinking the enemy submarine *UB85*. The news, when it reached home, was the more welcome in that on the very same date four British vessels, totalling 15,000 tons, had been sunk by U boats, with the loss of 50 lives. The name *Coreopsis*, which literally means "resembling a bug," is that of a beautiful flower.

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THE COUNTRY of the SOMME

Then and Now

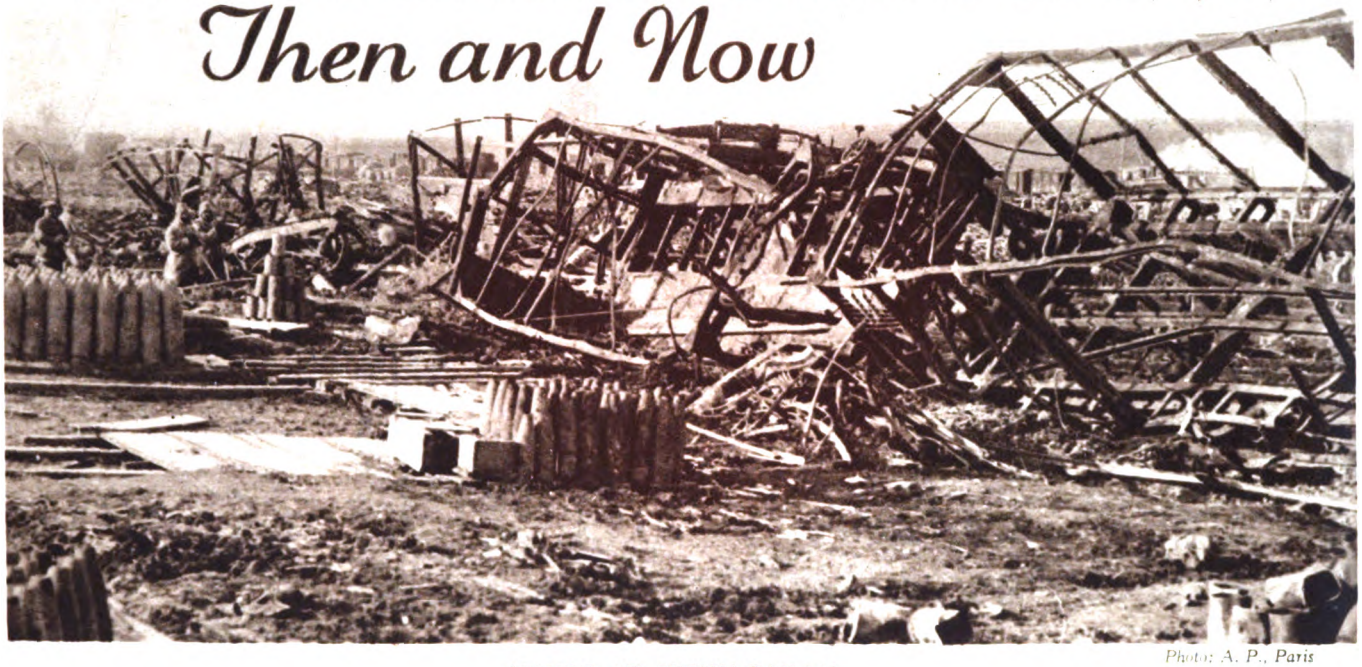

Photo: A. P., Paris

HAVOC AT CERISY-GAILLY

Cerisy-Gailly is a medium-sized village on the south bank of the Somme 6 km. south-west of Bray, and to-day it lies a long distance from the nearest line of railway. During the first half of the War, however, when the French still held this sector, they made it the railhead of a specially-constructed line for the conveyance of supplies; and the above photograph, which was taken on December 8th, 1916, shows rolling-stock gutted by fire as the result of enemy bombing or shelling.

Photo: A. J. Insall

SUPPLIES STILL IN EVIDENCE

On passing into British hands, Cerisy-Gailly became, until March, 1918, the headquarters of the 13th and 39th C.C.S.'s. On March 26th, the VII Corps, north of the Somme, retired so much further than the XIX Corps south of it that a length of the river, including Cerisy, became exposed. The bridges were at once destroyed, and a reinforcement consisting of a Canadian M.G. battery and 350 men was rushed up to guard the crossings at Cerisy and the two Saillys. Cerisy village, which had been in 16th Division hands, was abandoned, together with the crossing, about 2.30 p.m. on the 27th.

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Photo: A. P., Paris

MIDWINTER

A snowy scene on the road near Morcourt, January 23rd, 1917. Morcourt lies a bare 2 km. south-south-east of Cerisy-Gailly, and shared almost exactly the same fortunes of war as its neighbour. It was already well inside the Allied lines before the First Battle of the Somme, and did not make its acquaintance with the enemy until the Second Battle, March, 1918. The road is that from Amiens to Péronne *via* the south bank.

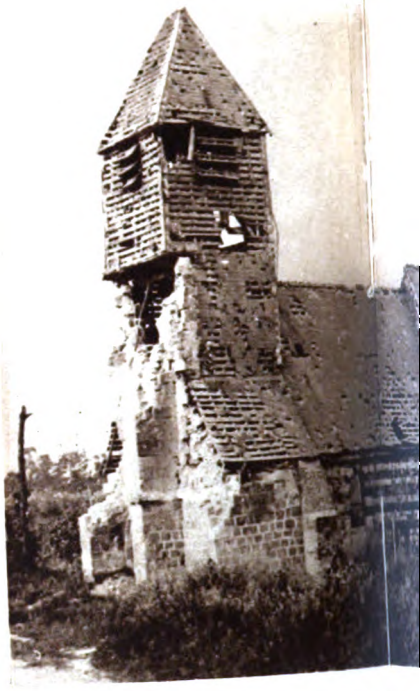
Photo: A. J. Insall

NEAR THE WINDING RIVER

While, as related on the previous page, the crossings at Cerisy and the two Saillys were being held, on March 26th, 1918, by Canadian machine-gunners and others, the Morcourt, Méricourt, and Étinehem crossings were guarded by the engineers of the 16th and 39th Divisions, augmented by small parties of infantry. On the 27th, the Pioneers and 116th Brigade of the 39th Division formed a small defensive flank for a time on a spur overlooking Morcourt.

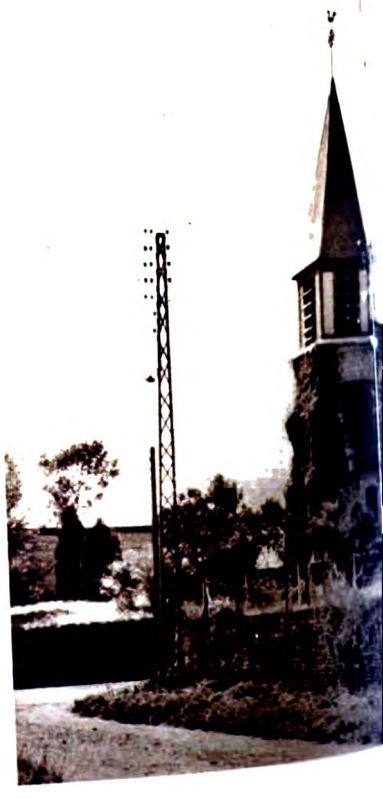
LAST DAYS OF A PICTURESQUE

The quaint little church whose already sadly batt
dates from before all the 1918 fighting—we show
village which received some attention in the sec
Péronne." It will be recalled that Éterpigny lies 4 k
means that it is 20 km due east of



THE NEW CHU

It is a pity that Éterpigny's former churc
new one, although handsome enough, surely
the old. The position of the village is
addition to being on the Somme Canal and
it flanks the Péronne—Chaulnes railway. It
late in Augus



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URESQUE CHURCH

sadly battered form—the photograph we show here, is that of Éterpigny, a in the section entitled "Environs of gny lies 4 km. south of that town, which due east of Morcourt.

Photo: A. P., Paris.

CHURCH

rch should have been destroyed, for the ntirely lacks the strong individuality of by no means "out-of-the-way," for, in and the main Péronne—Roye highway, It was retaken by the Fourth Army gust, 1918.

Photo: A. J. Insall

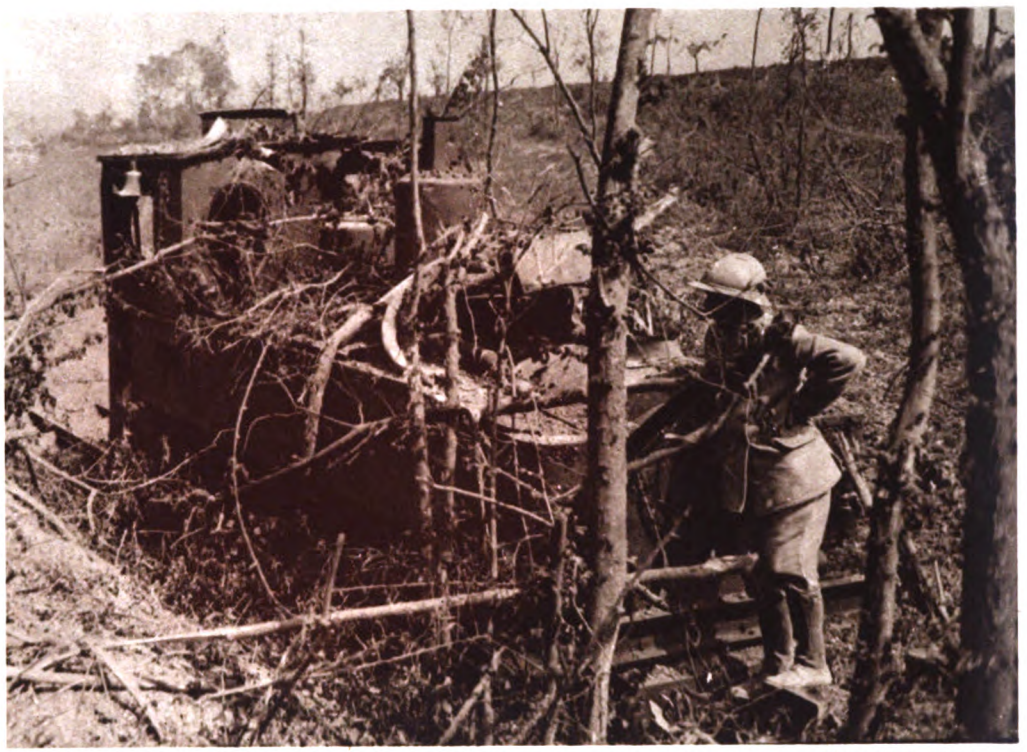

Photo: A. P., Paris

IN BIACHES WOOD

Biaches village, sugar-factory, and modern church were all illustrated on pages 1180 and 1181 of Volume Two. The above interesting photograph shows a German light locomotive lying abandoned in the Bois de Biaches on August 7th, 1916, a month after the village had been captured by the French I Colonial Corps. In the modern view below, the village proper is on the right, behind the pylon.

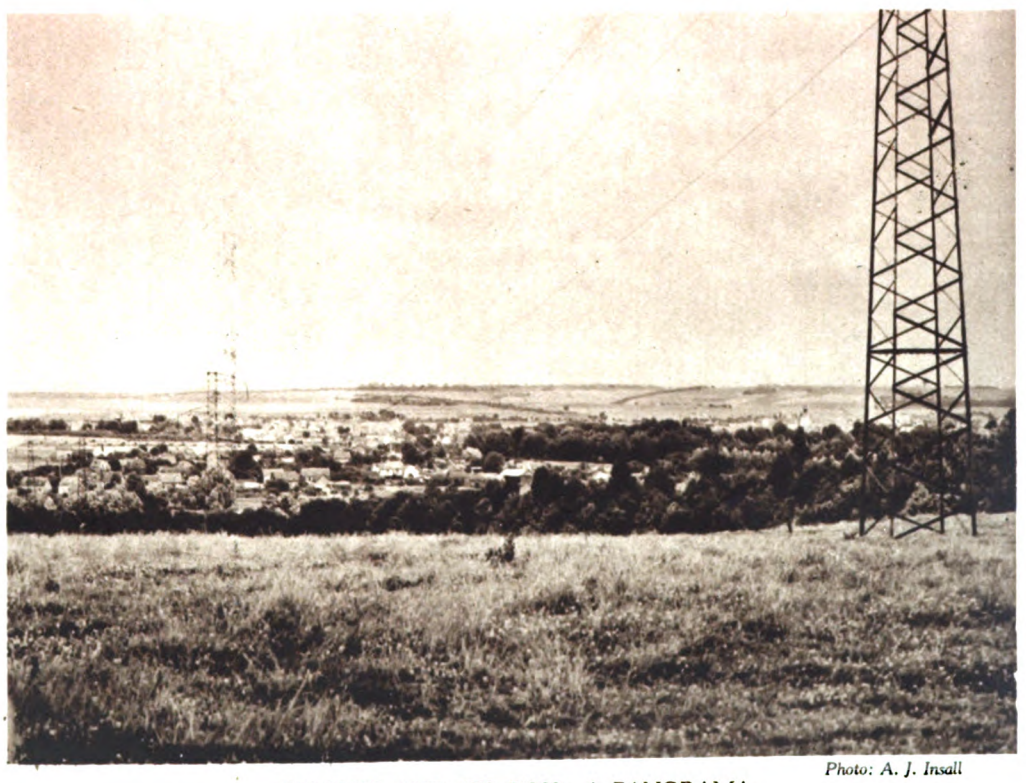

Photo: A. J. Insall

BIACHES AND ITS *BOIS*: A PANORAMA

During the last days of August, 1918, the 2nd Australian Division was greatly in evidence in this locality; for it was at Feuillères, a few kilometres north-west of Biaches, that the "diggers" crossed the river to turn the German positions before Mont. St. Quentin. Present-day Biaches contains 320 inhabitants, and is again mainly devoted, as in pre-war years, to the beet-sugar industry. The ubiquitous electricity-pylons hardly lend beauty to the modern French landscape.

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Photo: A. P., Paris

WINDING THE LONG TRAIL

An immense column of no fewer than 1,500 German prisoners, captured by the French in their successful advance during the First Battle of the Somme, being marched toward Aubigny on August 27th, 1916. In contrast with Éterpigny and Biaches, Aubigny lies closer to Amiens than to Péronne, being 11 km. east of the former, and about 12 km. west of Cerisy-Gailly. It is on the Amiens-Albert railway, the nearest station being Corbie.

Photo: A. J. Insall

A LONELY STRETCH

Aubigny was always out of reach of the enemy, even when, on April 24th, 1918, he made his temporarily successful thrust against Villers-Bretonneux, 5 km. to the south-south-east. At that time the Australian reserve line ran just west of the village, meeting the river between it and Vecquemont-Daours. There is, on the Fouilloy road, south-east of Aubigny, one British cemetery, which was in use from April to August, 1918. It contains 88 Australian and 8 United Kingdom dead.

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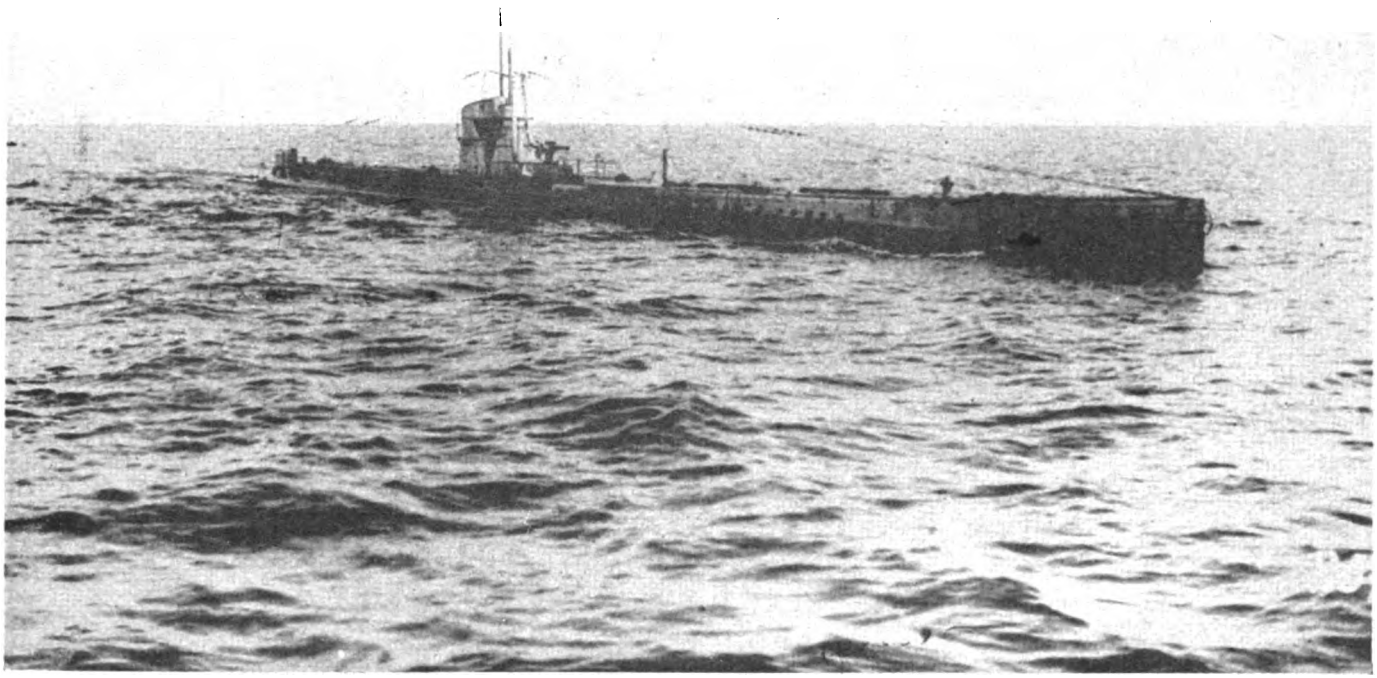

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

ABOUT TO DIVE

A German submarine photographed as she was about to dive during the month of April, 1917, when the U-boat menace was still at its height. This was, indeed, the blackest month of the whole War for our merchant shipping. No fewer than 169 vessels were sunk, involving a tonnage of 545,282 (more than 127,000 tons higher than during the next-worst month), while the loss in lives amounted to 1,125. In addition, 24 persons died as the result of less successful attacks on exactly 100 other ships, whose tonnage brought the total up to well over 1,000,000.

two we had in the ship. The after part of the ship quickly filled with water and the stern became awash very rapidly. The shock of the torpedo happened to knock me down, and when I got up I looked round and saw that everything was proceeding as arranged until I looked towards the forecastle and saw the men there still smoking their pipes. On enquiring what they were doing I got the reply, "Waiting for the order 'torpedo hit,' sir."

A Dangerous Pass

While the panic party were getting away in the boats the periscope of the submarine was seen about four hundred yards off, and obviously the submarine's commander was going to make sure we were not a mystery ship before coming to the surface. On board the ship things were in a bad way, for the engine-room was full of water, the Chief Engineer, Loveless, and his men had to hide on the gratings, and the stern was rapidly going down.

When the boats had finally got away and the ship appeared to be abandoned the submarine, still with only periscope showing, steamed up towards the boats and had a look at the crew, then she came close alongside the ship. On these occasions I lay flat on my tummy at the end of the bridge looking through slits and could see the whole of the submarine under water about fifteen yards off—so near and yet so far.

There was nothing to do, however, except to wait and hope for the best.

Luckily she came to the surface about three hundred yards ahead and the commander came out of the conning tower and had another good look at us to make sure we were not a mystery ship. In other words, we were pitting our wits against his. Having satisfied himself on this point, he decided to steam down towards the boats to take the "master" prisoner and also get some fresh provisions. When he was abeam of us and only a hundred yards off, I ordered "open fire." In an instant the White Ensign went up, the houses collapsed, and off went the guns. There was no question of missing, and after a few minutes the submarine was destroyed, but the panic party were able to save two of the crew.

It had been a great ordeal for the men on board to remain still while the ship was in a sinking condition, but they had behaved splendidly and fulfilled the implicit trust which I had in them.

Steps had now to be taken to try to save the ship, and after much difficulty we were taken in tow and after many mishaps we beached the old ship thirty-six hours later. After staying on board for a week saving the guns, etc., we left her and proceeded to Plymouth to fit out another one.

To Sea in the *Pargust*

Our new ship, *Pargust*, was as up to date as we could make her, and by June we were on our old hunting ground again, once more with the intention of deliberately getting torpedoed, for the submarine activities were nearly as severe as ever.

On June 6th Truscott informed me that we should see a submarine the following day, his opinion being based on the fact that a bird had flown into

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Photo: Imperial War Museum.

DISGUISE COMPLETE

On page 994 of Volume Two we illustrated a scene taken on the deck of the Q ship *Hyderabad*. Here we are able to amplify that picture with three photographs showing successive stages in the unmasking and preparing for action of the quick-firing gun on the *Hyderabad's* after-deck. Above, the gun is entirely hidden beneath a mock wheel and compass-pedestal.

my cabin, an event which had happened on each previous occasion of our sighting a submarine. Once more it turned out a good omen, for next day we got what we were looking for. At 8 a.m. a torpedo hit us right in the engine-room. Although there were normally three men on duty there only one was killed, for it so happened that one of the three was on a message, one was blown to pieces, and the third by some miracle fetched up alive on the upper deck. The panic party at once got busy, and it was not till the boats, under the direction of Lieutenant Hereford, R.N.R., had got away that we saw a periscope to port, the opposite side from which the torpedo hit. The cautious submarine commander came towards the ship to carry out his inspection, whilst I gave a glance towards the fo'c'sle, as in this ship we had a gun there and its crew had to lie round it flat on their tummies without moving, pretending they were part of the deck, a job requiring great courage and resource.

The periscope passed within fifty feet of the ship, turning toward the boats. At 8.25 it submerged, but a few minutes later I caught sight of it again coming round the starboard side. Having completed his inspection the submarine commander returned to the port side and came to the surface without opening his conning tower. A lucky shot might have destroyed him, but I dared not take the risk and decided to wait for a better opportunity.

This soon came, thanks to the skill and courage of Hereford. He was standing up in the stern of the lifeboat pretending he was master of the ship, but the enemy was in such a position that he knew our big gun mounted on the poop would not depress far enough to open fire. He therefore proceeded to pull round the stern towards the starboard side, and the submarine followed him, of course taking a bigger circle. The captain opened the conning tower and came on top with a megaphone, but when Hereford arrived on the beam his work was done, and he now pulled towards the ship so as to get out of the line of fire.

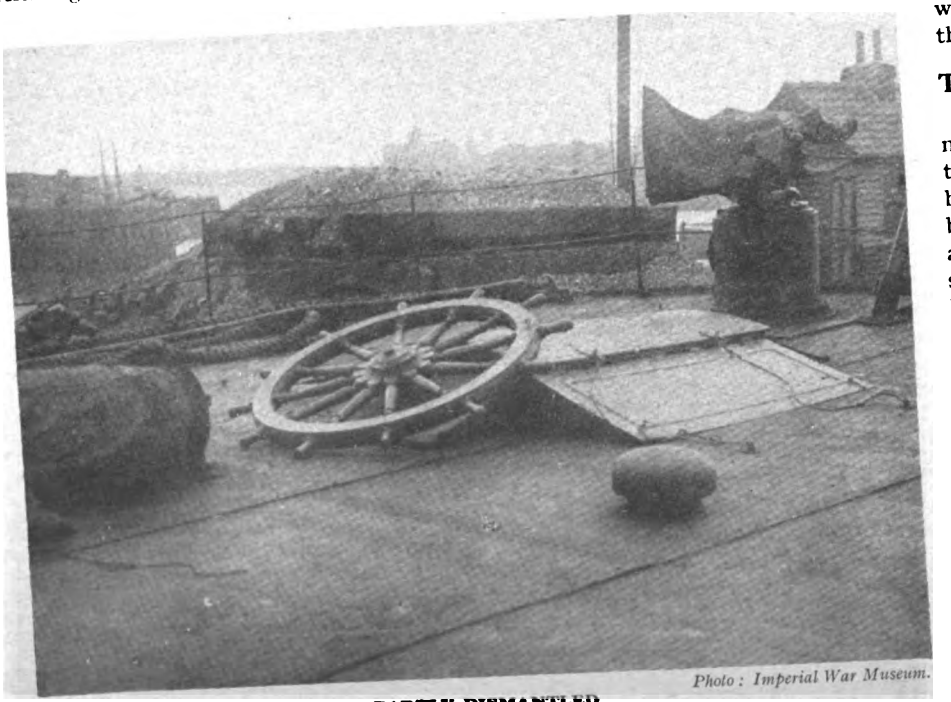

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

PARTLY DISMANTLED

Here the compass-pedestal (*left*) has been laid on its side, and wheel and wheel-house have been collapsed like a house of cards or a folding screen. The *Hyderabad* was not one of the more prominent Q ships, and her career was not marked by any conspicuously thrilling encounter.

The End of *UC29*

There was nothing more to wait for now and I gave the order to open fire, thirty-six minutes after the ship had been torpedoed. The submarine was barely a hundred yards away and shot after shot poured into her, and she soon started to heel over to port. The after hatch was opened and a number of her crew came out to surrender, so I ordered fire to cease. No sooner had I done so than the submarine started to steam ahead with the hope presumably of escaping in the mist. We at once opened fire again with the fo'c'sle gun, and the crew at last had a reward for their long wait, for in a few minutes *UC29* sank.

It was after this action that, for the first time in naval history, the V.C. was awarded under Clause 13 to be worn by one officer and one man, indicating that it was considered that all officers and men were equally deserving. A secret ballot was held and the V.C. was awarded

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to Lieutenant R. N. Stuart, my first Lieutenant, and Seaman William Williams, R.N.R., of Holyhead. When the explosion had taken place one of the cabin gun-ports would have fallen down and prematurely disclosed our identity, but Williams took the weight of the port on to his shoulders and so prevented this misfortune happening. In other words, it was his presence of mind which greatly added to the success of the attack.

Seven weeks later we had fitted out our next ship, called *Dunraven*. By this time submarines mounted big guns and preferred to use them rather than torpedoes, so we had to prepare tactics for dealing with the situation.

Just as we were about to sail from Plymouth on August 8th, 1917, news was received of a gun-firing submarine being active in the Bay of Biscay, and four days later we sighted her about eleven o'clock in the forenoon. Forty-five minutes later she appeared directly astern about five thousand yards distant and opened fire with a big gun. As this range was too great for us, fire was returned by a little two-and-a-half-pounder we had mounted on the stern for this purpose. The gun's crew had orders to fire short so as to encourage the submarine to come closer, and at the same time we made a lot of black smoke from our funnel for a similar purpose. In reality we reduced speed to one knot. The shelling continued for over half an hour, during which time we made *en clair* signals to pretend that we were being chased and trying to escape but took the precaution of not giving any position.

At 12.10 the submarine ceased fire and closed on us till about a thousand yards off, when fire was reopened. Shells were now dropping all round the ship, and it was very obvious that at any moment one of them would hit us and it might blow up the magazine. I therefore warned the crew that I intended to use the false steam pipe which had been built round the middle part of the ship with a lot of holes in it to allow steam to escape at will. At 12.40 a shot fell abreast the engine-room. I at once opened the valve and the ship was soon enveloped in steam. At the same time the panic party got away in the boats. The two-and-a-half-pounder was " abandoned " and the crew joined the panic party whilst I put the helm over so that the submarine could see what we were doing.

Sitting on a Red-hot Deck

The commander must have seen the cloud of steam, but whether he saw the panic party I do not know. Anyhow, he continued to shell us and three shells fell in the poop in quick succession. The first one caused a big explosion which blew Lieutenant Bonner, R.N.R., who was in charge of that gun, out of his hiding-place, but he crawled into the hatch which concealed the big gun and its crew. The whole poop was now in flames and the submarine ceased firing but continued to steam up towards us. The smoke issuing from the poop was so thick that it was impossible to see the submarine to open fire, and there was

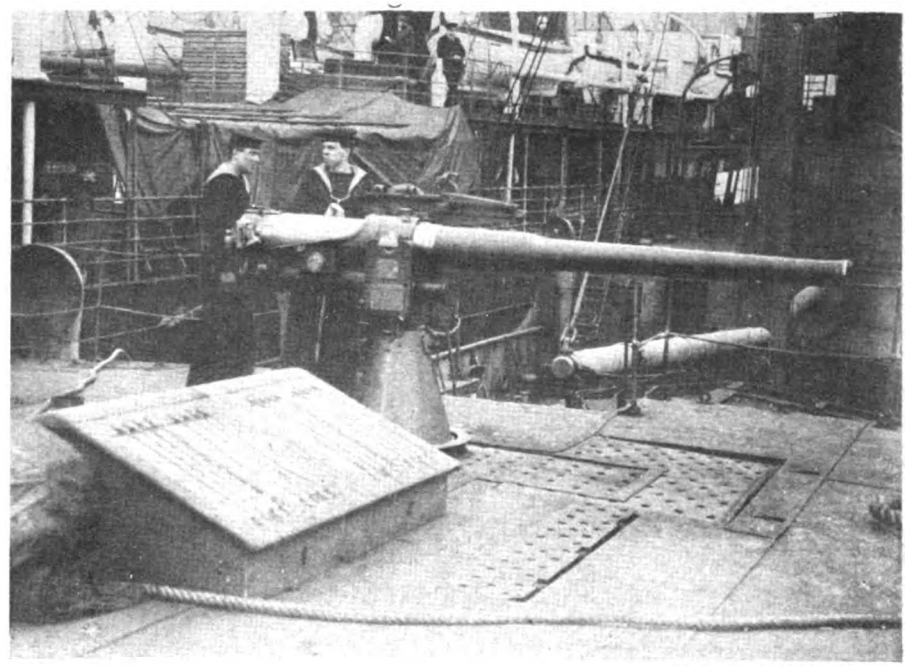

Photo : Imperial War Museum.

READY FOR ACTION

In the final stage the hidden gun has been raised on a lift from below the deck, and is ready to fire. As may be inferred from the proximity of the vessel in the background, the photograph was taken in port ; and of course the spick-and-span bluejackets would be disguised, when at sea, in the dingy and somewhat varied attire typical of a tramp-steamer's motley crew.

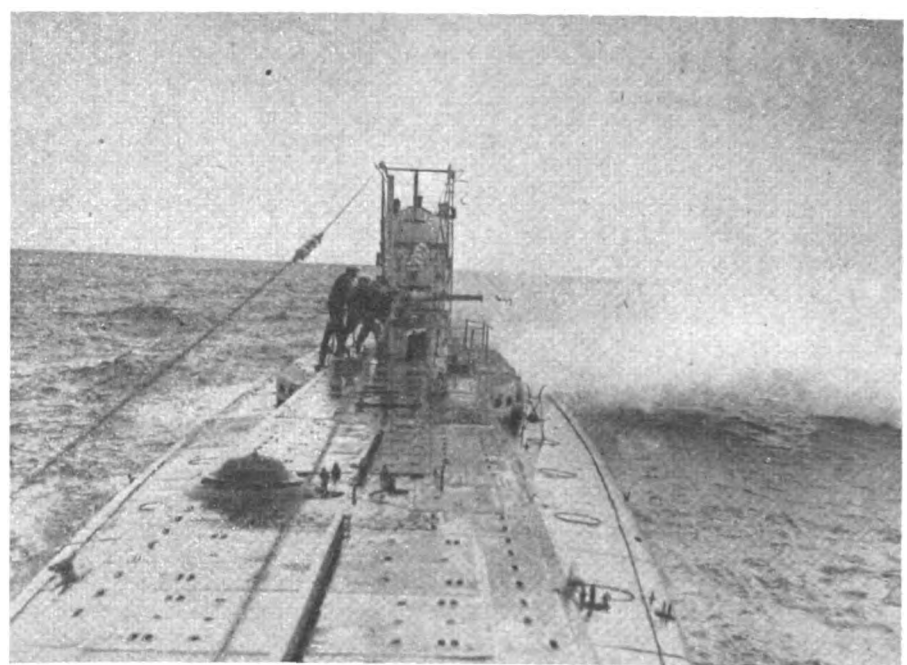

Photo : Imperial War Museum.

AN ORDER TO HALT

A rather rare type of " action " photograph, showing members of a German U-boat crew firing a shot across the bows of an Allied merchant vessel as the customary signal to heave to. If the intended victim were a Q ship, she would at once obey with every outward sign of panic.

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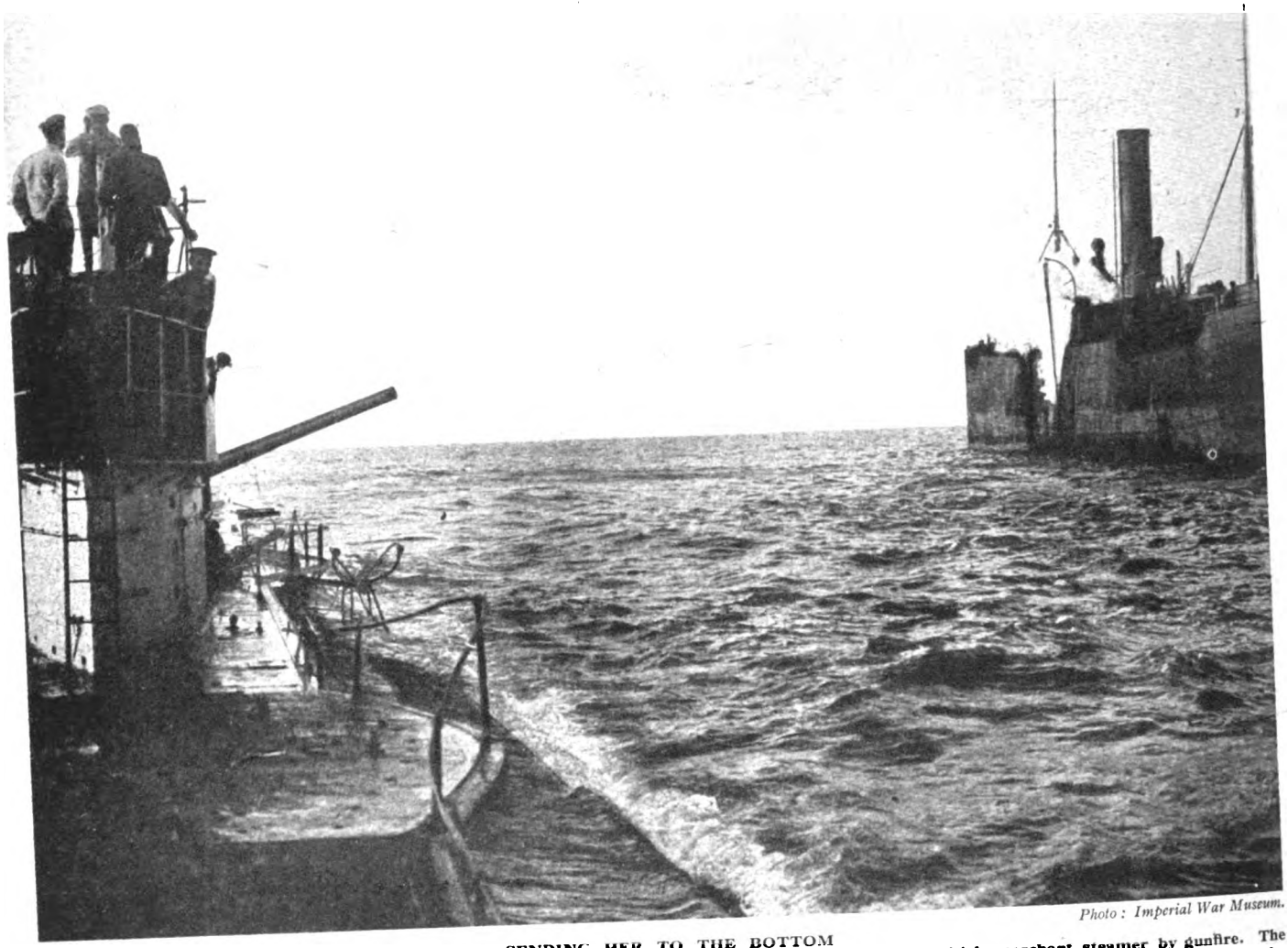

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

SENDING HER TO THE BOTTOM

This picture was taken from the deck of the German submarine *U35*, as the latter was sinking a British merchant steamer by gunfire. The *U35* had a long and varied career. Belonging to a class due for delivery on August 1st, 1914, she first made herself known to the British by sinking H.M. sloop *Primula* in the eastern Mediterranean on March 1st, 1916. June 21st of the same year found her at Cartagena with an autographed letter from the Kaiser to the King of Spain. Early in October, still in the Mediterranean, she torpedoed a French minesweeper and sank an auxiliary. During four days of April, 1917, she sank, with a colleague, seven British steamers off Gibraltar. Finally, still unscathed, she surrendered to the British Government after the Armistice.

nothing for it but to wait until she came up clear of the smoke. In the meantime Bonner and his gun's crew were sitting on top of a deck which was becoming red-hot, and immediately beneath them was a big magazine. The alternatives before them were to sit tight and get blown up, or come out on deck, but if they did this they would spoil the whole show, because the ship was abandoned, or supposed to be, so they just sat still.

At one o'clock, just as the submarine was passing directly astern of our ship and would have been clear of the smoke in another few seconds, a big explosion took place. The stern of the ship was blown out, the gun and gun's crew complete went in the air. The submarine made a crash dive. The aft gun's crew had a miraculous escape from death thanks to landing on some dummy railway trucks we carried on board made of canvas and wood, but they were all severely wounded.

There were two alternatives now before us. One was to hoist our boats and try to return to harbour, and the other was to have another go at the submarine. We decided on the latter course and waited patiently until she torpedoed us. In the meantime we had put the hoses on to the fire, though it was too fierce to get close to it, and although four depth charges had exploded, yet the magazine was still intact. When at 1.20 the submarine torpedoed us, a second abandon ship party was sent away, the boats coming back to fetch the extra men, and also a raft was launched, the idea being that everybody was now really out of it. We now only had two guns left on board for fighting, and during the afternoon the submarine steamed round and round the ship, with only the periscope showing, whilst the magazine went off in penny numbers as each box of ammunition got to the proper temperature. It was a most unpleasant and trying way to spend the afternoon, as at any moment a flash might have been carried forward and touched off our other magazine.

A Long Duel

By half-past-two the fire had nearly burnt itself out, and the submarine came up directly astern of the ship about a hundred yards away and proceeded to shell us again. We had no gun to return the fire with and no steam to steam round with, so we just had to grin and bear it, though the first two shells came on the bridge, and but for some

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armoured ends I had fitted to the bridge most of us would have been killed. After twenty minutes the submarine again submerged and once more came past the ship. I decided now to use some small torpedoes we carried on board, and personally fired the port torpedo, but it was not deep enough to hit. About a quarter of an hour later the starboard torpedo was fired and hit, but did not explode. However, the submarine heard it and at once submerged.

The game now appeared to be up, but we arranged to do another "abandon ship" when the next torpedo came. Unfortunately this never occurred, as the submarine had no torpedoes left. Presently an American yacht, the *Noma*, unexpectedly hove in sight and the submarine made off, and I regret to say that after five hours' endeavour we did not meet with success. However, the crew had done everything possible to achieve success, and had the big explosion delayed a few seconds the story might have ended differently. As it was there was nothing left to do except try to save the ship. The fire was eventually extinguished and the ship taken in tow. The weather became very bad and I transferred all the men except twenty to a trawler.

By 9 p.m. on the following day two tugs arrived to tow us, but the weather got worse and the ship became heavier in the water. Shortly after 3 a.m. the *Dunraven* went to the bottom.

Two V.C.'s Awarded

After this action Lieutenant Bonner was awarded the V.C. and a V.C. was also awarded to the after-gun's crew to be balloted for, the petty officer of the gun, Pitcher, being the one who received it. The remainder of the gun's crew received a conspicuous gallantry medal, a posthumous one also being awarded to Seaman Morrison, R.N.R., who had been in charge of the depth charges and although very seriously wounded insisted on remaining at his place of duty. I was particularly glad that included in the many awards was the promotion of Chief Petty Officer G. H. Truscott to the rank of Warrant Officer, a most unusual promotion, but no man had been more deserving of it, for he had been with me through two arduous years.

His Majesty the King, in making these awards, stated in his own hand that "greater bravery than was shown by all officers and men on this occasion can hardly be conceived."

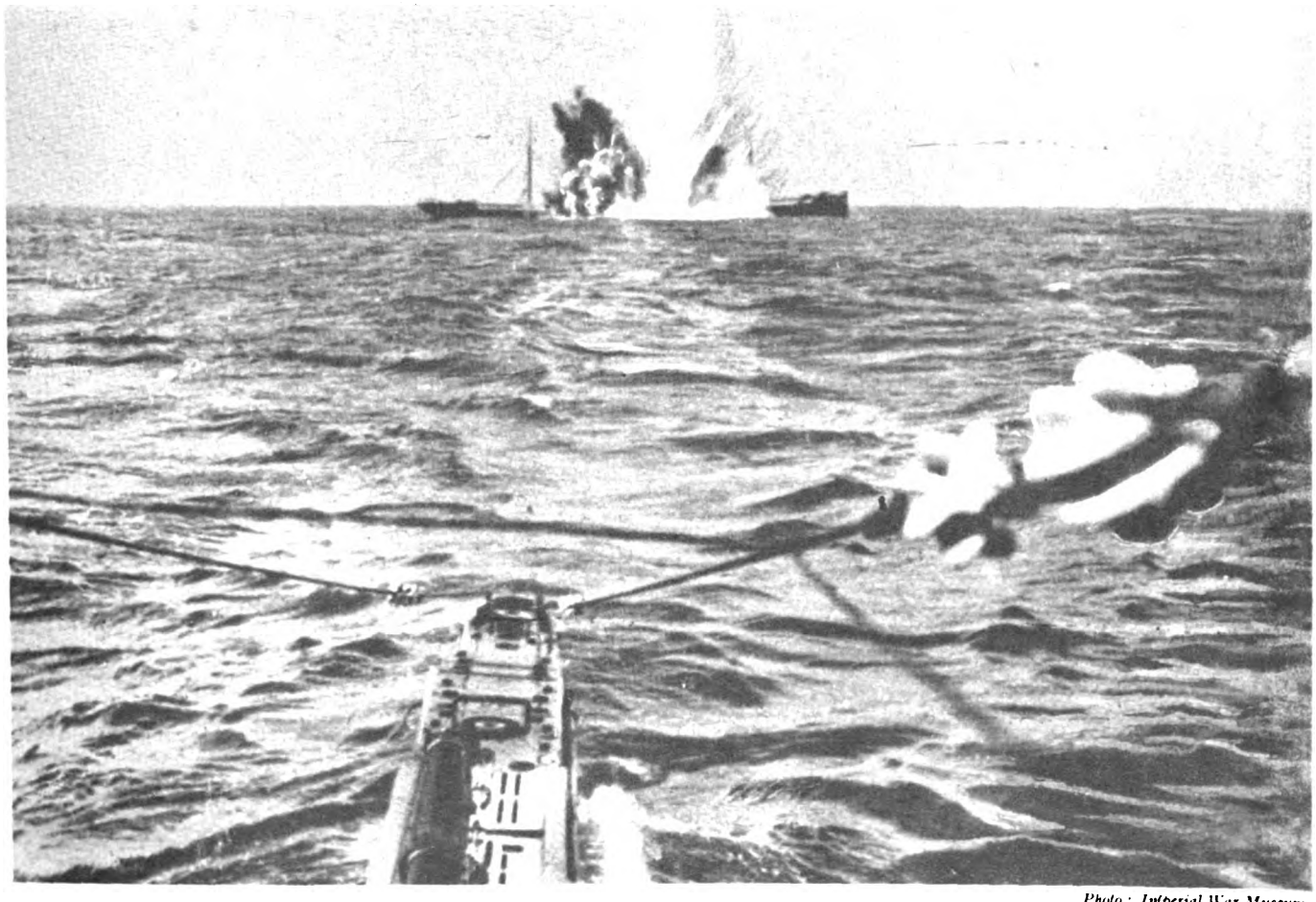

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

TORPEDOED

A torpedo in the act of hitting an unfortunate merchant ship, with the bows of the U boat responsible to be seen in the foreground. The number of British merchant vessels lost through enemy action during the whole of the War was 2,479, with a total gross tonnage of 7,759,090. Besides this, 1,885 other craft were damaged or molested, their tonnage amounting to the even higher figure of more than 8,000,000. The full number of lives lost is given as 14,879. Germany lost exactly 200 U boats.

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Photo : A. P., Paris.

THE VILLAGE OF BÉTHENCOURT, MARCH, 1917

This place is situated on the left bank of the Somme, 5 km. north-east of Nesle and 14 km. due south of Péronne. The 59th Brigade, 20th Division, crossed the Somme and took up its position from Voyennes to Béthencourt (inclusive), on the extreme left of the XVIII Corps sector, between 2 and 3 a.m. on March 23rd, 1918.

Photo : G. T. Watson.

COMPLETE WITH ELECTRIC-LIGHT PYLONS

After experiencing a comparatively quiet day on March 23rd—during which it easily repulsed a German attack on Béthencourt bridge—the 59th Brigade seems to have handed over the defence of the village to the 8th Division, XIX Corps ; for it was the 2nd East Lancs. of this division which, about 9 a.m. on the 24th, made a last brave stand there against Germans who had found a way across the Somme swamps.

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CHAPTER XXVIII

THE ROYAL ARMY SERVICE CORPS

The Royal Army Service Corps, as the branch of the Service mainly concerned with supply and transport, has existed in its present form since 1888. *During the period* 1914–18, *when it was called upon to serve an expeditionary force numerically greater by far than any army ever previously sent out from these shores, the R.A.S.C. proved itself equal, and more than equal, to every call made upon it. Most ex-Servicemen will agree that on the Western Front, at least, the arrangements governing their supplies of rations and other necessaries were at most times at least adequate, and this despite the fact that under modern conditions supply and transport services are no longer immune from hostile action by gun-fire and from the air. Notwithstanding every difficulty and danger, however, the Corps proved itself worthy of the fighting troops it laboured constantly to serve.*

THE supreme end and aim of the Army Service Corps (honoured by the prefix Royal at the close of the Great War), and indeed the justification of its existence as a military body, have been and will always continue to be the maintenance of the fighting troops in face of the enemy. It is, therefore, the rôle that the Corps played in the operations of war, rather than the technical and internal details of its work, that should prove of paramount interest.

"Nothing without Work"

It is, of course, no part of its claim to have carried any burden which could compare in effort and sacrifice with that of the fighting Arms which it was its duty to serve. But, in so far as was humanly possible, it did not fail those Arms, and may fairly be accounted to have lived up to its motto; *Nil sine Labore*—Nothing without Work.

For an understanding of what it accomplished in the world-wide campaigns from 1914 onwards, it is necessary to devote a brief space to a review of the main principles of its organisation. For the ten years preceding the War that organisation was in process of being remodelled to meet the conditions imposed by the advance of mechanical road transport; so that, when the Expeditionary Force took the field, it was with a Supply and Transport system as up to date as any in existence, and one which, as events turned out, required little modification in France and Flanders throughout the whole of the struggle. Moreover, in minor theatres, where special conditions prevailed, its flexibility lent itself easily to adaptation.

Briefly, that system comprised a horsed train carrying one day's supplies for a division, from the waggons of which train the regimental transport of fighting units was provisioned daily, while in its turn the train was replenished by a mechanical transport supply column working from a railhead to which supplies were sent by rail from the bases.

Thus there were available four "mobile" rations—the emergency one carried by the soldier, one in his regimental transport, one in the divisional train, and one on the supply column. Furthermore, as an extra margin of safety, a horsed reserve park, carrying two complete rations for every man and animal in the division, marched parallel (if possible) with the mechanical transport—a measure which proved redundant once trench-warfare had become established.

The system for the cavalry was slightly different, as, owing to the greater mobility of that Arm, the horsed train was omitted, and the lorries ran straight to the troops. With respect to ammunition supply, which, in contradistinction to that of food and fodder, was naturally irregular, the Army Service Corps held the responsibility up to the time when the supply reached the divisional ammunition column, the latter being a horsed artillery unit.

Setting Supplies in Order

Apart from the maintenance of field formations, much was done prior to the War to put the fundamentals of the supply services in order—the Corps' responsibility, it may be recalled, extended to all consumable supplies, including petrol and fuel wood. For instance, the idea that live cattle should be shipped abroad for the use of the Army was rejected in favour of retaining frozen-meat ships at the overseas bases; while it was decided, after some discussion, that bread should be baked by companies on the lines of communication, and forwarded daily in sacks, instead of being produced by field ovens established in close proximity to the troops.

At the Reserve Depôt at Woolwich, which was moved to Deptford shortly after the outbreak of war, a thirty-days' provision for 160,000 men and 50,000 animals—these were the figures of the proposed Expeditionary Force—was provided for immediate use.

In short, there were few measures that foresight and common sense could dictate in relation to policy or to detail, which had not been submitted to scientific investigation or put into practice in so far as the then existing conditions allowed. In this connection it is permissible, perhaps, to quote the words of an article published in a well-known Service periodical in 1925, by which date there had surely been ample time for reflection:

"It is doing no injustice to the other branches of the Land Forces to say that at the outbreak of war, the Army Service Corps was the most efficient branch of the Army; and it is a matter of history that, alone of all branches, it had emerged from the South African War with an enhanced reputation."

The fateful year 1914 found the A.S.C., like the remainder of the Army, scattered throughout the world with every British garrison, except with those in India. At that time it numbered some 500 Regular officers and 6,000 other ranks, well trained in their duties and possessing a strong *esprit de corps*.

No better proof of this happy state of affairs exists than in the smoothness with which the cadres were expanded on mobilisation, and fresh units multiplied during the period following it. The little leaven that existed in the nucleus of Regulars, and in the still smaller one of Territorials, proved capable of leavening the whole.

Forming the Field Units

There must be many who remember Aldershot, the permanent headquarters

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of the Corps, during the very early days of the War after the original Expeditionary Force had departed for France. Amid scenes of unprecedented activity every Arm of the Service had, of course, to struggle with the formation of the field units required for the New Armies—and that out of completely raw but magnificent material. But the Corps had, in addition, to carry on, with a mere skeleton of experienced personnel, the maintenance and quartering of the vast masses assembling everywhere.

By November there were nearly 200,000 men to be fed in the Aldershot Command alone, as against some 25,000 of the peace-time garrison ; there were 20,000 men in the Corps depôts ; and—as instancing the difficulties of catering—it was common for a recruit when he had finished his breakfast in one of the monster marquees erected as dining-rooms, to line up at the back of the queue outside to await his turn for dinner. It was at this juncture that a non-commissioned officer who was putting in some 18 hours a day in the supply depôt received a letter from one of his comrades in France commiserating with him on having nothing to do now that the First and Second Divisions had gone. " The grass must be growing quite green in the streets of Aldershot," observed the writer.

It was perhaps with respect to the provision of Army clerks that the difficulties were then greatest ; for, however efficient a recruit might be in shorthand, typewriting, book-keeping, and accountancy, it was indispensable that he should have some knowledge of Army Regulations and procedure, channels of communication, and methods of correspondence, before he could be of much practical use. Clerical staffs had to be found not only for regimental offices, supply depôts, barrack offices, and organisations of a like nature where a business training was a valuable asset, but for the headquarters of brigades and divisions of the New Armies, where orders and training memoranda had to be prepared, and where the majority of staff officers themselves were untrained as such.

No efforts were spared to give intensive instruction in these important duties, whose connection with the A.S.C. is too often forgotten. But Britons are at their best when muddling—that is why they are so often at their best. Despite the intolerable burden thrown on to the attenuated permanent staff, the job was done.

Major-General Selden Long

Before turning to the work and experiences of the Corps in France, it is expedient to devote a modest space to the higher direction of the A.S.C. at the War Office, where an exceptionally able and resolute officer, in the person of Major-General Selden Long, filled the post of Director of Supplies and Transport during the first 18 months of hostilities. The manner in which he conceived and carried out his duties is most easily conveyed by the relation of a few of the numerous incidents in which he figured.

Photo : A. P., Paris.

NEAR VENDIN CHURCH

A French photograph showing telegraph posts, stripped of their wires, along the road to Vendin church, August 22nd, 1918. The full name of the village is Vendin-le-Vieil (in contradistinction to Vendin-lez-Béthune), and its situation is 6 km. north-east of Lens, on a by-road leading from Hulluch to Harnes. Two lines of railway, and the Haute-Deule Canal, separate it from Pont-à-Vendin.

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Photo : G. T. Watson.

THE YOUNGER GENERATION IN VENDIN-LE-VIEIL

Our troops crossed the Haute-Deule Canal on a wide front, chiefly north of Pont-à-Vendin, on October 15th, 1918, in the teeth of considerable opposition. Prior to this the two Vendins had suffered severely from aerial bombardment by the R.A.F., chiefly on account of their situation on the railway. Modern Vendin-le-Vieil is an industrial townlet of 6,500 inhabitants.

At the outbreak of war the American meat-packers, and the interests which controlled the meat not only in the United States, but also in South America, made a strong bid to increase their prices. Though severe pressure was brought to bear from many directions, General Long firmly declined to allow the cost to rise beyond a certain small increase, saying that if the meat were not supplied at prices which the War Office was prepared to pay, it would be requisitioned under the powers granted. The packers, who were well aware that the Army would take only meat of "good average quality," met this by starting to import into England shiploads of a very inferior quality, so that the War Office refusal to accept it would leave it on their hands to be sold to the general public at a far higher rate than that obtained by contract.

On the arrival of the first shipload of this inferior meat at Liverpool, General Long promptly had it rejected by his local inspectors, and arranged with the local health authorities to condemn it. The packers then despatched it to London, but the Director of Supplies, on being warned of this, got the London health authority to seize and condemn it also ; and thus it became a total loss to its owners. This action temporarily smashed the packers' endeavour to overcome the stranglehold which had been held on the meat supply.

But they soon returned to the charge, and in 1915, anticipating that the increasing demands of France and Italy would enable them to force the hand of the War Office, sent a deputation to the Board of Trade with a demand that their prices be substantially raised. When the meeting was held the representatives of the American packers were disposed to be truculent, finally turning to the President of the Board of Trade, Mr. Runciman, and saying : " Well, as you will not pay our prices, we shall send no more meat to England, but divert it to other countries."

He had them Cornered

General Long replied : " By all means do so, gentlemen, if you think you can, but let me point out two facts. You own the refrigerators in South America, and can possibly do what you please ; but unless you put your meat on ships to come to this country—and practically all the insulated tonnage in the world is under the British flag—you will have no means of shipping it anywhere ; and, furthermore, as soon as that situation arises it will be easy for our Government to represent to that of the Argentine

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that you have brought one of the main industries of that country to a standstill, and that therefore it will be in the interests of the Argentine Government to requisition the local freezing-plants and carry on the trade for themselves."

These representations quickly brought the meat magnates to heel.

Even more summarily effective was the action taken with respect to sugar supplies; and it was, indeed, in connection with that commodity that the British Government was very early in the War able to acquire powers for the general requisitioning of foodstuffs in the country. It will be remembered how, on the outbreak of hostilities, prices at once began to soar, and how in consequence, when the War Office Contracts Branch requested immediate offers to meet demands, it was apparent that the grossest profiteering had to be faced.

The morning after the offers had been sent out by priority telegrams, the Director of Contracts came to see General Long to inform him that in reply to his enquiries for some hundreds of tons of sugar, there were acceptances barely sufficient to meet requirements, and that the prices demanded varied between 56/- and 75/- a cwt. Considering that the universal price two days previously to the declaration of war had been only 12/3 a cwt., the rise was extortionate; but there seemed no option but to accept.

General Long replied: "I am paying no such money. Wire to these people to send principals to see you immediately."

On the arrival of the sugar principals, Long went down to the Contracts Branch and said: "You were asked to supply certain quantities of sugar urgently required for the troops. The total of your offers hardly comes up to our modest demands, and the prices demanded are ridiculous."

The Sugar Kings Stirred

The reply of the sugar magnates was to the effect that they had their civil commitments, which it was impossible to break; to which plea the Director of Supplies retorted: "I am not concerned with your civil commitments. I am aware what quantities of sugar are in this country, as I have had the figures from the Customs this morning; and when you get back to your businesses you will find troops already put on guard to allow nothing to pass out, while the Customs have been asked to release no sugar from bond until military requirements are met."

The flabbergasted merchants then saw the wisdom of coming to some arrangement, which was dictated by General Long, with 12/6 a cwt. fixed as the limit. Then, turning to the Director of Contracts, the General added: "Will you please make out contracts at that price for thousands of tons of sugar where hundreds were asked for before"—and thus delivering himself, walked out of the room. The contracts were duly made, though it was pointed out that the action was illegal, a fact of which the General was well aware.

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

AN UNUSUAL POSTURE

An Army lorry suspended at apparently imminent peril above the quay while being unshipped for transfer to the Base Mechanical Transport Depôt at Rouen, on May 31st, 1918. What with the camps, hospitals, and supply depôts established at this old cathedral city, it became as active during the War as any town outside the fighting area, not excepting the Channel ports.

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

FOR FEEDING THE TROOPS

A scene worthy of Covent Garden Market or of any of the gigantic clearing-places for London's victuals: thousands of cases of food supplies stored in a ration-shed large enough to accommodate an airship. The collection, organisation, and distribution of this vast mass of fodder fell entirely upon the Army Service Corps.

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Photo: Imperial War Museum.

OIL DRUMS

At the outset of the War the petrol consumption of the B.E.F. was so small that the transport of the liquid from England in sealed cans presented no very serious problem. By the spring of 1916, however, the demand had already risen to 2,000,000 gallons a month; and storage-tanks and can-filling plants were therefore set up at Calais and Rouen. Above is a dump of cans.

Insistent, however, that authority should be wrung from the Government, he proceeded at once to interview the Parliamentary Financial Secretary to the War Office, Mr. Baker, who told him that it was utterly impossible for an Act to be passed to authorise the military authorities to seize foodstuffs. "That may be," he replied, "but, as I have already done it, I have committed the country, unless covered, to a claim to millions of pounds damages. My action is smashing the cornering in foodstuffs and forcing the throwing of stocks on the market for fear of their being requisitioned."

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

TYRES FOR LORRIES

A photograph taken during the stacking of solid tyres for lorries at the Base Mechanical Transport Depôt, Rouen, during 1918. The system of supply from the base to the front was by 1916 worked along the four lines of communication in pairs: Boulogne and Calais—northern lines Dieppe, Rouen, and Havre—southern lines.

At 10 o'clock that night Mr. Baker rang up to say that a short Act empowering general requisitioning had been read three times in the House of Commons, three times in the House of Lords, and had been signed by the King a few minutes previously.

With such resource and drive at its head—and instances could be multiplied almost indefinitely—it was natural that the Corps both at home and all over the world should have been conspicuous for its cheerful and successful wrestling with difficulties, bold improvisation, and fearless assumption of responsibility. Something of its activities which more directly touched the fighting troops, and its own gigantic organisation in France, may now be surveyed.

Important yet Neglected

In the official volumes, owing partly to considerations of space and partly to the lack of interest displayed by the average reader, but little appears in regard to the achievements of the maintenance services. Yet it may be questioned whether a treatment devoting greater attention to the administrative side would not have been more valuable in relation to the future; for now that war has become so much a matter of organisation, superiority in this direction is, given equal courage on the part of the contestants, the most potent factor in deciding the day.

The campaign in France and Flanders falls naturally into three main periods. There was the initial epoch of mobile operations, which, so far as the B.E.F. was concerned, lasted from August 12th until September 16th, 1914; then the dreary years of stagnation until the summer of 1918; and finally, from August of that year, the operations which developed into a general pursuit following a break-through. The most lively interest is inevitably attached to the first and last periods.

With the Expeditionary Force of six divisions and a cavalry division, and army and lines of communication troops, were mobilised 34 horse and 19 mechanical transport companies, three remount depôts, and 60 supply units of various sizes, together with the transport personnel of the field ambulances—figures amounting to some 16,000 all ranks, which gives some idea of the measure of participation of the Army Service Corps in the activity of the Regular field army or "Old Contemptibles."

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Photo : A. P. Paris.

WAYSIDE CHAPEL, SUZANNE

Suzanne, 3 km. east of Bray-sur-Somme, is one of the more important riverside villages not hitherto illustrated by us. It is on the road from Bapaume to Bray and Cappy bridge, and in October, 1916, the date of this photograph, lay in the French zone.

It was with very great difficulty that the troops were fed during the retreat from Mons, as they were almost continually fighting and marching, and in many instances could not be found by the transport columns ; while in addition, difficulties were accentuated by the congestion on the roads caused by refugees. But one fact, at least, became clear, and that was, that had the old system in vogue before the introduction of mechanical transport attempted to deal with the situation, the confusion inevitable in a retreat under pressure would have been vastly increased, and the troops probably not fed in any manner at all.

As it was, with the limited number of roads at the disposal of the Army, the staff had anxious moments in clearing them of transport to allow of the passage of the troops ; and it was frequently necessary to abandon efforts toward the proper delivery of supplies, and merely to dump them on routes through which the retreating columns must pass. The resultant waste was unavoidable.

1914 : the Move to St. Nazaire

Again, the military situation rapidly became such that the bases which had been organised at Boulogne and Le Havre were no longer safe—indeed, the advance of the enemy dispossessed the British of the advanced base which had been formed at Amiens. These contingencies, however, were foreseen on August 24th, the day after the fighting at Mons ; and from that date all further movement of men and stores to the two former ports was stopped, and the complex undertaking of a change of base effected at the minimum of warning.

St. Nazaire, on the River Loire, was

A SACRED SITE

It took our photographer a long while to track down the *petite chapelle* of the French photograph ; and when at last he found the site, it was to discover that the shrine had never been rebuilt. This iron crucifix marks where it stood, while let into the concrete platform in front is one of the old altar-stones.

Photo : G. T. Watson.

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selected as the new base; and by dint of Herculean efforts Boulogne was cleared in three days. At that time there were 60,000 tons of stores and supplies at Le Havre, but by September every pound had been removed; and although a few days were bound to elapse before this huge accumulation could be landed, the new base was put in order with such despatch that the needs of the Army were promptly met by the longer lines of communication. It was a signal feat of organisation, which passed almost unnoticed at the time.

The retreat of the British Army continued until September 5th, having lasted 13 days, during which time the troops had marched some 200 miles, eventually to find themselves south-east of Paris. On the 6th Sir John French passed to the offensive, crossing the Marne on the 9th and the Aisne three days later. North of the Aisne the line became stabilised, and the troops remained in this position until October 8th, when, with the exception of the cavalry, which marched, they began their entrainment for the north, to take their place in Flanders on the left of the French.

It was just after this that Major-General F. T. Clayton came out from England to become Director of Supplies; and energetic measures were put in hand to remedy certain deficiencies which had disclosed themselves in the practical working of the system, although the principles of the latter had, in the most difficult circumstances, proved themselves sound and adequate. Provision had to be made for the steadily increasing strength of the Army, which by the middle of September had attained the figures of 240,000 British and 25,000 Indians, with 100,000 animals—numbers which in the light of after events do not seem formidable, but which were then greater than had ever previously been contemplated.

Feeding the Indians

The heavy fighting round Ypres, and the uncertainty as to how that struggle would end, made the period one of the most critical of the whole War. Emergencies were allowed for by having what were termed *en cas mobile* trains, loaded with supplies, standing ready to move at short notice.

The feeding of the Indians presented a pretty problem, since it was important to furnish them with the special foodstuffs demanded by caste prejudice, while further complications arose out of the paucity of their own supply personnel and the inferior quality and faulty packing of such special supplies as had accompanied them from India. Those concerned at the time will have memories of the Indians' tea and hay being wholly unfit for issue, and of packages said to contain salt being adulterated with sodium sulphate. Again, the barley, which was the accustomed ration for the animals brought from India, became violently unpopular when oats were provided for those of other units.

In addition, there were delicate questions to be solved in relation to the French. At one time it was actually feared that imported supplies were to be deemed as liable for customs duty, while the "octroi" payable on local produce brought into towns was, in fact, insisted upon.

When the First Battle of Ypres died down, the Army lay on a front extending from Givenchy to opposite Wytschaete, a distance of 21 miles. In the recent fighting its losses had amounted to over 54,000 killed, wounded, and missing—and what these casualties meant to the

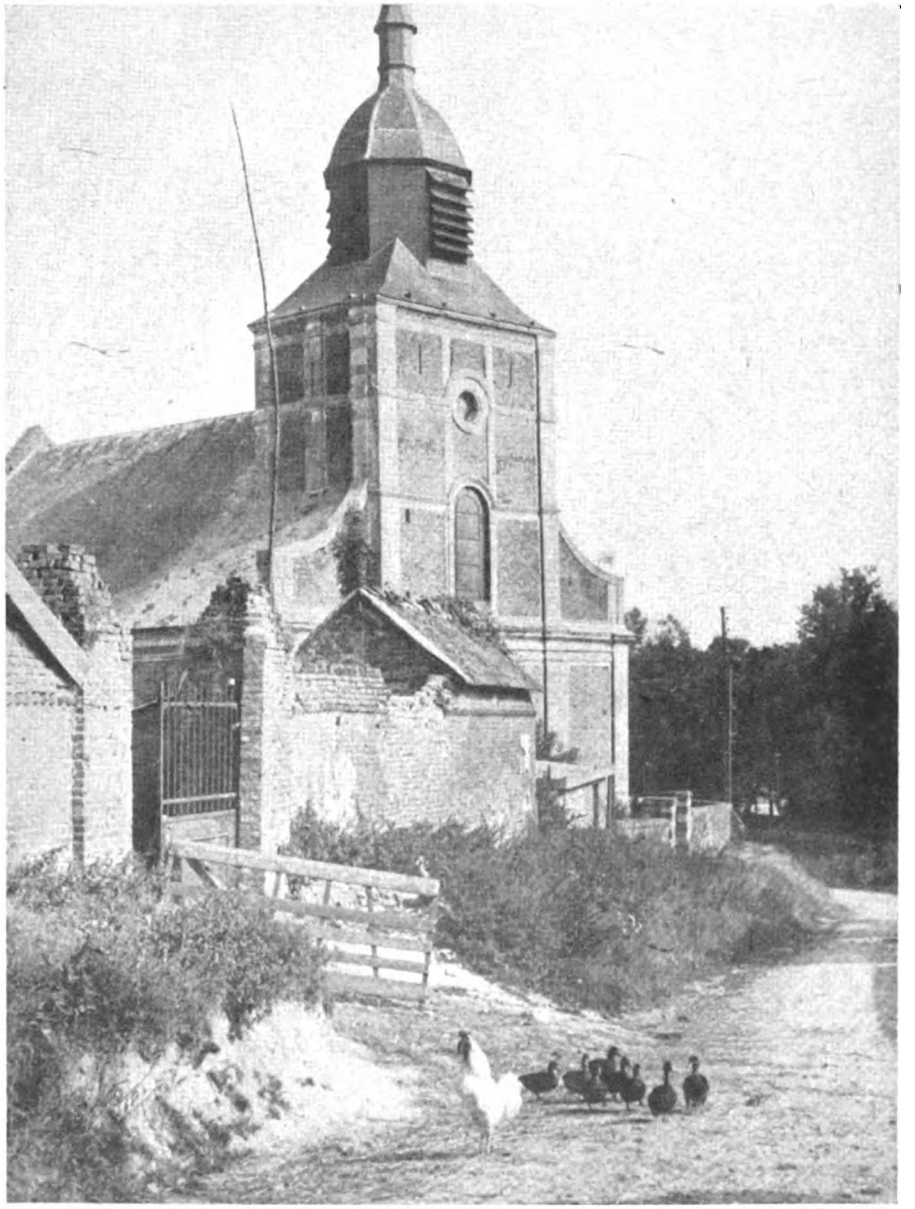

Photo: G. T. Watson.

FARMYARD ON PARADE

A charming old-world corner of present-day Suzanne. The village was abandoned, in the March Retreat, during the general night retirement of the 25th of the month. Earlier in the day "the 35th Division and its attendant detachments, undismayed by the danger of envelopment, [had] put up a magnificent fight against at least five German divisions" (*Official History*). This had occurred some way east of Suzanne, but they were the same troops who wearily trekked westward through the village during the subsequent hours of darkness. Suzanne's recapture was effected on August 26th, 1918.

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Field Ambulances is at times apt to be overlooked. The main centre of medical activity was at Ypres, to which the wounded were brought back from the regimental aid posts by horse and motor vehicles, and whence they were evacuated largely by the newly-formed Motor Ambulance Convoys, which thus served as an intermediate link between the Divisional Field Ambulances and the railway in every case where the loads were not run straight through by road to the hospitals.

When Transport Met "Head On"

It cannot be said that at this period the task of feeding the troops, compactly situated as they were, presented much complexity, except in respect of the prompt movement of transport columns. The obstacle to this last was the action of the French, who used a system of circular routes for their supply without regard to the British in the vicinity, and frequently changed the route without notification. Thus it sometimes happened that motor transport met "head on" on Belgian roads paved only for the width of one vehicle, with deep mud on either side. And the proverbial mud of Flanders, with which the British Army was once again renewing acquaintance, more than lived up to its reputation that dreadful winter.

But if comparatively straightforward, the task of the transport units was one of arduous and unremitting labour—the more so because movement in the forward areas had to be carried out by night. There was an ever-increasing volume of material in the shape of engineer, ordnance, and other stores to be brought up for the purpose of ameliorating the conditions of the troops; and as to the manner in which this task was effected, the words of the *Official History*[1] will be proudly read by every man who participated in the work:

"The dangers and hazards of getting ammunition and supplies into, and the wounded out of the Salient each night were immense. The columns were brought to a certain rendezvous and then taken over by guides who knew how to avoid the areas most favoured by the German artillery. By careful observation of the areas and routes that the Germans shelled—of course, on a methodical programme—it was possible after a little time for the R.A., R.A.S.C. and R.A.M.C., and regimental transport

[1] Vol. III, page 266.

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

DRAWING RATIONS

Drawing rations from the railhead at Écuires, near Montreuil-sur-Mer, on June 28th, 1917. A typical ration issued to troops in the field on the Western Front is that given in the January—July, 1916, volume of the *Official History* as having been in force during 1915-16. Disregarding minor reductions and increases made at different dates, this consisted of: Meat (fresh or frozen), 1¼ lb.; bread, 1¼ lb., or biscuit or flour, ¾ lb.; bacon, 4 oz.; cheese, 3 oz.; vegetables, fresh 8 oz., or dried 2 oz.; tea, ⅛ oz.; jam 4 oz.; sugar, 3 oz.; salt, ½ oz.; mustard, 1/10 oz.; pepper, 1/16 oz.; milk, condensed, 1/16 tin; pickles, 1 oz.; oatmeal, thrice weekly as an extra; butter, as an extra.

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Photo: A. J. Insall.

THE LONGUEAU SIDINGS, AMIENS

All who were concerned with supply during the critical days of 1918 will remember the great Longueau sidings at Amiens, which played so important a part in the transport both of troops and of stores. In peace-time, too, they are still of considerable, if no longer of paramount, importance; and above is a photograph of the many tracks and trucks characterising the scene at the present day. Longueau village lies 2 km. distant from the south-eastern side of the town, in the angle formed by the junction of the Avre with the Somme.

which had to go back across the canal, to the refilling points, to bring their columns through without heavy casualties; but shelled the enemy never so furiously, the transport moved slowly and deliberately, without lights, never pausing on its way except to avoid a shell hole or clear a lorry that had been hit. So ammunition and supplies were brought up and wounded got away. It was a marvellous display of cold-blooded courage and discipline which greatly impressed those who heard, although they could seldom see, the long procession of vehicles that went up night after night."

A Plea for Ex-War Horses

There can be none, however, of the many who must recall those activities, who will wish us to omit a just tribute to the thousands of noble animals which played a humble, and yet a vital, part in them. The transport service knows its quadrupeds no longer, and for them it is well. But the passing of the horse and his sturdy comrade the mule has removed a humanising influence which nothing can replace.

Soldiers of the Great War will share—nay, will lead—the growing indignation that out of no less than 80,000 of their old friends subsequently sold abroad, many still survive in terrible conditions. It is good to know of the noble work of Our Dumb Friends' League in rescuing, when possible, these heroes, but such rescue work is both difficult and costly, and much still remains to be done.

At the end of 1914 the British forces comprised eleven infantry and five cavalry divisions (a year later there were no less than 30 of the former), to meet which augmentation the Army Service Corps had increased proportionately; by July 31st, 1916, when the First Battle of the Somme had been raging for a month, its numbers in France had reached 3,396 officers and 119,493 other ranks, or roughly eight per cent. of the entire B.E.F. Nor must it be supposed that the whole of this personnel was employed on duties which normally pertained to the maintenance services, for among the most prominent of the steps taken to strengthen British fighting-power was the creation of heavy artillery which could be drawn only by mechanical transport.

Since the Corps was, among other things, the mechanical transport corps of the Army, it fell to it to provide the drivers and motor mechanics for this portion of the artillery Arm. In consequence no less than 20,000 of its men were, by the above date, serving as an integral part of various fighting units. Thus numbers of A.S.C. soldiers really never saw the War at all from the point of view of supplies, of transport of supplies, or of clerical duties, but purely from that of their fighting brethren.

Dissipating a Myth

At this stage it is well to dissipate certain widely-held misconceptions to the effect that the Corps absorbed vast numbers of able-bodied men who might

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Photo: A. J. Insall.

BERGUES: THE BELFRY

We illustrated the well-known Dunkirk—Bergues—Furnes canal in two pictures situated as far back as page 224 of Volume One. Here, in its modern guise—and it has altered little—we show the equally well-known belfry of the old walled town. Standing some 8 km. south-south-east of Dunkirk, this tower was a landmark for miles round over the flat country. Bergues was a centre familiar to many a British Tommy.

have been more valuably employed with the hard-pressed infantry. Early in the War the Supply and Transport Directorate at the War Office realised the prior claim of the infantry to the fittest of the man-power available, and the initial measures taken included the cutting-down of the establishments of all units, not excepting those in the field, while at the same time opening the door ever wider to recruits of inferior physique.

As time went on, this procedure was elaborated by a drastic comb-out of lines-of-communication units, which did not exclude those in skilled trades. On one occasion 1,000 butchers from the Aldershot depôt were transferred *en bloc* to the infantry, and left cheering wildly at the idea of their services being required for a less scientific mode of killing than that for which they had enlisted. The majority of these men went to one battalion.

Again, there will be many who remember the Base Horse Transport Depôt at Le Havre. By 1917 the combing process had extended to the horsed trains, which, consisting of divisional troops, and therefore serving under more arduous conditions than those farther back, had been left to the last. It was hard for these men, a fair proportion of whom were pre-War Regulars, to leave their horses and the divisions with which they had been associated for anything up to three years; but thousands of them were assembled at their own Base Depôt, and were sent thence for a brief infantry training at Le Havre.

It deserves to be recorded that their spirit when returning "up the line" in their new rôle was admirable, and in this connection one incident at least may be related. In the autumn of 1917 some battalions of the 60th Rifles had, after a gallant resistance, been overwhelmed by a crack German Marine corps near Nieuport. The British units had but recently received large drafts of A.S.C. drivers; and the adjutant of one battalion, who survived the fighting, wrote to the officer commanding the Corps Depôt at Le Havre, asking whether he could arrange for further men from the same source to be provided for the re-constitution of the unit, as those who had previously been incorporated had conducted themselves so splendidly in face of the enemy.

Large Transfers to Fighting Arms

During the course of the War no less than 1,200 officers and over 82,000 other ranks of the Corps were transferred to the fighting Arms, these figures of course being exclusive of those who, as mentioned above, were employed with those Arms without losing their original identity.

It has already been noted how the conditions of position warfare operated towards the simplification of the maintenance services. Yet, paradoxically enough, those conditions in no way diminished the weight of the burden that fell upon the transport in general. In some respects they actually enhanced it, and the reasons for this lay in the fact that—as was exemplified in every great advance in the West except the last—whenever the initial impetus of the attacker had died away, his troops quickly outran their means of support, and were therefore unable to press to the utmost the advantage they had obtained.

The devastation of the modern battlefield, churned up as it was by explosives, rendered support a complicated and difficult problem. It was obviously useless to push forward infantry and machine gunners if the necessary assistance in the shape of ammunition, supplies, and artillery could not simultaneously be got forward.

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The continuation and extension of an initial success depended, therefore, fundamentally on transport—that is, in the capacity to move large bodies of men rapidly from one part of the line to another, and to develop forward communications so that the troops could continue, as they advanced, to give battle under the same or approximately the same conditions as at the beginning of their forward movement.

The *Official History*[1] puts the matter in a nutshell: "The control by the higher commanders of the actual fighting once it had begun remained almost negligible; and their efforts were then best directed to ensuring the provision of ammunition, rations, water, and the special stores and material required so that their men might fight to best advantage." These considerations go to emphasise the vital share that the transport units played in tactical operations.

The London Omnibus Abroad

In the movement of troops the London omnibuses accomplished valuable work. During the earlier phases of the War the sight of these vehicles, complete with their signs and advertisements, plying the roads much as they did at home, gave a homely touch to the foreign scenes which evoked no little hilarity. But the bus soon assumed the sober, dull green garb of other Army vehicles; and by the end of 1916, the omnibus companies, seven in all, of which one consisted of charabancs, had all been concentrated under G.H.Q., at Valéry-sur-Somme. Subsequently they were based at intervals along the main trunk road through Amiens—Doullens—St. Pol into the Ypres sector.

The strength of the whole then amounted to 650 vehicles, manned by 1,800 all ranks; and their capacity was that of the dismounted troops of a division. How effectively the Auxiliary Omnibus Park, as it was designated, could operate, is indicated by the fact that it was able to move within one hour of the receipt of its orders, while the process of embussing a division seldom took more than half-an-hour. The record for a brigade of infantry was 4½ minutes.

During the German offensive of 1918 many of its "moves" were of a vital nature, and among those which may be picked out were: that of the entire 12th Division from the First Army into the gap at Albert, during March; that of a Guards brigade into the breach near Strazeele, during the same critical period; and that of a large portion of the Canadian and Australian Army Corps from the Arras sector to Amiens, this last transportation being carried out mainly by night.

In the course of these undertakings the bus-drivers were often at the wheel for periods of up to 60 hours at a stretch. For its services during the enemy's final offensive the Omnibus Park was mentioned by name in the despatches of the Commander-in-Chief, being the only Army Service Corps unit in the B.E.F. to receive that distinction during the whole campaign.

[1] Vol. III, page 355.

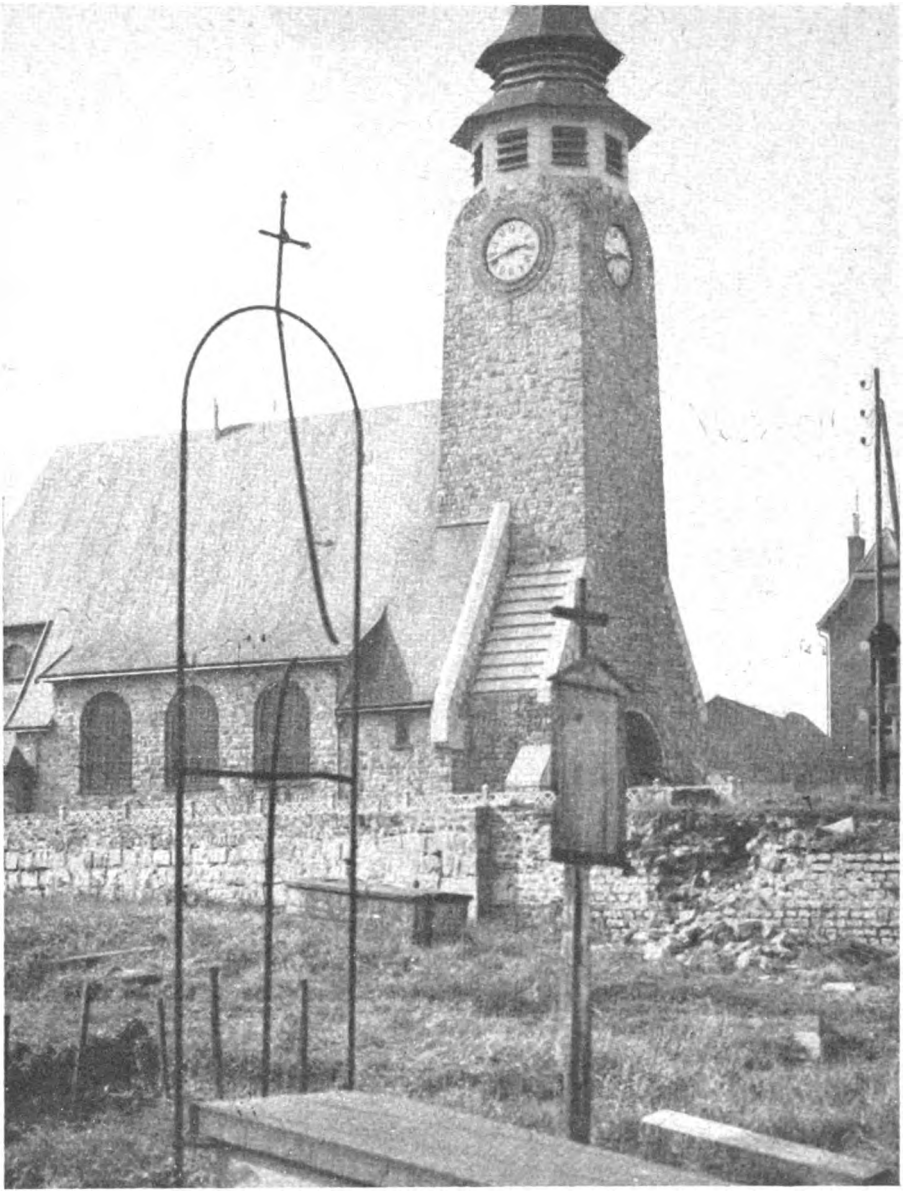

Photo: G. T. Watson.

REMINDERS AT BOIRY-STE. RICTRUDE

Contrasting aspects of the sugar factory which is the dominating feature of this south-of-Arras village appeared on pages 842-3 and 1114 of Volume Two. Above we present a view of the modern church. As in one or two other instances, the shapeless remnants of the former building were preserved as a memorial, while the new edifice was reared alongside. The old churchyard also was not tampered with, and to-day bears many evidences, such as the broken ironwork in the foreground, of the hard times which befell it.

An Army Service Corps V.C.

It was, too, during the fighting in the spring of 1918 that Private R. G. Masters of the A.S.C., a driver attached to the 141st Field Ambulance, won the Victoria Cross near Béthune, on April 9th. The Corps were justly proud of his deed, as exemplifying at its highest the work which they were unremittingly carrying out. The citation from the *London Gazette* of May 8th, 1918, ran:

"For most conspicuous bravery and devotion to duty. Owing to an enemy attack, communications were cut off and wounded could not be evacuated.

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The road was reported impassable, but Private Masters volunteered to try and get through, and after the greatest difficulty succeeded, although he had to clear the road of all sorts of debris. He made journey after journey throughout the afternoon, over a road consistently shelled and swept by machine-gun fire and was on one occasion bombed by an aeroplane. The greater part of the wounded cleared from this area were evacuated by Private Masters, as his was the only car that got through during this particular time."

It is the final phase of the struggle on the Western front, with its tense drama, that is most impressed on the minds of those living to-day. The long, swaying battle, which began on March 21st and ended on November 11th, has for those who belonged to the Mechanical Transport branch of the Corps its own special memories, in that it exemplified a more effective and scientific use of the vehicles they operated. During the previous winter, when the French railway system had showed ominous signs of collapsing under the tremendous strain to which it had been subjected, a reorganisation of the mechanical transport had been carried through as a precaution against railway breakdowns.

The policy involved the principle that the lorries were to be "pooled" for common use, and, except in a few isolated instances, were not to be particularised for any specific service. In place of divisional ammunition parks, army, divisional, and corps-troops supply columns, and similar units, mechanical transport companies were organised on a universal establishment of a headquarters and a number of sections containing 16 lorries each.

The "Balance of Savings"

These measures secured an economy in vehicles as well as in personnel, and effected a greater output of work per vehicle and per man than before. But the new companies which were lucky enough, for the time being, at any rate, to find themselves relegated to the "balance of savings" that was accruing, were all either put into a general reserve or formed into companies for emergency use by G.H.Q. All were to pull every ounce of their weight before the end.

The new grouping fully justified itself during the enemy offensive of 1918 and the Allied advance which followed; nor is it too much to say that it largely rendered possible the continuity of pressure exerted by us in the autumn. To take the first situation: the German thrust was directed against certain vital railway centres behind the Allied front, and the over-running of such important

Photo: A. P., Paris.

THE RUINS OF NOREUIL, SEPTEMBER 13TH, 1918

Noreuil, a village on the Hirondelle 3 km. west-south-west of Quéant and 5 km. south-east of Croisilles, was the scene of heavy fighting in two successive springtides—those of 1917 and 1918—and again in the late summer of the latter year. On March 19th, 1917, British cavalry were in touch here with the rearguard of the retiring Germans; but on April 15th the enemy struck back, launching an attack with some 16 battalions on our positions between Noreuil and Hermies. He made, however, no permanent gains. There is now an Australian cemetery at Noreuil, containing 182 Australian and 64 United Kingdom fallen of the years 1917 and 1918.

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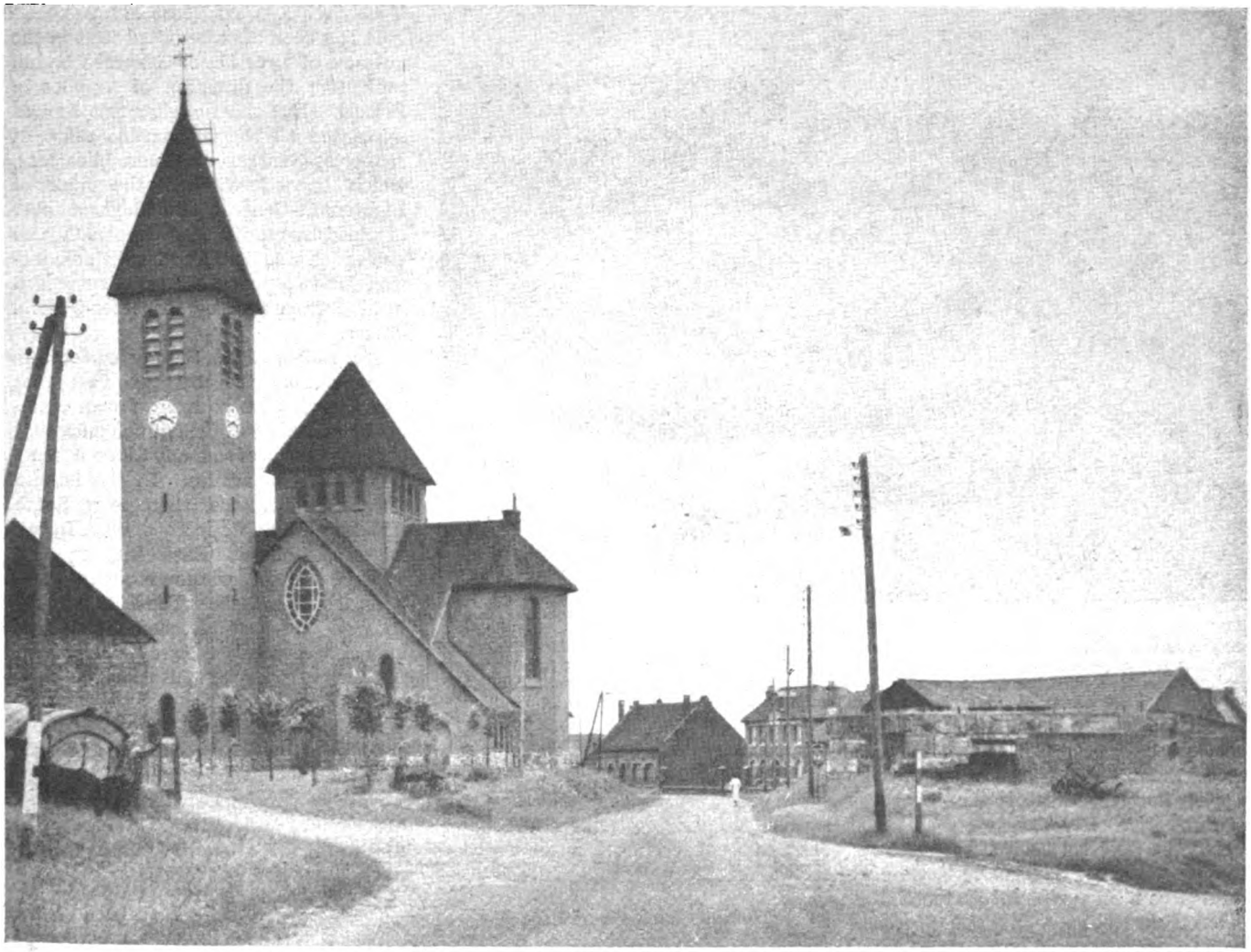

Photo: A. J. Insall.

CHURCH AND PILL-BOX (ON RIGHT OF ROAD)

On March 21st, 1918, Noreuil lay in the battle zone of the sector held by the 59th Division. The 2/5th Sherwood Foresters and an R.E. detachment, manning the defences, were attacked about 10.40 a.m. The Germans were met by a heavy fire, and presently withheld their frontal attack, as a flanking movement was developing up the Hirondelle valley. Despite measures to check it, this flank attack was entirely successful; Noreuil was taken, and the British holding the trenches in front of it were cut off. Reduced to 150 men, the Sherwoods clung on desperately until 12.30 p.m., when a runner brought news of supports in a trench only 500 yards to the rear. A retirement was ordered; but it was just too late, and the majority of the little band were wiped out, only a tiny handful escaping after fighting until 3 o'clock.

lateral lines as the Amiens—Achiet—Arras route, and the interruption by shell fire of the line Hazebrouck—St. Pol—Amiens—St. Just interfered gravely with proper rail working. Owing to the difficulties of finding return circuits for empty rolling stock, congestion and delays occurred in the main forward lines, and it became necessary to select railheads far back.

Demands were also made on the British for maintenance of French, American, and Portuguese troops, and for feeding civilians. In these circumstances the railways became hopelessly overweighted, and the situation had to be met by mechanical transport.

These were anxious and strenuous days—but even more arduous were the ones which followed. From the late summer onwards events moved with incredible rapidity. The Hindenburg Line was smashed at the end of September, and early in the following month the German right wing in Flanders was driven in and the coast cleared. The onward sweep of hundreds of thousands of men and thousands of guns, in face of a resistance still obstinate, and over a devastated country, was indisputably one of the most extensive military operations of all time.

The question of how long our pressure could have been continued had the enemy succeeded in disengaging himself and making a stand on the Rhine is an intriguing one. The Allies could not have operated indefinitely at a distance from their railheads, and the events of the three months preceding November 11th had already, as regards both men and material, put a strain on the A.S.C. mechanical transport formations which could not be kept up at the same tension for a much longer period. The personnel were utterly exhausted, and the vehicles much knocked about. The first fortnight of November marked the highest point of service and effort.

Behind the Final Advance

The speed with which the enemy had been driven back left the railways far behind; and since the Germans had, of course, destroyed the whole system within their areas as they retreated, supplies, ammunition, and stores had to be carried over execrable roads, in execrable weather. Bridges had everywhere been blown up; the routes were strewn with the bodies of the dead and wounded and the wreckage of war. At times, owing to delay-action mines and

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Photo: Imperial War Museum.

AWAITING REPAIR

A heterogeneous collection of worn-out cars, lorries, etc., awaiting renovation at the Base Mechanical Transport Depôt, Rouen, shortly after the arduous days of the March Retreat and the fighting on the Lys. The terrible condition of the roads, coupled with the frequent damage caused by shrapnel, shell-splinters, etc., made the wear and tear on vehicles extremely heavy.

other causes, the supply trains could not reach their distant railheads, while supplies had constantly to be drawn by night.

Had the problem been merely one of feeding the troops, it most certainly could have been solved for an indefinite period; but to have brought forward the vast quantities of ammunition and battle stores required for equipping a further serious offensive would have entailed more than could have been achieved, in view of the destruction done to roads and railways by the beaten enemy.

It was, in fact, recognised by the High Command early in October that a prolonged winter campaign would be impracticable; and measures were under consideration for a methodical advance in the spring of 1919, when the forward lines of communication should have been put in order.

Having recalled certain of the salient features of Army Service Corps' activities and responsibilities in the field in the western theatre—where, incidentally, its casualties amounted to nearly 10,000, including some 3,700 killed—it yet remains to say something of the part played by it in the huge machine comprised by the bases and lines of communication, which generated the power by which the army lived, moved, and fought. True, what may be termed the "business" side of war is prosaic as compared with the sterner aspects; but since huge numbers of men were necessarily employed thereon, and are justly sensible of having done the "bit" demanded of them, it is fitting that their share should be recognised.

The A.S.C.'s Highest Ever

It has been already noted that in the autumn of 1914 Major-General Clayton took over the direction of supplies in France. But shortly after this he was appointed to the responsible office of Inspector-General of Communications, which carried with it the rank of Lieutenant-General, the highest ever attained by an officer of the A.S.C., and one which was held by him with distinction for two years. He was succeeded in his former post by Brigadier-General Carter.

The duties of the Supply Directorate were complicated by the fact that provision had to be made for an extraordinary variety of foodstuffs, on account of the presence of so many different races in the British armies. In the Labour Corps, for instance, there were South African natives, Cape Boys, West Indian negroes, Chinese, East Indians, and Fijians, all of whom required their several special diets. The East Indians, to give one example, demanded their own native meal, their own substitute for butter, plenty of split peas, and their own condiments.

The care needed in the issuing and accounting will be gathered from the fact that the scales of rations included quantities varying between 1/100th part of an ounce and 1½ lb. The Americans upset all calculations by refusing to eat mutton. This was at first issued to

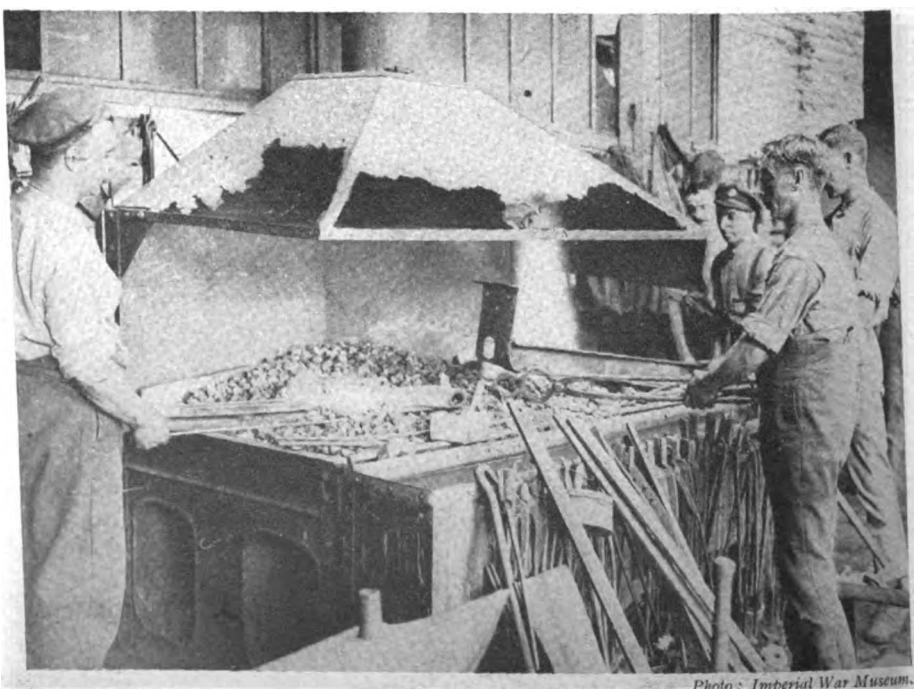

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

"... THE VILLAGE SMITHY STANDS"

A photograph of smiths working at a forge belonging to the 1st Heavy Repair Shop of the Mechanical Transport section of the A.S.C. on July 24th, 1918. This repair shop was situated at St. Denis, on the northern outskirts of Paris. The two others dealing with heavy transport were situated at Rouen and St. Omer respectively.

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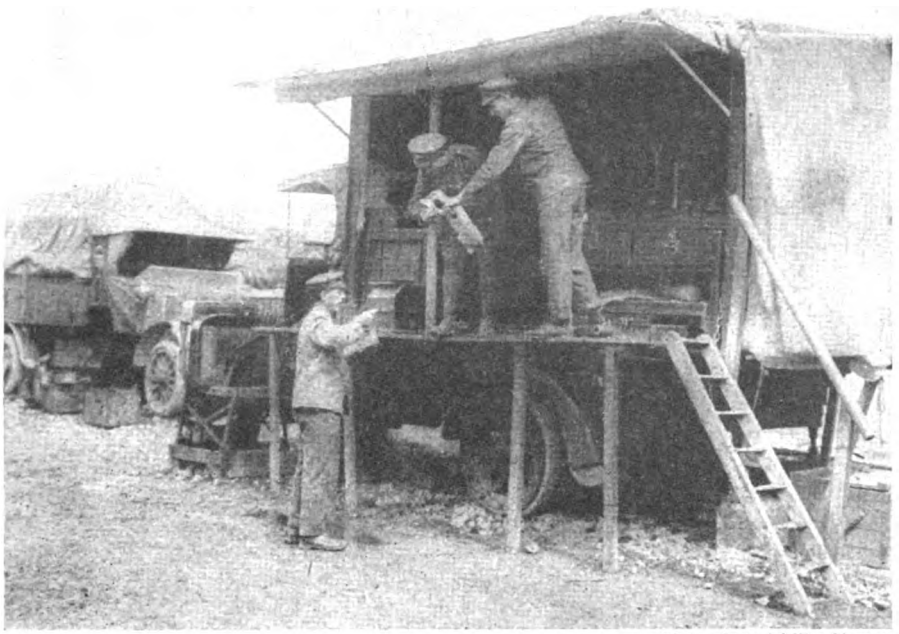

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

A TRAVELLING WORKSHOP

One of a number of travelling workshops, housed in lorries, with which the Army Service Corps was able to undertake "odd jobs" of various kinds. This lorry is seen at Poperinghe on August 22nd, 1917. The repair units of the Corps in 1918 numbered three, in addition to which there were a number of A.S.C. labour companies. A second Base M.T. Depôt was situated at Calais.

them in the same proportion as to other troops, but when it was discovered that they simply treated it as carrion and buried it, beef had to be substituted.

Of the base supply depôts Rouen easily held the record for the highest daily feeding strength, its average throughout 1918 being 1,294,936 men. But among the others Calais, Boulogne, and Le Havre dealt with enormous numbers. With respect to bread, the highest combined output of the Corps bakeries in France for a single day was 1,735,418 lb.—figures which testify to both the continuity and the intensity of the work.

The demand for petrol for aircraft and mechanical transport grew to dimensions never previously visualised. The largest depôts for this commodity were located at Calais and Rouen, and attached to them were refilling and repairing plants, as well as can and case-making factories. Aerial ropeways kept the depôts in constant touch with the refilling plants —and, incidentally, by the saving of transport thus effected, paid for the cost of their erection in less than two months. The record petrol issue was attained by Calais, whose monthly average during 1918 was nearly 8,000,000 gallons.

The Fuel Problem

The provision of fuel presents a feature of some interest. In the summer of 1915 the French Government was compelled to prohibit local purchases of coal, owing to the needs of its munition works. Rolling-stock had then become so scanty on the railways that it was impracticable to send the fuel up from the bases, so an expedient was arrived at by which the British authorities drew their requirements from the Bruay mines, while an equivalent quantity was replaced by sea at St. Malo, Brest, and Cherbourg. The consumption of the B.E.F. came to a total of close on 2¼ million tons.

The maxim of von Moltke that "no army food is too expensive" was faithfully observed by the War Office; but early in 1917, when the necessity of economy was becoming more and more urgent, an innovation came into force. Two rations were established: one for the troops on the fighting front, and the other, slightly lower, for those on the lines of communication. There was also a separate diet for enemy prisoners, which consisted of the not ungenerous quantity of nine ounces of bread, six ounces of fresh or frozen meat five days a week, and ten ounces of salted herrings or sprats on the other two days.

Coffee, tea, sugar, potatoes and other vegetables, rice, oatmeal, jam, and cheese, were likewise issued to them at a proportion somewhat lower than that for British troops. But they always had ample for a healthy existence, and our men in Germany would have been grateful for half that amount. In general, however, rations were elastic, adapting themselves to season and to locality; and there was also a system of substitution to add variety to the food. Sardines, tinned herrings, veal, and

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

DELIVERING WATER

A water-tank lorry delivering its precious fluid into a roadside watering-point in a forward area. On the back of the vehicle is the sign "H_2O"—the chemical formula for water—which was the special mark of the 4th Water Tank Company, Mechanical Transport, A.S.C. The organisation of water-supply fell to the lot of the Royal Engineers.

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sausages all came into the menus at times.

For the purposes of supply, the north of France was divided into two districts, northern and southern. The northern lines of communication included the major ports of entry of Calais and Boulogne, and were responsible for the feeding of three of the five British armies in the field ; on the southern line were the three major ports of Dieppe, Le Havre, and Rouen, which dealt with the remaining two armies.

Those who served in this connection will remember a slight difference in the method of operation of the two groups. By reason of the proximity of the northern bases to the front, supplies—until an advanced depôt was opened at Outreau—went practically straight from the base to the railhead; on the southern line they went in bulk to the advanced depôt at Abancourt, whence they were reconsigned in railway trains before proceeding to railhead.

A Mass of Transport

On the transport side the scope was equally comprehensive. Starting with 950 lorries and 250 motor-cars in 1914, the A.S.C. controlled at the time of the Armistice no less than 33,500 lorries, 1,400 tractors, and 13,800 motor-cars, besides thousands of motor-cycles. By the system obtaining at the outset, all heavy repairs to mechanical vehicles were executed in the workshops of the Army Ordnance Department, only light running repairs being left to the mobile workshops of the Corps.

The campaign was but a few months old, however, when it was found that these arrangements were totally inadequate, as the Ordnance Department could not cope with the work. Accordingly the whole business was taken over from it with results that were in the highest degree satisfactory. For the A.S.C., after all, embodied all the best motor experience that the Army possessed ; and that experience was constantly being reinforced by some of the ablest brains in the motor world, who naturally offered themselves where their services could be most fully utilised.

Four heavy repair shops were ultimately established, at Paris, Le Havre, and Rouen (two). Paris and Rouen dealt with lorries—Rouen also handling bicycles—while Le Havre was responsible for ambulances and motor-cars. The present writer has good cause to remember the chief Rouen repair shop, for it was at a spot about twenty miles away that he succeeded in wrecking the Rolls-Royce of the C.I.G.S. when taking

Photo : A. J.

THE ROAD TO AMIENS

Or to Albert, as the case may be : the two towns being at either end of it. The stretch of highway shown lies just west of Querrieu, about 8 km. out of Amiens. At this village, incidentally, is the only kink in a thoroughfare otherwise as straight as a gun-barrel. Such war-history as Querrieu possesses has already been related beneath our illustrations of the village, and of the château which once housed Fourth Army H.Q.

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it back to Versailles. But the extensive damage was put right so expeditiously that Sir Henry Wilson, who was in England for a few days, was never any the wiser on his return. Nor was he enlightened!

But the repair shops, and the Retrieving Section which supplemented their activities by producing from damaged stock or from manufacture items of which there was a particular shortage, were merely a fraction of the base organisation of mechanical transport. There were also base and advanced M.T. depôts, the two representatives of the former being located respectively at Rouen and Calais, while the latter was at Abbeville until 1918, when, owing to the interruption to work caused by the intensive air raids on that town, it was moved back to Calais.

At a Base M.T. Depôt

With road mechanical transport in its infancy so far as war was concerned, there was little precedent on which to act in the running of these units, which assuredly were faced with some "job." Should any still entertain the idea that base work was necessarily "cushy," a glance at the particular activities involved will surely dispel any such illusion. The functions of the Base M.T. Depôt comprised the provision of personnel, spare vehicles, and spare parts. Of this trilogy the most important item was spare parts, and this may therefore receive attention first.

The original plan was for such parts to be supplied from home on what was known as the "10 per cent," schedule, which had been drawn up on expert commercial advice. In practice, however, this proved unnecessarily cumbersome, and the principle of automatic supply presented considerable difficulties. Masses of stores were sent over in unequal proportions, resulting in large surpluses of articles for which there was scant demand. Consequently, within a few months, a reduced scale, based on the three most important articles required by any number of vehicles above 100, was introduced in lieu of the original plan.

Another complication was that of nomenclature. Different makers used different names for the same article, and some even changed the names of their manufactures from time to time. As it was clearly impossible to induce them to standardise the names of parts, this job had to be done in the depôt, and work on it began in 1915. It took two years to compile vocabularies for every type of vehicle in use in the Army, and the magnitude of the task may be gauged from the fact that it had been estimated by experts that it would take five years.

The reserve vehicle park for complete replacements was organised in four divisions, two for new and repaired vehicles, one for captured German vehicles, and one for those awaiting despatch to England. Then there was the personnel branch for M.T. reinforcements, of which over 200,000 passed through the Rouen depôt alone during the War, these including Canadians, Australians, New Zealanders, and South Africans, and representing no less than thirty trades.

Photo: G. T. Watson.

A CURTAINED WAY

This splendid aisle is in marked contrast with the dark and lordly poplars opposite. The view was taken between St. Omer and Ardres, on the road to Calais. The thoroughfare is among those which may be called a *via dolorosa*, for many a soldier passed down its tree-fringed length on the first stage of his journey to the line, and not a few came back along it gravely wounded; while some did not come back at all. . . .

The Great Fire of Calais

Those associated with the Calais depôt will not have forgotten the air raid which took place on that town on August 11th, 1918, when 60 bombs were dropped, and a conflagration started in the depôt which could not be got under until a large section had been destroyed. The spare parts of some 19,000 cars and lorries were lost, together with the whole of the ledger cards and records of 14 makes of vehicle. The difficulty of obtaining assistance was increased by the fact that the depôt camp was also hit by three bombs, which killed 8 and wounded 27 men.

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Photo: A. P., Paris.

'A VIEW OF ANGRES

This general view of the ruined village of Angres was taken by a French photographer on July 19th, 1917. The place was, however, in British hands at the time, having previously been in German.

But fortunately three hangars and the central stores offices were saved, and their records were used to such effect that by August 14th a complete replacement order for the stock lost, comprising nearly 1,000 pages of typewritten foolscap, was despatched by special messenger to England. Within six days 1,600 cases had been received from the Home Depôt, while by the end of September the arrival of a further 13,000 made the situation again normal. The estimated value of the material destroyed was between one and one-and-a-half million pounds sterling.

As a side-line to its other activities, the Calais depôt ran its own fire brigade, which, owing to the bombing to which the town was subjected from 1916 onwards, was kept fully occupied, turning out for no less than 90 fires in the area, 40 of which occurred on premises occupied by the French and Belgian Governments and by private individuals. One member of the brigade, which consisted of experienced firemen, received the M.S.M., and three others the Croix de Guerre for gallantry.

The Advanced M.T. Depôt had its own rôle to play, which consisted of holding for immediate issue to units the stocks of spare parts and accessories. These were stored on the basis of 10 days' requirements as a minimum and 30 days' as a maximum, calculated on the demands received from units during the previous 30 days. The business-like operations of this unit may be gauged from the twofold fact that in its move from Abbeville to Calais, referred to above, over 1,000 tons of its varied stores were moved in 87 hours with the loss of only £57 worth, and that its functions were resumed at the new site within 48 hours of departure from the old.

The subject would not be complete without mention of the Schools of Instruction, which, starting as parts of the Rouen and Calais Base Depôts, were in 1916 transferred as a separate and single establishment to St. Omer. During its career this school trained some 10,000 men.

Photo: G. T. Wilson.

STILL BUILDING

Angres stands on the small River Carency—or Souchez, if you prefer; the same stream has both names—1½ km. south-west of Liévin, and 5 km. west-south-west of Lens. It was first entered by British troops on April 13th, 1917, during our north-westward drive along both banks of the Souchez river. At this time we were attacking on a 50-mile front stretching from Loos to west of Cambrai.

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Concerning Horse Transport

Finally, something may be recorded as regards the principal installations devoted to animal transport. In the Base Depôt at Le Havre, as already noted, were assembled all reinforcements of drivers and artificers, including those of the Dominions coming from overseas. South Africa, for instance, sent 2,000 Cape Boys, who proved most satisfactory. But the Advanced Horse Transport Depôt, located at Abbeville, had a different function, the most important part of which lay in providing units with complete " turn-outs "—that is, with driver, animals, vehicles, and harness, as a whole. This was found very necessary in the case of units requiring replacements for casualties, and also to meet special demands, such as those issued by newly-formed units, or by divisions arriving in France with transport lacking or incomplete.

Other duties lay in the reception of " turn-outs " evacuated for any reason from the front, the animals being reconditioned and light repairs to vehicles or harness being undertaken ; and in the training of infantry or machine gun transport drivers, many of whom had had but little previous experience with horses. For these, monthly courses were held every month.

In recalling, as we have done, the part played by the Army Service Corps in France, where its personnel numbered some 150,000 at the time of the Armistice, recourse has perforce been had to statistics, since, to some extent, figures alone can serve to impress the scope of the work undertaken. But facts and figures apart, the method and variety of the work done was very striking, and that despite the advantages to be gained from operating in a temperate climate and a civilised country, with proper road and rail communications and large modern towns and ports. In a future chapter we shall turn to theatres where no such favourable conditions obtained.

In theatres other than that of the Western Front the Royal Army Service Corps was called upon to perform miracles of improvisation, but it was up and down the roads of France and Flanders that much of its finest work was done.

Photo : G. T. Watson.

WHERE PARKING PROBLEMS ARE UNKNOWN

Although situated so close to industrial Lens, modern Angres has every appearance of complete rurality. Once in British keeping, it never again passed out of our hands while the War lasted ; and to-day its 2,400 inhabitants include few who are prepared to reminisce, even if they can, about the period of German occupation. Another Angre, without the final " s," lies in Belgium to the south-west of Mons, and was recaptured by the British on November 6th, 1918.

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CHAPTER XXIX

MEMORIES VII.—A GUNNER REVISITS THE SOMME

Many men who served in France and Flanders during the Great War have never been able to return thither. Of those, more fortunate, who have been able to afford the time and the money to revisit the scenes of their war-time activities, some have toured the battlefields as a whole, while others again, like the writer of the present chapter, have wandered off in search of some remote field or hamlet which may hold for them alone memories never to be effaced. The Somme will never be forgotten by those who fought there, and to the Somme many a man has returned in order to conjure up once more the drama that was July 1st, 1916, or the black days of March, 1918.

I HAVE returned to the line in France and Flanders three times, but I shall not go again.

On one occasion I went with two of my closest friends. We became pals by the chance of meeting in the brigade of artillery of which I had been adjutant; and now, six years later, we found ourselves with three days to spare at the end of a walking holiday in the Pyrenees.

Tails for the Somme

Where should we go ? Johnny voted for the sea, but Harold and I had other wishes. We nearly quarrelled, and in the end we tossed a penny. Heads for Deauville, tails for the Somme. Johnny lost, and he came reluctantly. It would be a wash-out, he said ; and, in retrospect, I believe he was right.

It was late August, and the roads were hot and dusty. Food was scarce ; the estaminets were filled with Poles. Strangers tenanted our old billets ; the few who remembered us seemed to have lost interest in the past. Crops were growing in fields through which we wished to pass ; the apples in the back-area orchards were private property.

We could not see the gun positions in the château wood because the gaps in the wall had been rebricked, and the man at the new iron gates was not too friendly. The path through the back gardens had vanished so completely that it might never have existed ; the chalk cutting where the tanks had rested before the Cambrai show was now a canal filled with dirty water.

In the winter of 1925 I went again. This was my last visit, and I went with my wife. It was part of our honeymoon—a strange honeymoon, you may think ; but in those days I was a sentimentalist about the War, and anyhow she wished to see where I had been. We went to Ypres. I still have a snapshot of her standing on the road to Zonnebeke. She is wearing a fine fur coat, but she has neither rifle nor gas mask.

We moved on to Arras. There had been a heavy fall of snow ; it was freezing hard, but the days were brilliantly sunny. We had the countryside to ourselves, and we walked from Lagnicourt to Quéant. . . . " Here was the Hindenburg Line," I said, but in spite of the great sympathy between us I do not think she understood. . . . Yet how could I have expected her to understand ? She was no more than twelve when the War began.

I have left my most important visit until last. In the winter of 1921 I found myself in Bruges—I had been travelling alone from Germany to Spain. " Alone " ; I wish to repeat that word, because I know now that it was best that way. I am fond of Bruges —I like to fancy that it may not be unlike the old Ypres—and there I saw an Australian soldier. Blouse tunic, slouch hat, polished brown boots, nails squeaking on the pavé, I can see and hear him yet.

A " Digger " at Large

I suppose that he, like myself, was sight-seeing ; and we met several times. He was swaggering through the narrow streets with a true Australian roll, and people were turning to stare. We did not speak, but he set alight the train which Bruges with its Flemish names and clattering clogs and old familiar smells had laid.

Fired with sudden resolve, I returned to my hotel and packed my bag. By stealing a day I felt sure it could be done. The railway guide showed me the way—I must spend that night in Lille.

I left Bruges in the late afternoon ; it was too dark to see more of Flanders than the flatness and the poplars. There was an hour to wait at Roulers . . . " Roulers " : here was a name to conjure with. How often, aeroplane photograph in hand, had I steadied my glass over the station to see if old ——'s 9·2-inch gun on the railway spur by Poperinghe had done the damage its owner (a friend of my colonel) claimed . . . And here was I eating a pork chop in the station hotel.

At six next morning I was up. There was, I remember, some difficulty in persuading the night-porter that I had paid my bill overnight ; but by seven I was sitting in the overheated Paris express. At Arras I changed into the *train omnibus* which served all stations to Amiens. My zero hour was approaching, and already I began to feel childishly excited.

My destination was Beugny, a small village of no importance to anyone but me. It lay some five miles from Bapaume along the Cambrai road, and to reach it I must take the light railway from Achiet-le-Grand.

Achiet had not changed much in four years, I decided. The mud and the railway lines looked much the same, and I walked into the road half expecting to find Thompson waiting with the brigade car.

" I hope you had a good leaf, sir ? " he would have said, with his staid grin.

" Tophole, thanks,"—yes, we said " tophole " in those days—I would have replied. " Anything new up the line ? "

And he would have answered, " Jerry's bin quiet these last few days, though he was dropping a few into Morchies on Tuesday ; you could hear them very plain. And I did hear Ninety-five Battery had two or three wounded."

That Vauxhall of Old

And by now I would have been sitting in the Vauxhall, and Thompson would have let in the clutch with a jerk—he

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always let the clutch in with a jerk when the colonel wasn't present—and twenty minutes later we would have been in Beugny. The colonel would have been seated in the office with the map-board before him.

"Hullo. You back?" he would have growled. "Help me with these pin-points, there's a good fellow. . . ."

But, alas! the only car to be seen was an old Ford which muddily announced that it was for hire at 40 francs an hour, or 200 francs for the whole day; and I turned back into the station and bought a ticket.

My train was waiting. It consisted of three small and remarkably uncomfortable carriages, and it was nearly full. A number of parcels and packages and hens in crates and animals in sacks were thrown from the platform into the van, and off we went. I stood on the little platform at the end of the last carriage, but the tantalising morning mists—the same old mists—were down, and I could hardly see a thing.

It was through my ears, indeed, that I first became aware how much the times had changed. We had pulled up in the mist. There were some dim buildings, and the guard ran up and down shouting, "BeeveeYAY! BeeveeYAY!" What was he saying? Trying to tell me Biefvillers was no longer known as Beef Villas? . . . It was hard to believe—perhaps because I did not wish to believe it; but none the less it was true.

On again. The mists were lifting.

Photo: A. J. Insall.

AN OLD VILLAGE MILL

This charming scene is to be found at Daours, a village on the Amiens—Péronne route 4 km. west of Corbie, and consequently just outside the limit of the enemy's advance in March—April, 1918. Daours was known to many troops out of the line, and in May, 1916, was made the point of departure of a 10-mile branch railway constructed from the Amiens—Albert line to the new ammunition dump in the course of being formed at Contay.

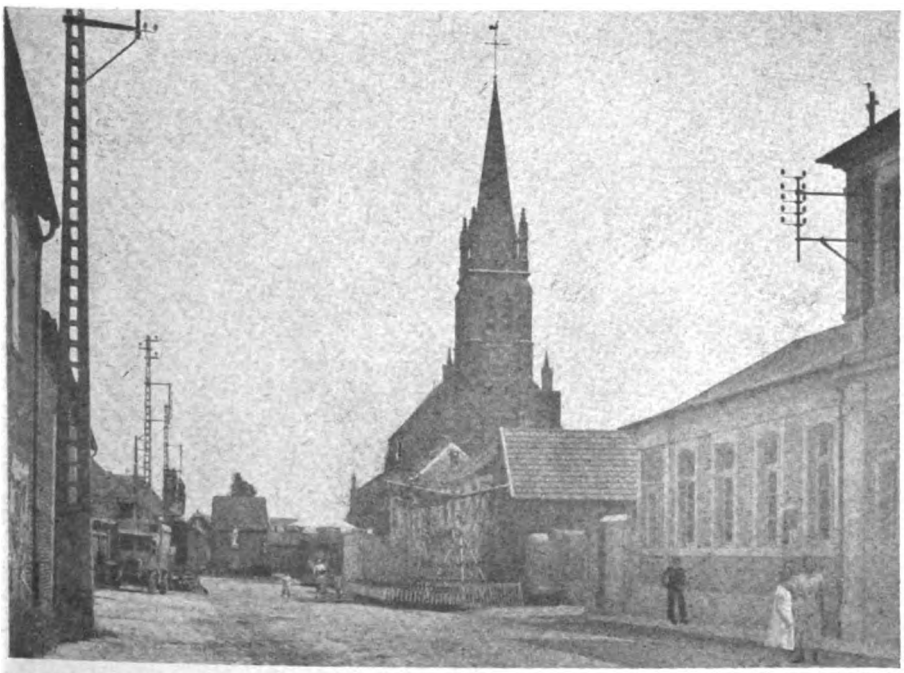

Photo: A. J. Insall.

A VILLAGE FAIR, ETINEHEM

Etinehem is situated on the north bank of the Somme 3 km. south-west of Bray, and during the morning of March 26th, 1918, was behind the lines of the 35th Division, VII Corps. The unfortunate retirement of that corps later in the day—it was due to a misunderstanding, and was directly contrary to Third Army H.Q.'s intentions—left this village to the enemy. Thereupon emergency troops of the XIX Corps, south of the river, had to be rushed up to guard the crossing, which they did until early on the 27th.

This bit of country looked familiar, and we stopped a second time. "FRAYmeecour! FRAYmeecour!" the guard was shouting now—Frémicourt. . . . But, FRAYmeecour or Fremmycourt, it was the same little hamlet in which the 51st and the 56th Divisions had lived during our time. Here one fine morning I had gone in best bib and tucker to apologise to an angry brigadier because one of our gunners, less soldierly than most, when ordered to fire a musketry course on the divisional range, had shot a Black Watch sergeant through the arm. . . . A peculiarly unsporting shot, too, I recollected, since the sergeant had been sleeping in his tent.

There Was Once a Château

And so we came to Beugny. I looked about me with doubtful eyes. "Beugny-au-Château," the station board insisted. And there was now a Café de la Gare outside the station gates. I had not breakfasted, I remembered, and I entered. I asked for an omelette, but there were no eggs. *San fairy ann*, coffee and bread and jam would do. While I was waiting I inspected the rack of postcards by the door. Yes, they confirmed it—"Beugny-au-Château."

"Why 'au-Château'?" I asked Madame suddenly.

"Why not? Before the War there was a château here."

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"Never!"

"But yes, m'sieu. Only a small one, it is true."

"Where?" I was still incredulous.

"Beside the church."

I drank my coffee in silence. How could my halting French explain that the Beugny we knew was so flat that few of us discovered even the church?

I paid my bill and hurried through the village to brigade headquarters. The sunken lane began as muddily as ever, the tree-stumps at the corner greeted me as sadly. On the site of our stables a small house had been erected. Its owner was working in the garden, and I felt inclined to tell him that by digging down 18 inches below his front door he would without doubt find the mortal remains of Jenny the cable cart-horse, killed early on March 21st.

Our garage had gone, but the chalk-heap beside it—spoil from the mined dug-out—remained. Our line of shacks in the road-bank had gone, too. I recalled that they had been dismantled by the Germans during the summer of '18; but it was easy to identify the scars where once they had stood—the Colonel's, the Doc's, the Sergeant-major's, mine. Mine, as snug a home as I have ever had, was filled with rubbish—stones, a rusting tangle of barbed wire, shell cases, steel helmets of both sides, blown tins that had once contained bully-beef.

Searching the road-bank for the mined dug-out, I walked on; but both entrances had vanished without trace. No doubt with the removal of the supporting timber the shafts had collapsed during the winter rains. A haycock had been built beside the ruins of the office hut, and another was standing on the near crest beyond—in full view of the Hindenburg Line.

Across the Open to Morchies

The roadway itself had been re-metalled, and I could find no evidence of the numerous shell-holes of March 21st. There was nothing else to see, I felt, and I scrambled up the bank and struck across the open for Morchies, as I had done many times before. The grass seemed as tough and as rank; there was the same clean smell of damp winter earth. The contours of the ridges before me looked the same. Beugny, 500 yards away to my right, was its misty self.

The day was very quiet, but there had been many similar days during the winter months of '17. A light breeze was blowing from the east, and instinctively I tuned my ears to catch the slow whistle and the distant, echoing crash which announced the arrival of yet another 5·9 in Lagnicourt or Doignies or Beaumetz.... But all I

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

ADVANCING THROUGH ÉTRICOURT

Above is one of the very few photographs taken during the actual course of the March Retreat and the enemy's advance. It shows German waggons and infantry passing through Étricourt on or just after March 23rd, 1918. The village stands on the Bertincourt—Péronne road, the Bapaume—Roisel railway, and the Canal du Nord (or River Tortille), 12 km. south-east of Bapaume and 1 km. north of Manancourt, with which it forms a single commune.

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heard was the crowing of a cock in Beugny, followed by the shrill laughter of a child.

I reached a patch of ploughland where the going was so heavy that I turned back towards Beugny. Soon I came upon the Lagnicourt road a couple of hundred yards above the position of our battery of 6-inch guns. The pits were still there, and so, strangely enough, were dozens of empty cartridge tins. How furious the colonel would have been!

"Fetch the officer on duty," he would have commanded the nearest gunner; and no doubt old Jobling would have come gently forward—"old," I see I have called a man no older than I am now. "What the dickens are all these empties doing here, Mr. Jobson?" the colonel would have asked in a voice shaking with indignation—he could rarely remember names.

"They're w-waiting for the l-lorry to take them away, s-sir," he would have stuttered without a turn of his thin red hair. "I l-left them l-like this to camouflage them in case a Boche plane came over. . . ."

Mystifying the Postman

A postman on a cycle overtook me as I left the battery position for the village.

"*Bonjour, m'sieu!*" he called gaily. They were friendly in those parts that day.

"*Bonjour!*" I replied as gaily. "There is a post office in Beugny now?"

"No, m'sieu, the nearest is in Vaulx."

"That can't be right. Vaulx's in VI Corps area, and we're all IV Corps here."

"What did you say?" He had dismounted from his cycle.

"I was just telling myself things have altered since I was last here."

From Beugny I walked along the Cambrai road toward the line. A lorry laden with bricks and tiles overtook me, and splashed me with mud. There was nothing very new about that, I reflected, and I watched it bump past the spot where the board saying—

> NO VEHICULAR TRAFFIC BEYOND THIS POINT IN DAYLIGHT

—used to stand, and disappear over the last crest before the front line.

The road was now as lonely as it had always been. The magpies were still active, though, flying in front of me from tree to tree as in the past; and the hawks seemed far more numerous than before. I was approaching the cross-roads where one turns left past the sugar factory for Morchies, and I paused to honour the memory of an exciting escapade. . . .

Photo: A. J. Insall.

GROWING OUT OF ITS PAST

On March 23rd, 1918, Étricourt lay in the hands of the 9th Division, which constituted the left flank of the VII Corps. The 26th Brigade actually held the village, and was forced to uncover both it and Manancourt about 7 p.m., in order to close a gap on the brigade's left. During the final Allied offensive, both villages were carried on September 4th. Photographs of Manancourt have appeared on pages 750 (Volume Two) and 258-9 (this volume).

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Here I had driven on the night of March 21st to see our most forward battery. Had our orders to pull out reached it in sufficient time? Thompson had just drawn up beside the sugar factory, and I was standing in the roadway wondering how much further we could drive, when an officer appeared in front of me.

"Stop!" he shouted, brandishing his revolver in my face. "Mon, where the de'il are you going?"

"I'm looking for one of our batteries," I explained. "Where's the Boche?"

"Aboot two hundred yairds doon the road."

Telling Thompson to turn the car and wait with engine running, I walked boldly on. I had whisky in me, and the side-road from which our battery was shooting lay barely a hundred yards ahead. I pictured the men pulling out in fearful silence under the very noses of the Boche; there seemed every chance of a scrap once the noisy engines of the tractors started up.

I turned into the side-road. It had been strafed to blazes; no four-wheel-drives could haul guns over such a surface. Should we have to blow them up and come away? I reached the position. It was deserted. The pits were empty, the guns had gone. I flashed my torch into the fighting post. Empty, save for splashes of blood on the floor and a litter of field dressings....

The Quest for Eggs

I have said that I was approaching the sugar factory where one turns left for Morchies. The factory was still in ruins, but a family was now living by the boilers in a house made from odds and ends. A notice stated it was the ESTAMINET DE LA PAIX.

"May I have an omelette?" I asked an old woman boiling a pail of water in the ragged garden.

"Omelette?" Her voice was harsh and she shook her head. "We have no eggs."

I walked on towards Morchies, pausing by the roadside cemetery where they had buried the men of Ninety-five killed by a premature that blew gun and detachment to bits. Here I was still standing when three big farm-carts came up the hill from the village. One following the other, and each drawn by a pair of cantering horses, they came rattling past me like the empty limbers of a field battery on their way back to waggon lines.

In Morchies a number of red-brick villas were being built, but it seemed that one had to draw one's water from the pond, because it no longer came in

Photo: A. P., Paris.

MONT ST. QUENTIN AGAIN

The present view of the ruined village on top of the Mount was taken by a Frenchman from an old German observation post. Readers will recall that we presented four photographs of this important knoll in the photogravure section entitled "Environs of Péronne." The above illustration was taken more than a year earlier than the wartime pictures there shown, and is dated July 25th, 1917.

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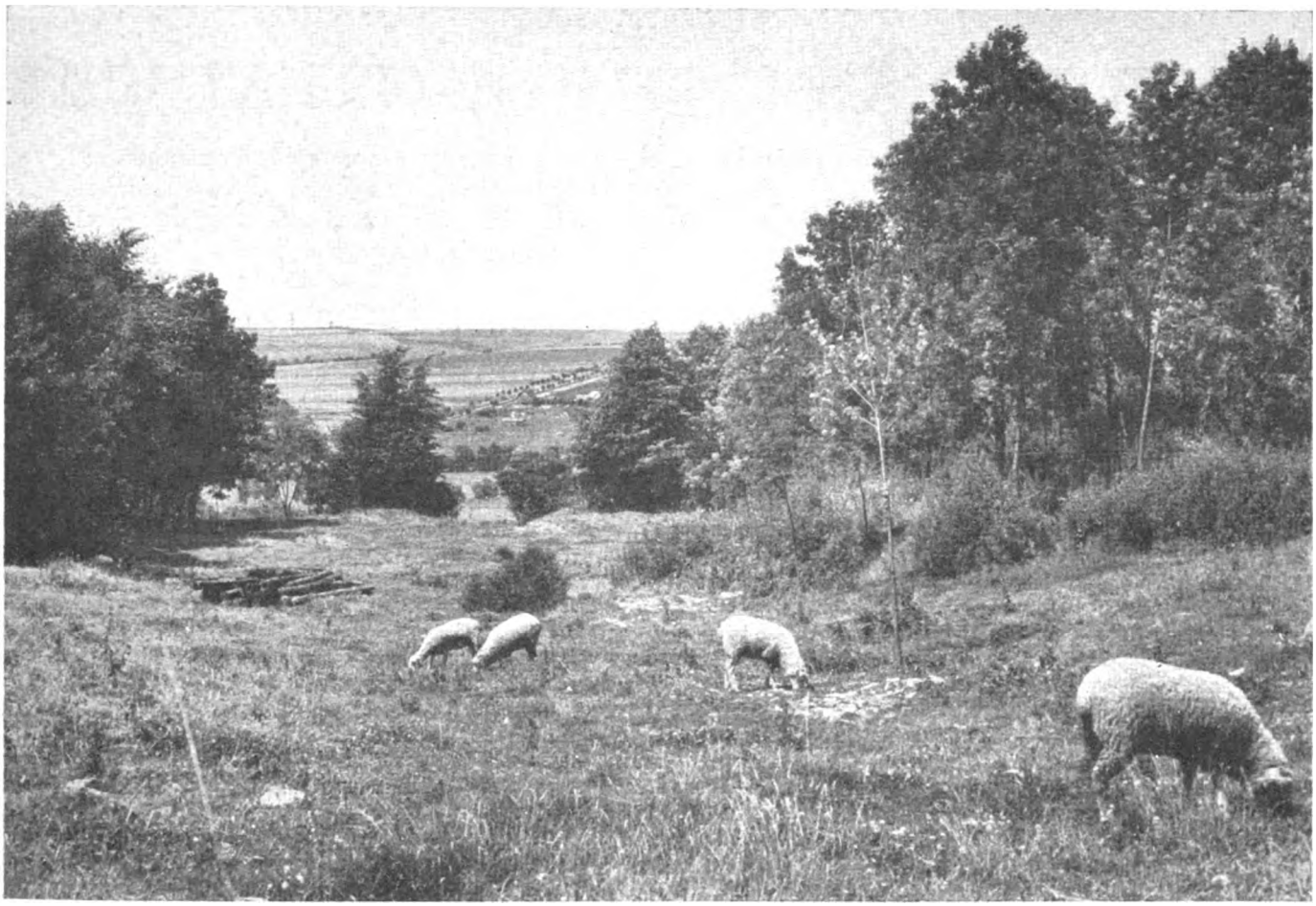

Photo: A. J. Insall.

FROM THE TOP OF THE HILL

A view taken with the camera looking north, where the slope is steepest: it being fairly gradual on the Péronne side. In the clearing seen, things have been left much as they were at the end of the War, and the traveller may find several evidences of trenchworks. The "pill-box" illustrated across the centre of pages 378-9 lies a little way to the left of where the camera is now being held.

tanks by Decauville railway from Bapaume. There were still many foot-paths through the wilderness of the château garden, I noticed, and the spidery crosses in the civilian cemetery were still sticking out in every direction like pins in a pincushion.

I left this hamlet by the steep lane leading to Tusculum, the brigade O.P. It had thus been named, I suppose, on account of the comparative loftiness of its situation; and its adequacy as a view point had not been questioned. But in other respects one remembered it as a place of boredom rather than of excitement, no doubt by reason of its distance from the line.

The dug-out had vanished, but the wide panorama had not changed. You could no longer see the wire of the Hindenburg Line, but the ridges over which the German cavalry had come were still as bare.

Standing in full view on the bank, I lit a pipe and waved my stick at Quéant. What would they have said had I done such a thing in other days? And then I heard a dull, heavy boom away to the north, up Bullecourt way. It was followed by another, and another, and another.

I sprang back under cover—the gap of four years had been bridged. A cloud of white smoke rose in the Agache valley. Oh, God! where was the telephone to brigade? *A column of transport was marching up the Cambrai road!*

I drew out my glasses—the same old glasses. The reckless cavalcade was nothing more important than the procession of farm carts from Morchies; and the smoke in the Agache valley turned out to be steam from a train. . . .

An elderly farmer in a high trap was driving towards me; he stopped and regarded me with curious eyes.

"This used to be our observation post," I explained lamely.

"Did you hear the explosions?" he asked with a nod and a smile.

"Yes. What were they?"

"It happens every day. Always they are destroying shells." He shrugged his shoulders. "And there are plenty more to be got rid of. Only last week a plough in Havrincourt touched something and an explosion followed. No one was hurt that time, but we are not always so lucky."

He spat thoughtfully on the ground, wished me good-night, and jogged his horse into motion.

I turned from the line. In the shallow valley before me I saw the newly turned earth. A peasant was working in the field through which the Decauville railway had once run. Another was digging in an allotment, his spare tools resting against the massive carcase of a burnt-out tank. With the evening mist, plumes of pale grey smoke were rising peacefully from the chimneys of Morchies—and I had known the whole valley filled with the smoke of bursting shells. . . .

It was growing late. Soon it would be dusk, and now I felt tired and very lonely.

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CHAPTER XXX

WITH THE R.F.C. IN THE GREAT WAR

The developments that have taken place in connection with aviation have, since 1918, been so marked that it is difficult to believe that twenty-five years ago flying was still in its infancy. Men who served on the battle-front at any time during the opening years of the Great War will be able to recall to mind the early fighting 'planes. They were few in number, and, by modern standards, frail and clumsy. In this chapter one who served with the Royal Flying Corps tells something of those pioneering days on the Western front, when flying over the enemy's lines was an adventure indeed.

THE mobilisation tables prepared at the War Office, many months before the cloud of war cast its shadow across the face of Europe, included the various units of the newly-formed experimental force known to the Army as the Royal Flying Corps (Military Wing). In the minds of the General Staff it was considered that the aeroplane provided a valuable addition to the means of observation available to a commander in the field of operations, and, small as was the number of aeroplanes existing at that date, enough had been seen of the flying-machine's capabilities to show that it had come to stay as a permanent part of the equipment of an army. But that was about all; the new Arm was still only a fledgling in a world pre-occupied with matters of life and death, and although it counted among its Service associates more than one firm champion in high places, it met with many an obstacle in its fight for existence.

Two Important Figures

Perhaps an incident that occurred so late as the early part of the year 1915 illustrates this better than any other. It comes in very happily, at this stage of the story, in that it introduces two figures to whom the Royal Air Force of twenty years after owes a lasting debt — both for their faith in the future of the newly-created air service and for their untiring energy in the work of making its foundations secure.

The occasion was that of the provision of additional squadrons for the New Armies, for which an order of battle had been prepared. When this order of battle reached the Directorate of Military Aeronautics, the Assistant Director (Lieut.-Colonel W. Sefton Brancker, a former Gunner officer who had lost his heart to aviation in 1910) expressed the daring opinion that, at the rate of one artillery reconnaissance squadron per Army Corps and two or three fighting and reconnaissance squadrons per new Army, not less than thirty-five service squadrons would be required. He accordingly sought authority for the creation of these new units, and the file containing his minute began its travels round the various departments of the War Office concerned, collecting on its way a considerable crop of adverse comment. The gist of these remarks was that there were other more urgent branches of the army to be provided with men and weapons, and that the Royal Flying Corps would have to make do with very much less than Colonel Brancker appeared to think so necessary.

At length the file was laid before the Secretary of State, and, soon after, it re-appeared upon Colonel Brancker's table, bearing the following ministerial instruction: "*A.D.M.A. should be prepared to double this.*" And then followed the red-inked initial: "K," which, long after the sinking of H.M.S. *Hampshire*, carried more weight behind it than almost any other letter of the alphabet.

The First To Land

Four aeroplane squadrons, with a headquarters and an aircraft park, accompanied the British Expeditionary Force to France in August, 1914. The first machine, a Government-designed B.E., landed at Amiens at 8.20 a.m. on the 13th August, piloted by Lieut. H. D. Harvey-Kelly, a dashing Irishman, who, at the time of his death at Arras in 1917, was one of the most popular squadron commanders in the Corps. The four squadrons were concentrated at Amiens two days later, and two days later still made the first British air reconnaissance of the War, when Captain P. B. Joubert de la Ferté (in a Blériot monoplane of No. 3 Squadron) and Lieut. G. W. Mapplebeck (in a B.E. of No. 4) went up to reconnoitre the area about Nivelles and Genappe, to the south of Brussels. We may fittingly pause a moment to consider the remarkable fact that this first dual flight—as did several of those that immediately succeeded it—easily equalled in distance the normal "long" reconnaissances demanded of the Royal Flying Corps in the later years of the War.

It is true that there were no anti-aircraft guns to be met with at that date, whereas within less than a twelvemonth no aeroplane could cross the line without becoming the target for shell-bursts of various sizes and hues. But against that the first flights were all made at ridiculously low altitudes, well within rifle-range of the ground—and friend and foe acquired the habit of firing at any and every aeroplane that passed over them. There was also the ever-present possibility of engine-failure.

It needed so very little to upset an aeroplane's engine. The minutest morsel of cotton-waste could do all the damage if it found its way into the petrol-system, and there were times when it was highly inconvenient to have to land for the sake of a bit of fluff . . .

Even much later in the War, when there really was a standard of reliability in our engines, it was no unusual thing for a motor to give up the ghost, without warning, in the midst of a two-and-a-half to three-hours' flight.

Inducements to Smoking

The writer treasures a battered but still serviceable leather cigarette-case by Mark Cross, purchased late in 1915; the case is designed to hold forty fat cigarettes, and does so comfortably, and was bought to provide against smoke-shortage during forced-landings on the Western Front. Flying induces a craving for tobacco, and so also does a wait of perhaps two-and-a-half hours in the bleak wired-in emptiness of some inaccessible part of an Army's reserve trench-system, while a spare engine, rocking unsteadily on a padded box-stand in the back of a Crossley light tender, wanders to and fro across the inhospitable landscape looking for a means of reaching the scene of the breakdown.

It was a British aeroplane that gave

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BEYOND BAPAUME

Then and Now

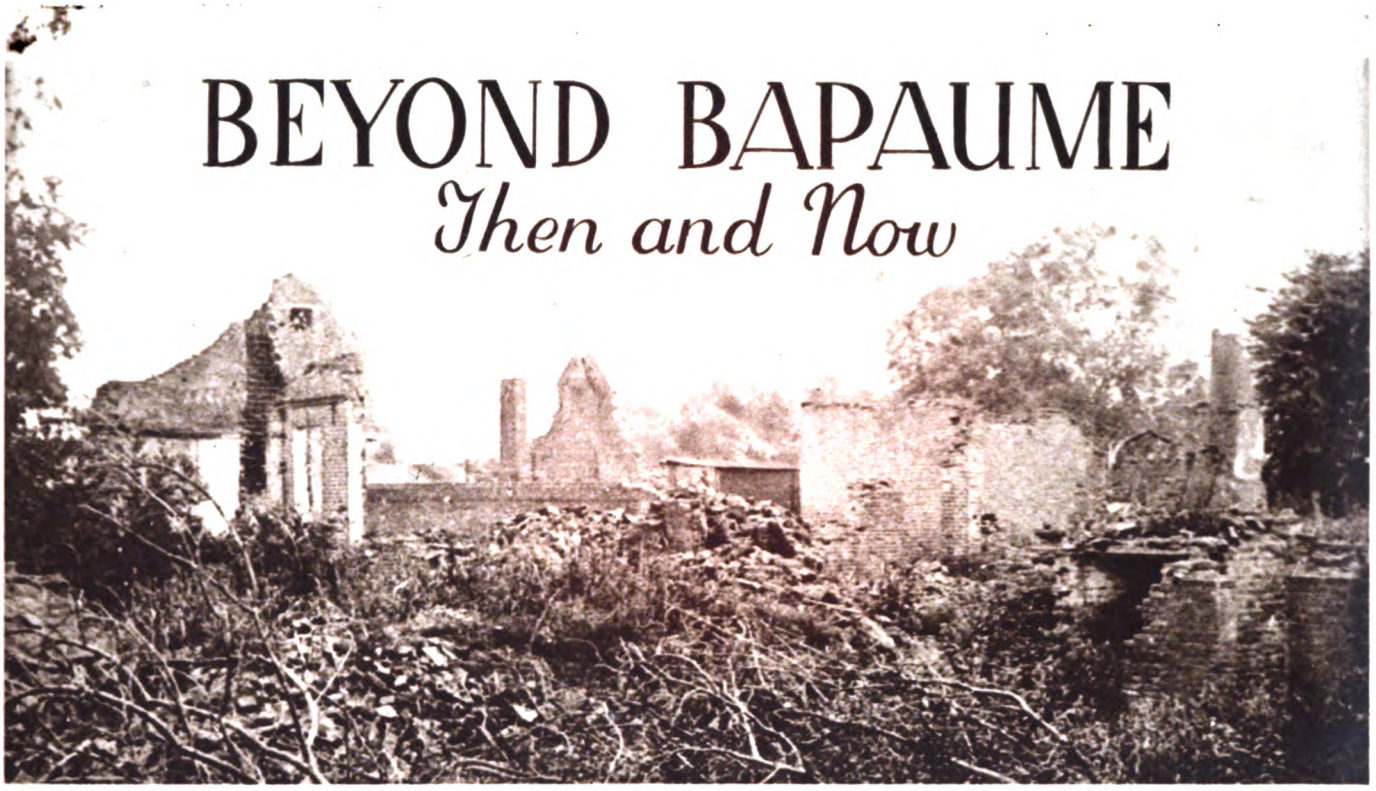

Photo : Imperial War Museum

TWENTY YEARS AGO

Ruins of the village of Haplincourt, whose château we illustrated on page 213 of this volume, as they presented themselves to view on July 25th, 1917. The place, it will be recalled, stands on the road from Bapaume to Bertincourt, and is about half-a-dozen kilometres east by slightly south of the former. By the evening of March 19th, 1917, during the first four days of our advance to the Hindenburg Line, our cavalry was in touch with the enemy between Haplincourt and Bertincourt.

Photo : A. J. Insall

HAPLINCOURT CHURCH

The British line had been pushed forward to within 2 km. of the western edge of Haplincourt by September 2nd, 1918, and the village fell in the next "push" delivered in this sector. To-day the small community of 280 inhabitants has little of interest to offer the outsider, unless it be the handful of British graves in the Communal Cemetery. The cross-roads in the foreground is formed by the intersection of the main road with one from Beugny-le-Château to Barastre.

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Photo : Imperial War Museum

IN RUYAULCOURT

There are two roads, neither of them important, which pass through Ruyaulcourt. One leads from Bertincourt down to Metz-en-Couture and Gouzeaucourt; the other from Hermies to Léchelle and Ytres. The position of the village is between the Canal du Nord and Havrincourt Wood, 11 km. east of Bapaume. The British line was established through this point on April 2nd, 1917, and maintained until March 23rd, 1918.

Photo : A. J. Insall

A VILLAGE STREET

The situation of the V Corps troops in the sector covering Ruyaulcourt was, on March 23rd, 1918, extremely complicated, as the divisions which had occupied the former Flesquières Salient were badly bunched, and at the close of the day's retirement, were facing north, east, and south. The 63rd (Royal Naval) and 17th Divisions were the most closely concerned with Ruyaulcourt village. There is now one British cemetery, used from April, 1917, to March, 1918, and containing 323 U.K. and 23 Overseas fallen.

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Photo : Imperial War Museum

NEUVILLE-BOURJONVAL

This place lies a couple of kilometres south-south-east of Ruyaulcourt, on the road from Ytres to Metz-en-Couture, and is 12 km. from Bapaume. The 20th Division, which was responsible for the capture of Metz on April 4th-5th, 1917, was closely associated with Neuville-Bourjonval at the time of the German retirement; and the above photograph, taken between three and four months later, shows how the village then appeared.

Photo : A. J. Insall

BREASTING THE HILL

The brief history of Neuville-Bourjonval during the March Retreat follows closely that of its neighbour Ruyaulcourt, except that the 47th Division, forming the V Corps right, comes into the picture instead of the 63rd, which formed its left. March 23rd marked the loss of the one village, as of the other. Modern Neuville is slightly larger than Ruyaulcourt, and this photograph shows clearly the rise on which it stands. The Canal du Nord passes through a 5 km-long tunnel slightly to the west of it.

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Photo: A. P., Paris

A FORLORN SPECTACLE

Here at last is Bertincourt itself, so frequently referred to in our pages as a " measuring-point " for surrounding villages. This photograph, taken in July, 1917, shows a condition of things which, though already bad enough, was rendered considerably worse by the fighting of 1918. The modern village is larger than most—its population totals nearly 900—which is perhaps due to its situation at the junction of roads from Bapaume, Cambrai, and Péronne.

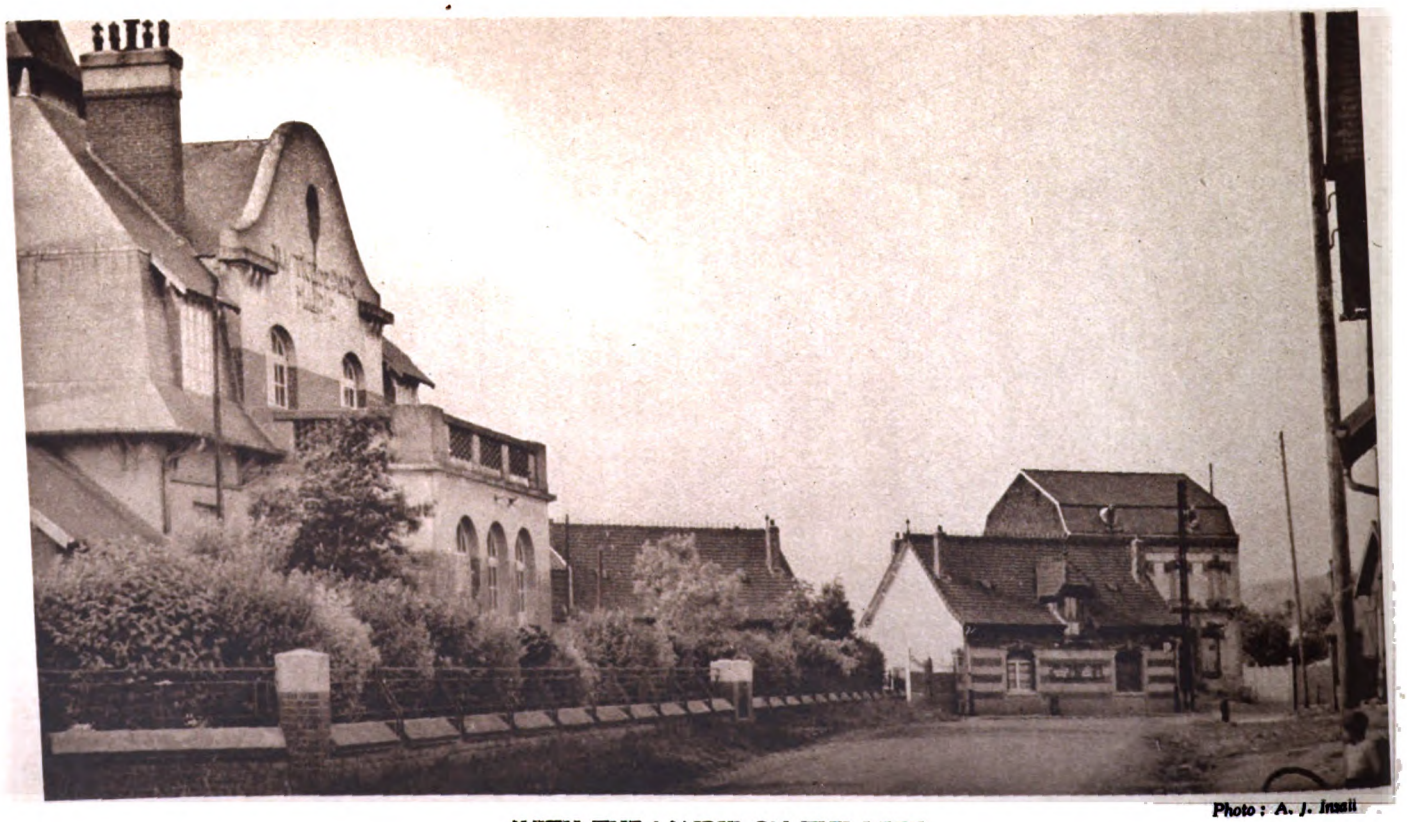

Photo: A. J. Insall

WITH THE MAIRIE ON THE LEFT

Bertincourt Château Cemetery was begun by the 7th K.O.Y.L.I. on March 29th, 1917, and was used by them and other formations until September 28th, 1918. It houses 47 U.K. dead. On March 23rd, 1918, the 7th Lincolnshires of the 17th Division, who had been holding Hermies, just managed to reach Bertincourt after being all but cut off in the former village. Many casualties were incurred. The Bertincourt Salient, as it was called, was occupied about 1 p.m. by the 63rd Division, which held it until the next morning.

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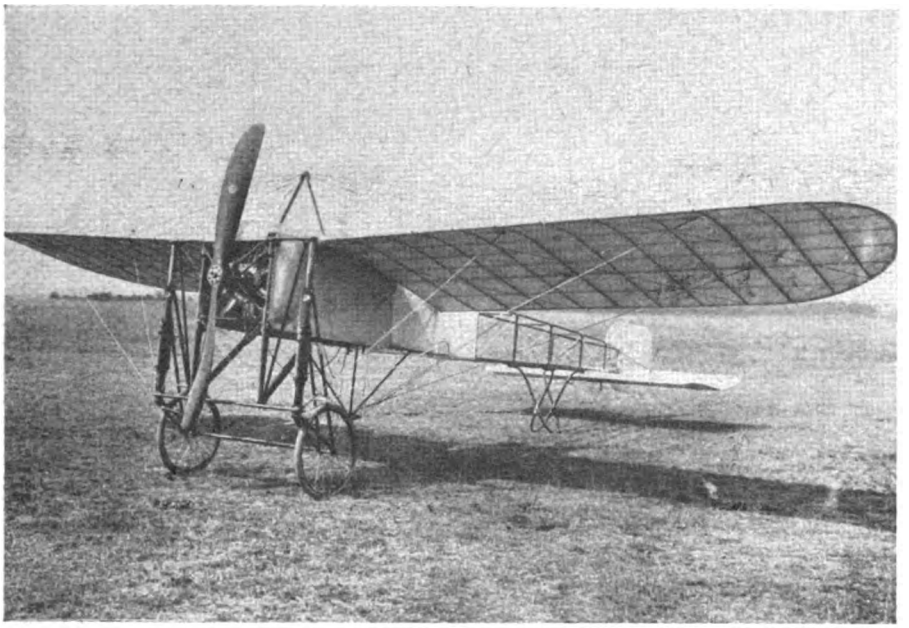

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

A PIONEER

The Blériot monoplane, here seen, was among the earliest types of aircraft employed by the R.F.C. It takes its name from its French inventor, Louis Blériot, who is probably better known for his having been the first aviator to make an aeroplane flight across the Channel. The machine is in itself a pioneer, for it was in one of these craft that another Frenchman, Adolphe Pégoud, looped the first loop in September, 1913.

the first definite news to General von Kluck of the presence of British troops in France. Two officers, Lieutenants V. Waterfall and C. G. G. Bayly, flying in an Avro biplane of No. 5 Squadron, failed to return from a reconnaissance on the morning of the 22nd August, and the capture of their aeroplane (both of whose occupants were killed when it fell in the German lines) bore out reports that had reached the enemy of British cavalry at Casteau, north of Mons, a little earlier. The Royal Flying Corps suffered a third casualty on that day, when a non-commissioned officer of No. 2 Squadron, Sergeant-Major D. S. Jillings, stopped a German cavalryman's bullet over Ghislenghien, near Ath. The wound was not fatal, and Jillings was flying again in the following month, but the occurrence brought home to the Corps the unpleasant realities of war.

The fate of Waterfall and Bayly was almost ancient history by the time the news of their death reached the Flying Corps in the field, whereas Jillings was lifted from his cockpit with a German bullet in him, and ocular proof makes all the difference. The writer will never forget seeing a B.E.2c land on its aerodrome, on a spring morning of 1916, after an encounter with a Fokker monoplane in the course of which a burst of explosive ammunition had struck the B.E. just where the observer was sitting. It was a ghastly spectacle, and made him ponder over one or two previous occasions when he himself had sent German aeroplanes diving headlong earthward—without the use of explosive bullets, it is true, for the Royal Flying Corps was always rather humanitarian in the way in which it handled its victims.

A Veil Over the Early Days

It is doubtful whether it will ever be known exactly how much the Flying Corps pilots and observers saw of the British Expeditionary Force and the subsequent recoil of the enemy's forces from the Marne and the Aisne. So much of it lies buried in the archives of that dim, almost-forgotten past. So little of it was appreciated at its real value at the time.

Fortunately, the R.F.C. possessed staunch friends—without and within. In the Corps itself no greater friend existed than its chief, Major-General Sir David Henderson. His was an uphill fight, if ever there was one; for, long after the R.F.C. had justified its existence, much dogged determination and considerable persuasion was required to establish the claims of this very junior Service to priority in certain necessary materials, and in skilled labour. Every aeroplane built required approximately four propellers—one to use and three in reserve—and each propeller consumed, in the making, enough timber to provide stocks for at least one dozen rifles. And the men who made and flew these aeroplanes totalled more than the soldiers comprised in any one infantry division.

The primary, if not the sole, duty of aircraft in the field, for many months after the outbreak of hostilities, was the non-offensive one of reconnaissance. Such action as the dropping of steel

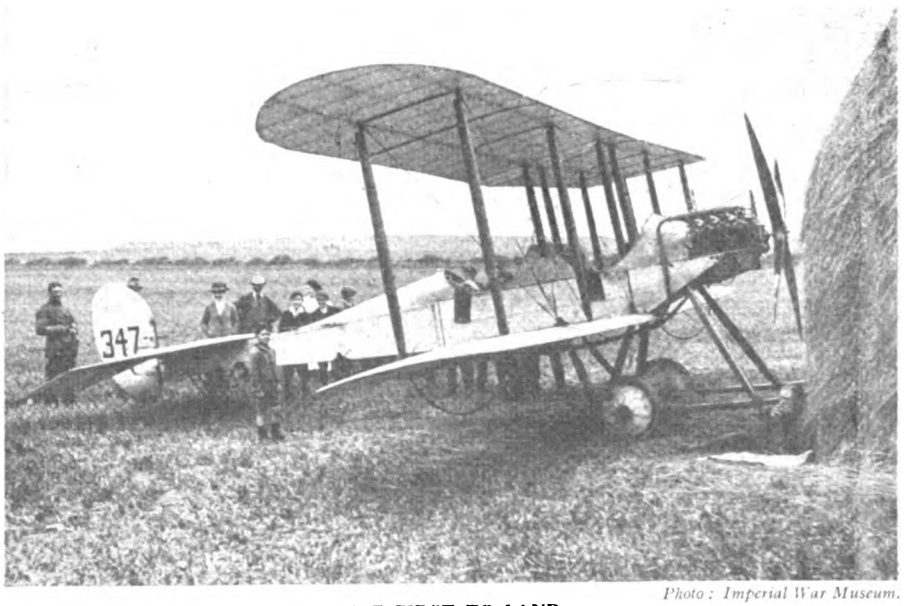

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

THE FIRST TO LAND

This historic photograph shows the first British Army aeroplane to land in France during the Great War. The machine is a B.E.2b biplane of No. 2 Squadron, R.F.C., and its pilot, Major H. Harvey-Kelly, D.S.O. (killed in action behind the German lines on April 29th, 1917), is seen on the right by the hay-stack. His landing was made at Amiens on August 13th, 1914. The picture was taken in England.

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darts, indulged in fairly liberally by the French, was regarded as ingenious though unprofitable side-play, as indeed it was. As early as 1911–1912, the Royal Flying Corps had mounted Maxim machine guns in some of its "pusher"[1] aeroplanes, but it went to France without weapons of any kind fitted to its machines, whose first encounters with enemy aeroplanes were attended with nothing more offensive than hand-waving.

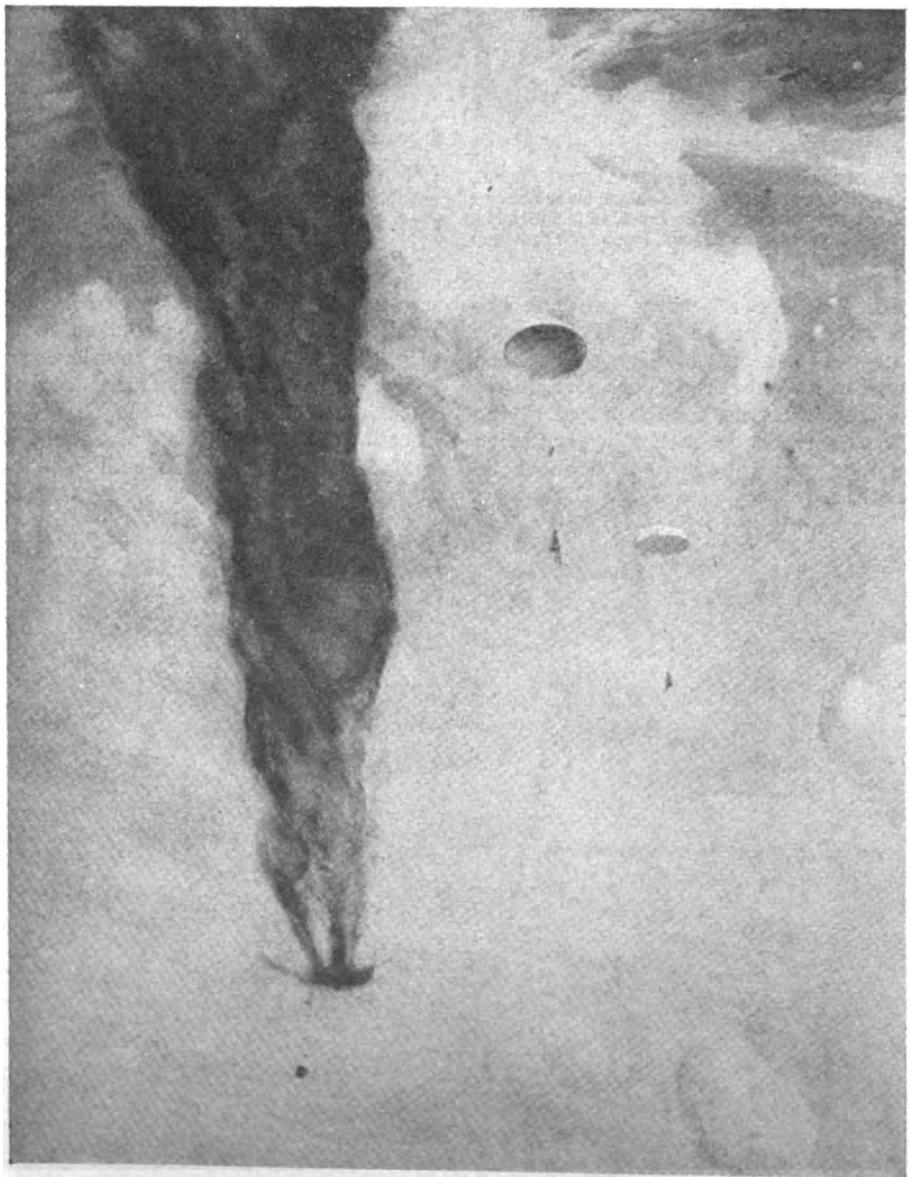
[1] The "pusher" type had its engine behind the main planes. The Maurice, Henri, and Horace Farmans, the Vickers Fighters, the De Havilland 2's, and the F.E.2b's and 2d's were all of this kind; the F.E.2b's remained in use to the end (from 1917 onwards as short-range night bombers).

The Farman "Pushers"

The Lewis gun, that marvel of the gunsmith's art, had been adopted as the approved armament for aeroplanes, but there was no object in machines carrying this weapon when no opportunities existed for its use. Every additional pound of weight had to be considered; and in point of fact the only machines lending themselves to the fitting of Lewis guns were seldom capable of rising above 3–4,000 feet. These were the Farman "pusher" biplanes, in which the problem of arranging for forward fire—the only really sound method of fighting an aeroplane—was not complicated by the presence of an engine and propeller in front of the gun-mounting.

In the Training Manual of the Royal Flying Corps, a provisional issue of which had been made early in 1914, the various phases of "the struggle for the command of the air" were dealt with in considerable detail, and the probability of pilots having to fight in order to obtain the information required by the Army Commander was foreseen. The first aeroplanes sent out to France, equipped with machine guns, formed "C" Flight (there were three flights in a squadron—"A," "B," and "C") of No. 4 Squadron, and were Maurice Farman Shorthorns, a term applied to the type of Maurice Farman that dispensed with an elevator situated in front of the nacelle. The flight reached the field on the 20th September, 1914; but the aircraft were dreadfully slow, and to fit a machine gun to them was rather like arming a bath-chair.

Tantalisingly enough, we had one or two aeroplanes capable of over 90 m.p.h. although no one had yet thought of a way of satisfactorily arming them. These were the Sopwith "Tabloid," Martinsyde and Bristol Scouts, and the S.E.2. The last-named, of which one only was made, remained in service in France until March, 1915. These little single-seaters made rings round the few enemy aeroplanes encountered by them, but beyond frightening the hostile pilots and observers they did no useful harm.



From the original in the Imperial War Museum.

"BROUGHT DOWN IN FLAMES"

A painting executed in 1917 by William T. Wood, and showing a characteristic scene at the close of an aerial duel. The vanquished machine plunges earthward, a dense column of black smoke trailing in its wake, while pilot and observer descend in parachutes. The victorious aeroplane can be seen in the top right-hand corner, presumably making for home.

Little to Choose between Sides

Apart from these two or three fast single-seaters, owned by the Royal Flying Corps, there was little to choose between the aeroplanes employed by the two sides. The Germans went to war with a handful of squadrons equipped with moderately-effective two-seaters of the "tractor" variety. Some of these were monoplanes of the "Taube" pattern, in which the main-planes closely resembled the wings of the bird after which they were called; these soon went out of service, and the German Air Force settled down to wage war with machines of the conventional biplane design, "tractors" equipped with Benz or Mercédès motor-car type engines and provided with seats for two. In the German Service, as in the French, but more so, it was usual for the pilot to be an N.C.O. or private, the observer almost invariably being an officer. With us, both members of the crew were more often than not officers.

The French depended largely upon the Farman type of aeroplane, with the

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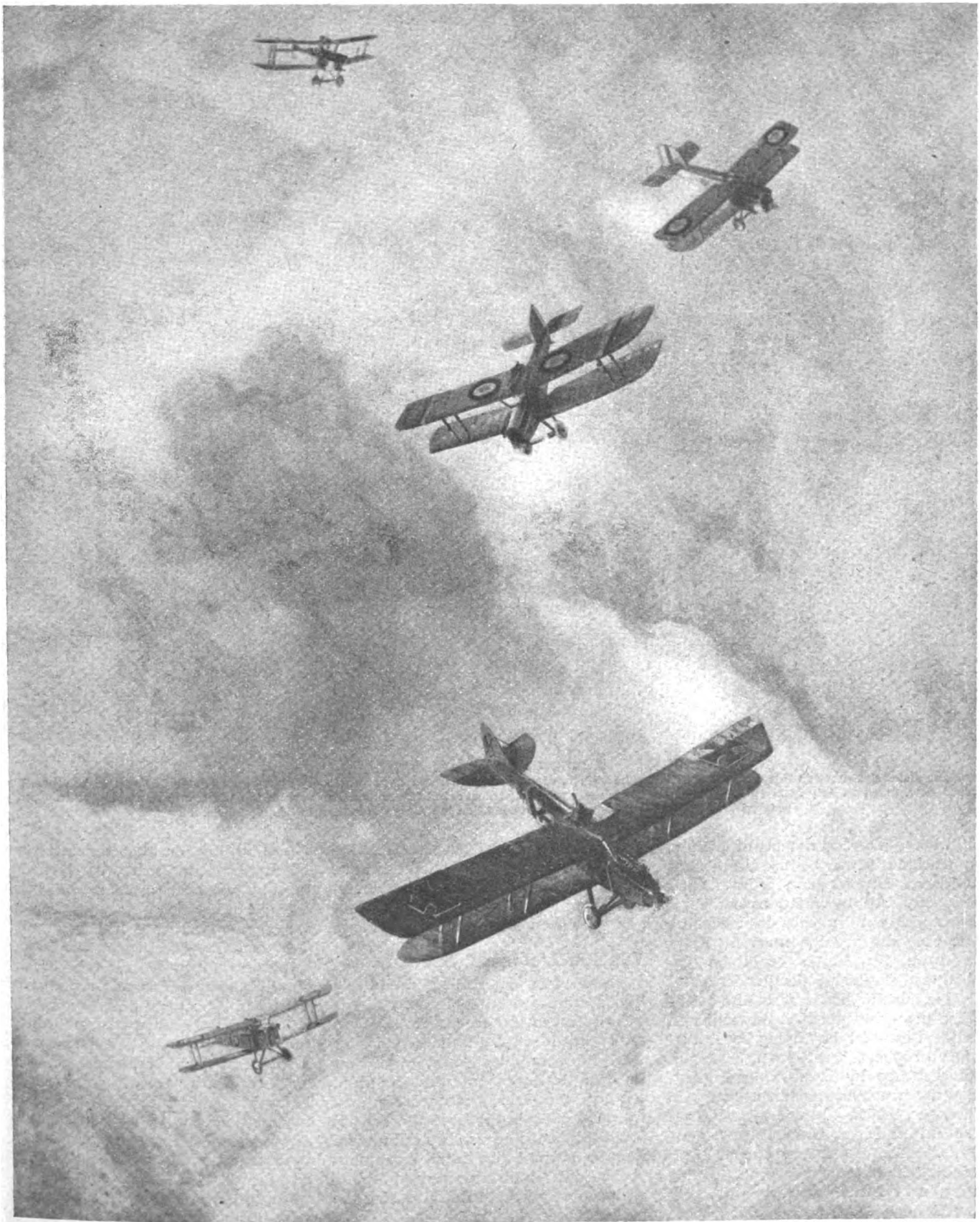

From the original in the Imperial War Museum.

"PUTTING OUT HIS EYES"

The above painting by G. H. Davis illustrates tactics in aerial warfare. In the early dawn four British machines out on patrol sight a German two-seater. One Briton dives to take the enemy unawares from underneath, while the remaining three engage him from above.

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Photo: Imperial War Museum.

A CORNER OF MÉHARICOURT

Another dishevelled nook in this once attractive Somme village, of which two pictures have previously appeared on page 360 of this volume. The above view, taken on July 12th, 1916, includes the church—as yet fairly intact; but the destructive work of the War's two remaining years speedily reduced even the remnants seen here to a condition infinitely worse than in this photograph.

addition of a certain number of Blériots (a machine flown by us also), early Moranes, Deperdussins, Voisins, and Bréguets. All the variations of the last two types were ponderous machines, but they did yeoman service. Early in 1915, the Voisin could be encountered staggering along under a real load of mischief, in the form of a quick-firing pom-pom gun that was mounted in the front of this "flying bedstead" of an aeroplane. The Germans answered its challenge by introducing a great, slovenly machine equipped with two fuselages, which, when it appeared on the British Front, was dubbed "Two-Tails." The writer saw one of these double-tailed atrocities once, during 1915, near Arras. It was well inside the German lines, sailing along quite proudly at about 7,000 feet. Of course, it turned away when a British machine (a Vickers Fighter armed with a Lewis gun) steered towards it, and started planing down as soon as fire was opened at it. Two or three instances were, however, recorded of a "Two-Tails" daring to stand and fight for a few seconds—not more.

Von Kluck's Wheel Spotted

There was something peculiarly "soft" in the general character of the early German Air Force personnel. Very rarely was it possible to mix things up with an enemy aeroplane, even over its own territory, and when an E.A. (enemy aeroplane) was encountered trespassing on our side of the lines it invariably made off with its tail up and its nose down. Later in the War things became different, but we are now dealing with the work of the R.F.C. during the earlier stages.

After the first flights, to which we have already referred, which were made in order to locate the foremost troops of the invading enemy, reconnaissance followed reconnaissance, barely a day passing without some report being brought in showing clearly just how far the German advance had progressed. Thus, on the 31st August, the famous wheeling movement of von Kluck's *First Army* was seen and reported by officers of Nos. 4 and 5 Squadrons, who had noted the sudden change in direction of the advancing German columns. A point of some little interest, when one recollects that, in 1915 and later, reconnaissance was habitually made at heights of 7–9,000 feet and upwards, is the fact that these officers were able to describe the enemy as wearing "dark uniforms"—another way of indicating that the observations were made from about 2,000 feet. . . .

In 1914 many of those who went out on reconnaissance seated in the passenger's cockpit were themselves pilots. It was

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not until the late summer of the following year that appointments were made to the position of "Qualified Observer," and a special worsted badge introduced consisting of an "O," from one side of which spread a single wing. But a course of instruction for observers had been inaugurated as early as July, 1914, and several comparatively senior subalterns, some of whom had served on the Staff, accompanied the original R.F.C. to France in the rôle of experts in air observation. With one or two exceptions, all the officer personnel of the Royal Flying Corps at that date was seconded from regiments of the Regular Army, and the majority of the N.C.O.'s—especially those of Warrant rank—had been obtained from the same source.

Legend of the "Mad Major"

At that time the squadrons were commanded by majors, invariably qualified pilots, whose duties were generally considered to be primarily administrative and/or executive. But this did not prevent the vast majority from spending a very considerable amount of time in the air (the only place where a man with responsibilities could call his soul his own), and in this the Royal Flying Corps was in a sense unique, for its executive officers—with very few exceptions—made a fairly constant practice of going out and doing the kind of jobs, however unpleasant, that normally it was their less unpleasant task to tell other people to do instead. Did I say "less"? This habit, as we may term it, was largely responsible for such legends which grew up around the Corps as that of the "Mad Major."

The "Mad Major" legend centred round the exploits of a certain captain, who commanded a "Flight" of No. 5 Squadron operating just below the Ypres Salient in the early months of 1915. He made a habit of flying over the British trenches almost daily, either on his way out or on his way in from reconnaissance over the lines, and of indulging in what was commonly dubbed "split-ac" evolutions at a moderately low altitude, diving, rolling, and looping in and out among the German anti-aircraft shell-bursts that were put up in thick clusters for his special discomfiture.

Our men in the trenches took great delight in the spectacle of this British aeroplane brazenly taunting the enemy day after day in this manner; and the rumour went round that the pilot was the commanding officer of some unknown squadron. There was nothing more in it than this, but the newspapers at home got hold of the story through one of the little band of War correspondents, who saw the appeal of the roman-

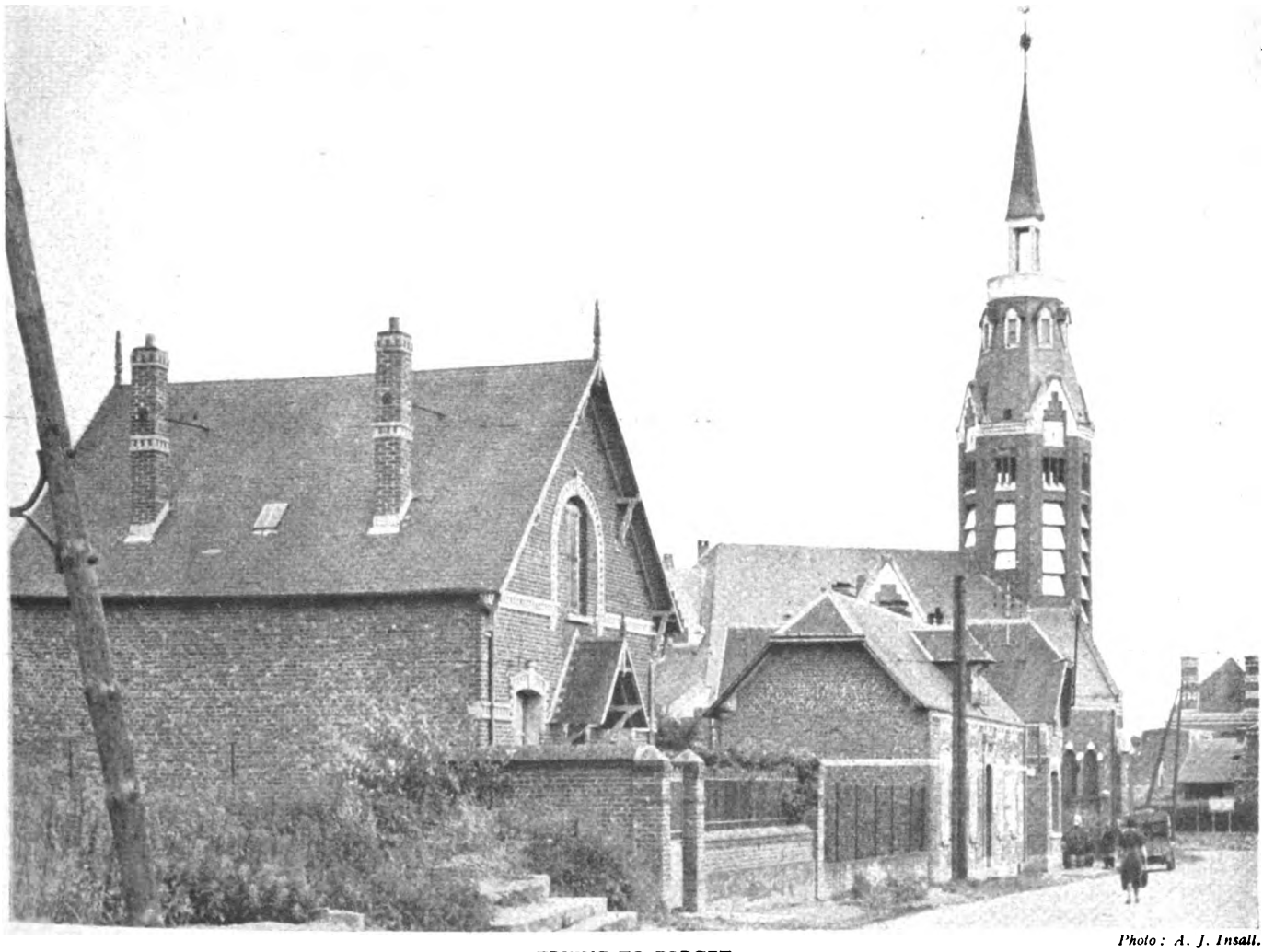

Photo: A. J. Insall.

TRYING TO FORGET

The cavalry capture of Méharicourt in August, 1918, has elsewhere been mentioned. Prior to that, the enemy had been in possession since the morning of March 26th, when the 24th Division, forming the right of the XIX Corps, retired through the ruins to the new Rouvroy line. Note the change of design in the new church—an exception to the general rule.

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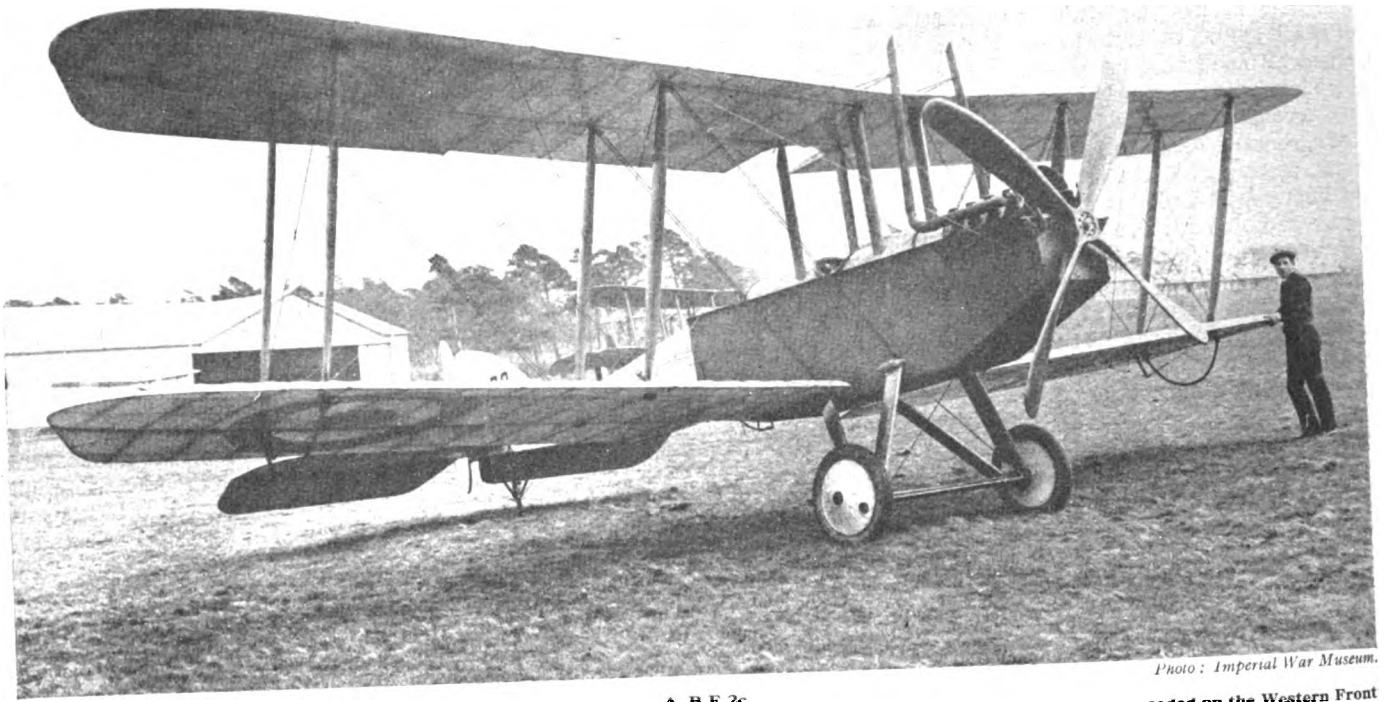

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

A B.E.2c

A three-quarters frontal portrait of the only B.E.2c armoured biplane ever constructed. The unarmoured machine was superseded on the Western Front long before the end of the War, but remained in service on the Palestine and Mesopotamian fronts, where its increasingly out-of-date design caused no small disadvantage to the pilots.

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

A D.H.2 SINGLE-SEATER

A De Havilland single-seater fighter biplane of the "pusher" type—the nickname being derived from the fact that, as may be seen, the propeller "pushed" the machine from behind the wings. This D.H. aeroplane was successfully used against the Fokker biplane early in 1916. The streamer flying from the right-hand strut indicates a flight-commander's machine.

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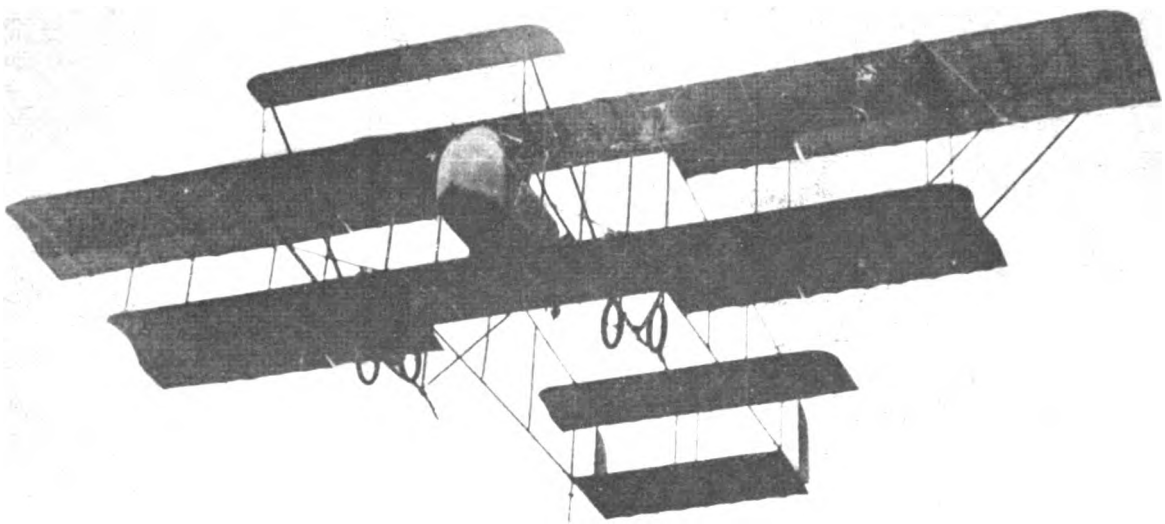

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

A MAURICE FARMAN LONGHORN

The photograph shows one of these famous old machines, of a design dating from 1912, in flight above Chartres on February 1st, 1916. The brothers Farman—Henri and Maurice—were British-born, but lived in France; and it was at Billancourt, near Paris, that Henri founded his factory in 1908, Maurice joining forces with him in 1912.

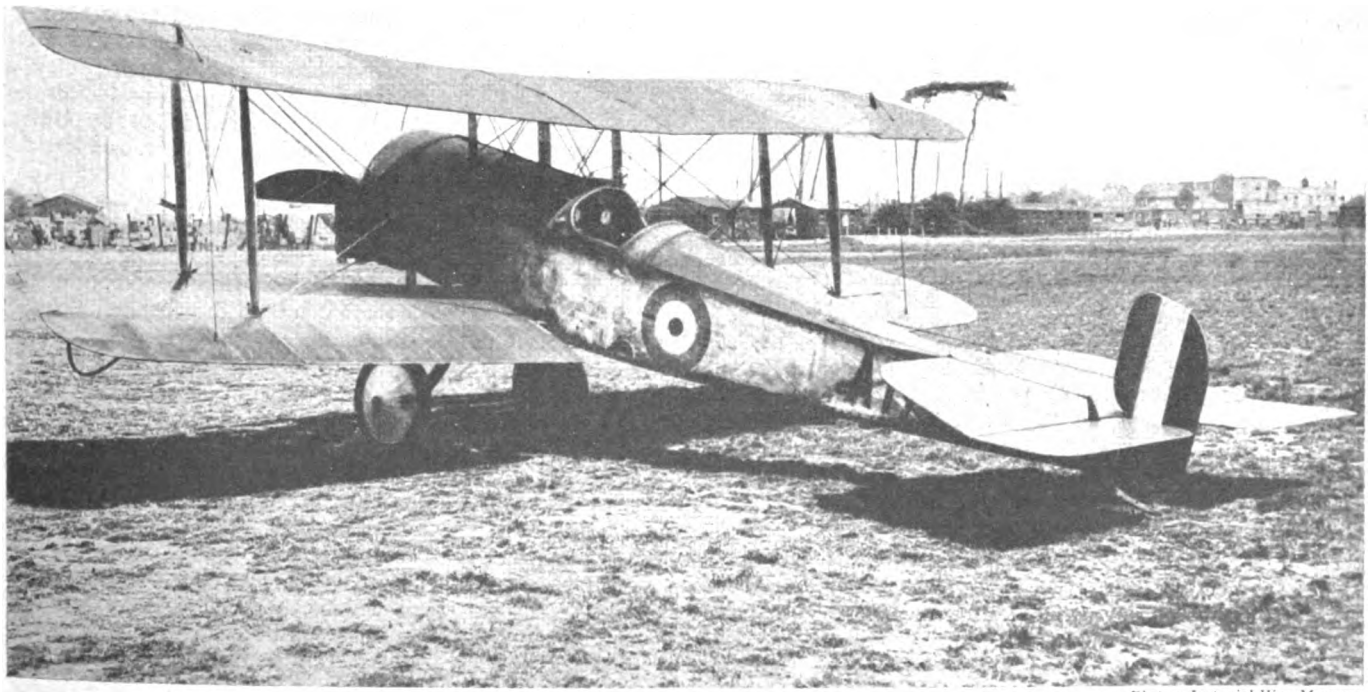

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

A BRISTOL "SCOUT"

This little single-seater biplane earned no less fame for itself than its cousin, the two-seater Bristol "Fighter," which was first produced at the end of 1916, and made its début in France the following March. The Bristol Aeroplane Company began building aircraft in 1910, and also carried on the largest British flying-school of that early period.

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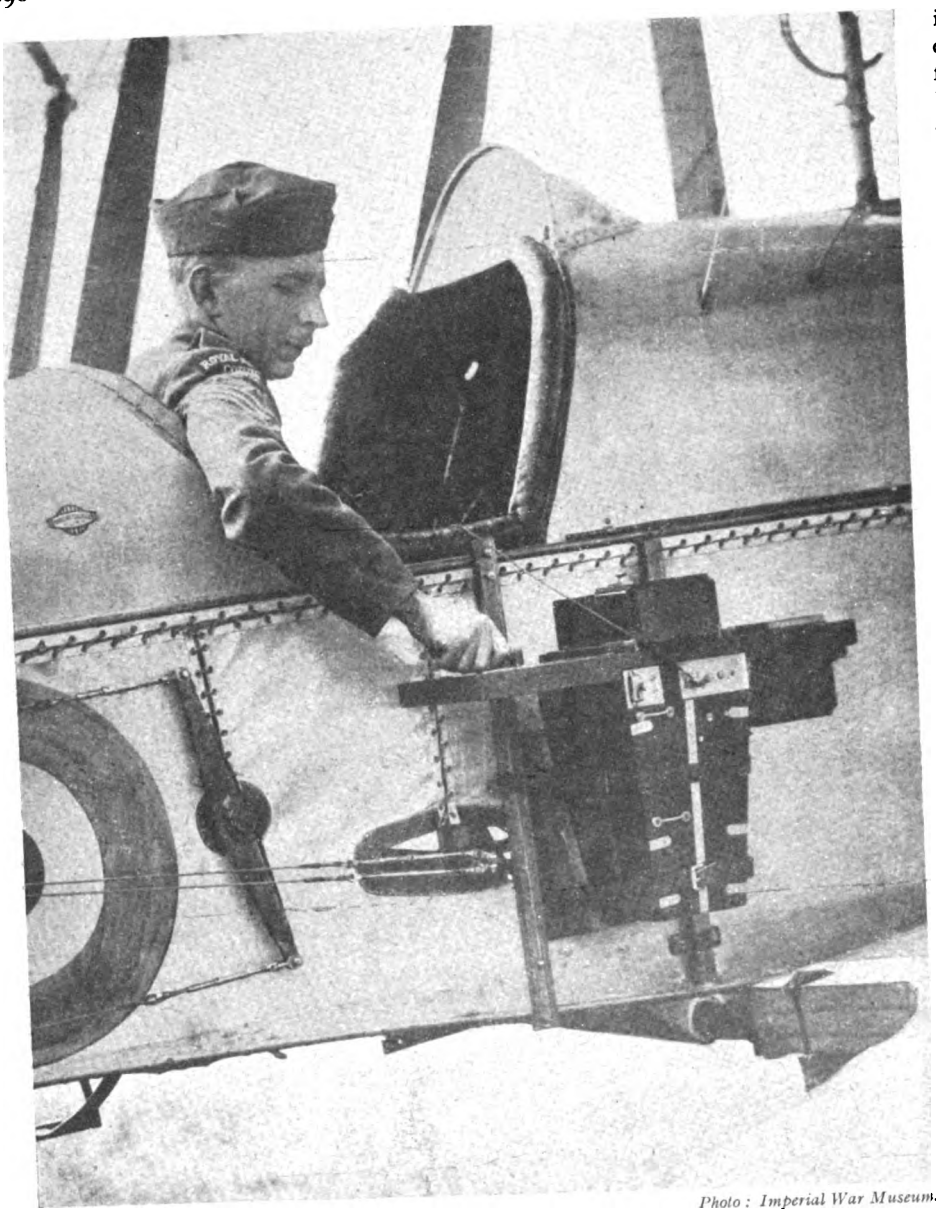

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

AN AERIAL PHOTOGRAPHER

A flight sergeant of the R.F.C. seated in the after-cockpit of a B.E.2c fitted with an outside photographic camera. This represents the intermediate stage in the development of aerial photography, the earliest cameras having been held over the side of the fuselage by hand, and the later designs in use before the Armistice consisting of an automatic instrument mounted in an aperture in the floor of the machine.

tic title given to the pilot by the troops on the ground, and as the tale of the "Mad Major" the legend persisted, making it very difficult for any member of the Royal Flying Corps to admit that he cared more than the proverbial fig for the dirty brown-and-green smoke that so closely encompassed him whenever he crossed the lines and entered the domain of the gentle "Hun."

Almost Unnoticed

In the long month during which the fate of the British Army appeared to many to hang on a thread and the German seizure of Paris to be growing hourly more and more certain, the work of the R.F.C. passed almost unnoticed, swamped by the grave issues that were commanding the breathless attention of the entire world. And yet this work was of cardinal importance in shaping the future operations of the War. One might even say more, but to do so would be to ignore much of what was taking place on the ground, and it would be no service to the flying men to exaggerate their just claim to recognition. Everything was interconnected; all Arms pulled double their weight, and what the Royal Flying Corps did was just its share in the common giant undertaking.

When the German Army was recoiling, after Joffre had opened his counter-offensive on the Marne at the end of the first week in September, 1914, it was the R.F.C. that kept us abreast of the enemy's movements; and on more than one occasion a pilot sat above that same enemy and watched the long grey columns slowly moving northward, noting upon his knee-pad the exact location of the head and tail of each column, and bringing back a clear picture of the turn of the tide. It was at this stage, by the way, that one of the major developments in the operational control of our air forces took place, the Royal Flying Corps being instructed by the Commander-in-Chief to allot individual squadrons to work direct with army corps.

It would be impossible, in the compass of an article of this length, to follow the story of a Service such as the flying Arm through in any detailed chronological sequence. The most that we may hope to do is to touch upon some of the highlights in its history, and to attempt to cast a little further light upon some of its less well-known endeavours. The month of October, 1914, saw the R.F.C. concentrated about St. Omer, consequent on the settling down of the British Army on a line stretching from Ypres to below Béthune; and thereafter the four squadrons of the original strength, plus a fifth (No. 6) which had flown over from England to Bruges on the 7th of that month, began to take up their quarters at various points behind the British front and to make for themselves "aerodromes" out of such promising material as 2- or 3-acre root-fields, not infrequently circumscribed by strange hazards such as an asylum or a forest of hop-poles.

Venerable Landing-grounds

These landing-grounds, curiously enough, became time-honoured in spite of their manifold drawbacks. Some of them had been tentatively selected some months before the outbreak of hostilities, by certain officers who had devoted sundry weeks of annual leave to touring the probable theatre of the war which "those in the know" well realised would be fought out in Northern France and Flanders. The majority of these landing-grounds would to-day be regarded as utterly useless for the purpose for which, then, they were considered perfectly suitable.

In this connection, there was an aerodrome in 1915 at Marieux, 8 km. south-east of Doullens, which was a real death-trap for the unwary. The pilot who wished to land there straight from

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the line (as was necessary, all too frequently, thanks to the prevailing westerly wind), would throttle down his engine over the German second-line trenches, at about 8–9,000 feet, and glide down on an even keel, followed for a time by the longer-range anti-aircraft shells sent up in his wake. Arrived within reach of the ample landing-ground, he would describe one or two mild "S" turns, losing height steadily, and come swishing down to land, with the dawning realisation that the ground was not level but sloping downward. If he were lucky (and provident), he would then open up his engine and sail majestically out of the jaws of death, his heart in his mouth and his landing-wheels skimming the tops of the trees forming the thick wood "concealing" the sheds, the squadron offices, the "Flight" messes, the squadron's stores and transport, and the hundred-and-one other adjuncts to a flying unit operating on the Western Front.

Needless to say, the next attempt at landing would be made far enough out on the aerodrome to avoid any chance of running into the wooded bay, and the pilot would then taxi into the sheds with great respect for the downward slope; for an aeroplane going downhill, on the ground, is an uncontrollable craft when it has—as was the case in those days—no brakes.

Gradual Development

The close of 1914 found the Royal Flying Corps organised into wings, two of which had been formed in November. It had now a squadron charged with the duty of doling out aeroplanes, as required, for wireless artillery observation. Before the new year set in, a "flight" from this squadron (No. 9) had been attached to each of the two wings, and this departure was the prelude to the introduction, during 1915, of corps squadrons for the purpose of meeting all the aeronautical requirements of the corps to which they were attached, including wireless artillery observation, photography, and tactical reconnaissance. Fighting *qua* fighting would be the duty of special army squadrons, grouped still later into army wings (as corps squadrons were to become grouped, also, into corps wings), and squadrons were to be created solely for such duties as long distance day bombing and strategical (or Army) reconnaissance.

Our first attempts at aerial photography were made during the Battle of the Aisne by No. 3 Squadron; but our Allies, the French, were ahead of us in technique here, and it was not until we had studied their methods that we were in a position to regard air photography as a part of our Air Service's normal duties. The trench map, which showed every earth-work behind the enemy's front and the exact configuration of the front itself, drawn accurately to scale, was the direct result of the introduction of the aerial photographic camera. The first camera, designed solely for use in the Royal Flying Corps, had a romantic origin. In February, 1915, two officers came back from France with instructions to produce a camera which would not be dependent for its extension upon easily distorted leather bellows; an instrument, in short, which could be used with safety in any wind and would stand up to rough handling from numbed fingers.

A telegram to Altrincham brought the secretary of the Thornton-Pickard Manufacturing Company post-haste to London, and, all in one night, the new apparatus was sketched out on sheets of note-paper in the Kensington house of Lieutenant J. T. C. Moore-Brabazon.

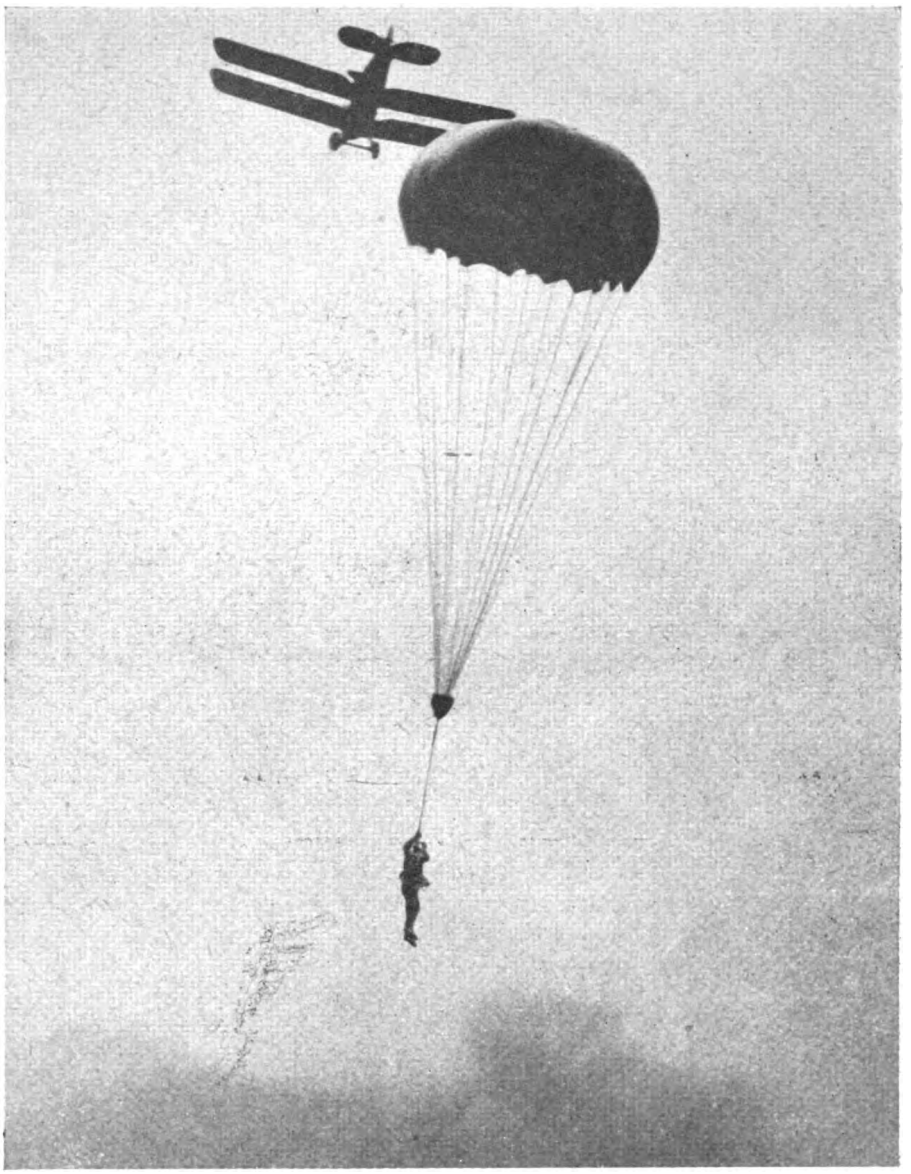

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

PARACHUTE DESCENT

A war-time parachute drop from a Bristol "Fighter." It is perhaps not widely known that the first successful parachute descent on to English soil was made as long ago as September 21st, 1802, when André Garnerin, a Frenchman, landed safely in a field near St. Pancras Church, London, from a height of 8,000 feet. His method of ascent had been to sit in the basket of his parachute while a balloon, to which it was attached by a long rope, towed it aloft from Grosvenor Square, and then to cut himself adrift at the appropriate moment. . . . From which it seems that "nerve" among airmen is not a twentieth-century development!

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The First Aerial Camera

A few days later, the " A " Camera, a rectangular box-pattern instrument accommodating a fixed long-focus lens and fitted with a focal-plane shutter, was undergoing its trials. Few people know how diligently and unsparingly one Richard Hesketh, of the Altrincham firm, worked to make this simple instrument the fool-proof tool it proved to be on active service ; fewer still are aware of the share he had in the securing, late in 1917, of a desperately-needed supply of lenses—at a time when no lenses were supposed to be available anywhere within the ken of Allied photographic experts.

The first 5 × 4-in. plate exposed over the German lines in the new camera was developed in the field on the 2nd of March, and from that moment onwards air photography went forward by leaps and bounds. In a remarkably short time an automatic version of the same instrument made its appearance ; and provision was likewise made for travelling dark rooms in the form of trailer-vans, which were borne upon the transport strength of corps and reconnaissance squadrons. All flying personnel now began to receive expert instruction in the newly-added duty. Gone were the days when a man was an eligible recruit for the R.F.C. simply because, as a child, he had once been taken to see Monsieur Louis Paulhan leave the ground at Hendon in a cat's cradle of sticks and wires.

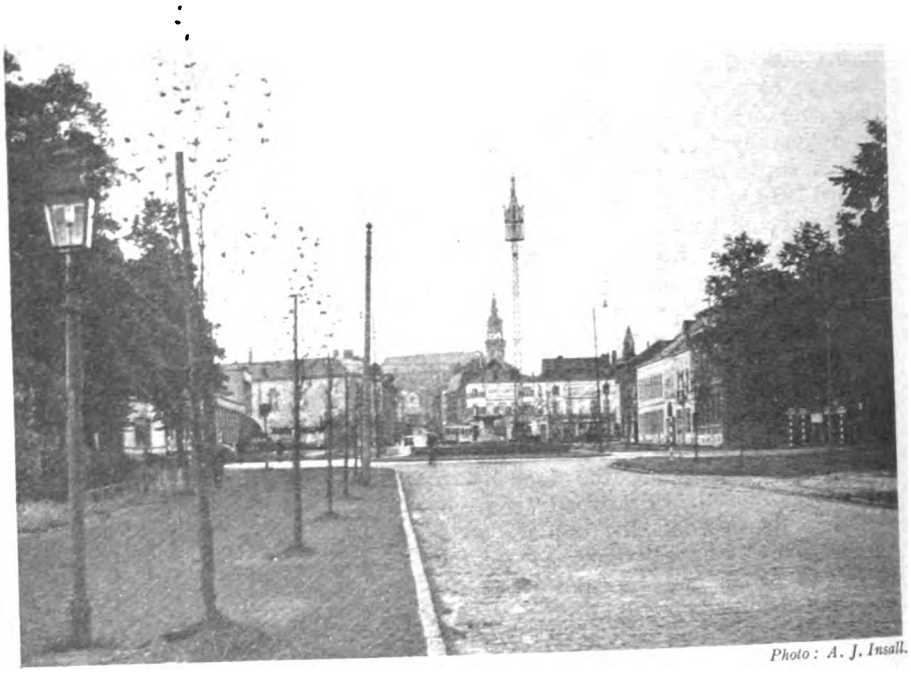

Photo : A. J. Insall.

MORE OF MONS

A view of the town from the main Brussels road. There is one British cemetery (actually a part of the Communal Cemetery), which contains burials from the famous battle of 1914, and was afterwards used by the enemy as a prisoners-of-war cemetery. The nationalities represented by the fallen are consequently many—330 United Kingdom, 57 Canadians, 4 Australians, 2 New Zealanders, 1 South African, 25 French, 1 Belgian, 2 Italians, 71 Russians, 9 Roumanians, and 3 Germans.

It would require several chapters of TWENTY YEARS AFTER adequately to describe the strides made, during any one year of the War, in the various branches of the comprehensive work of the Royal Flying Corps. In wireless alone the progress was such that we must content ourselves with the merest outline if we are to give the reader anything in the nature of a general idea of the subject. When it was desired that a battery's firing should be controlled from the air, an aeroplane, fitted with a Sterling transmitting-set of about the size of a present-day car-battery, would venture forth. Letting down as it gained height some 300 feet of copper aerial-wire terminating in a fishing-plummet of lead, it would climb to an altitude of some 6,000 feet—sometimes less, and never more. At this height observation of the target and the fall of the shell was reasonably easy ; and the ground-signals put out near the gun-battery (in the form of six-foot strips of American cloth, placed to form certain letters of the alphabet and numbers) could similarly be read with fair ease.

Photo : A. J. Insall.

MONS : THE GRAND' PLACE

The centre of activities in this historic town, which is the capital of the Belgian province of Hainault. It stands on a river—the Trouille—and is in the centre of an important coal district. The Hôtel de Ville, seen in the above picture, is a 15th-century building, reconstructed in 1718, when the clock-tower was added. The Flemish name of the town is Bergen.

Morse-code Signals

By means of the code invented by Samuel Finley B. Morse, in the early eighteen - hundreds, communication between the aeroplane observer and the battery-commander would then take place, and continue (more or less uninterruptedly) for the duration of the shoot. It was all hieroglyphics, of course,

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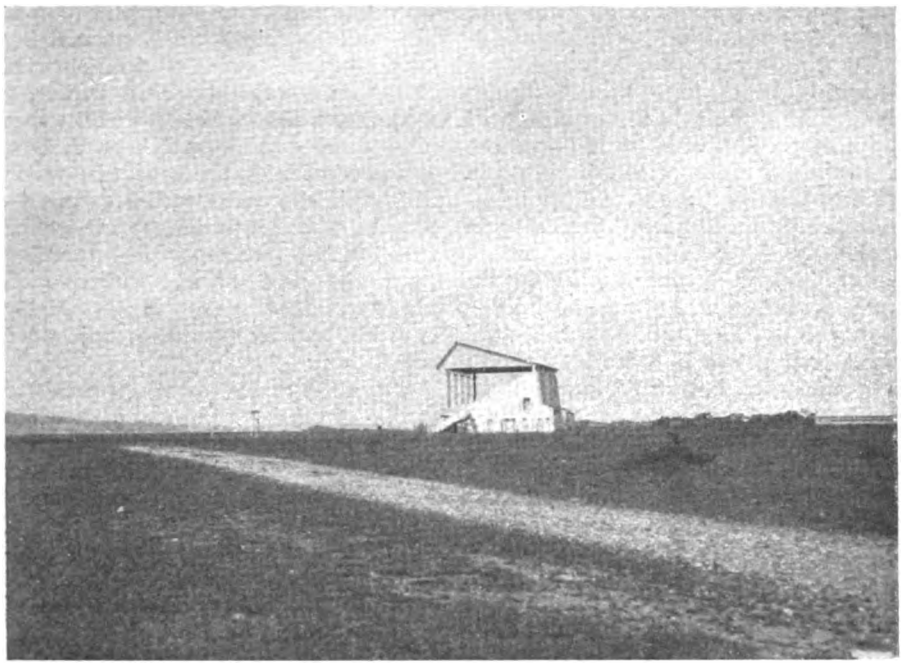

Photo: A. J. Insall.

ST. OMER AERODROME

Here R.F.C., and later R.A.F., machines used to land and report, on arriving from the United Kingdom, before joining their appointed squadrons on the lines. The aerodrome, situated on a hill above the town, was the headquarters of the R.F.C. for a long period, and this was one reason why St. Omer was heavily raided by enemy aircraft in November, 1917, and May, 1918. Serious loss of life then resulted, especially in the many hospitals and casualty clearing stations.

with, if luck held, a touch of slang. "G" (two longish sparks through the ether followed hard by a short one) meant "Fire"; "T" (one longish) meant "I beg to acknowledge receipt of the message just put out, which I fully understand." "W" ("G" reversed, i.e. one short and two longish) signified "Washout," in the technical sense, as when a shot could not be observed, and not as an expression of opinion directed at the battery-commander personally. "O K" (– – – – . –) was the signal used exclusively to record a direct hit; it was never followed by "with you (or me)," not even when an additional ally came in on our side to show us how to win the War.

There was provision for almost every conceivable eventuality in the code for inter-communication between air and ground; and if an aeroplane observer spent 80 per cent. of his time when not flying in perfecting himself in Morse on a buzzer, the rest was generally plain sailing—always provided that his aerial did not foul his under-carriage as it unwound, that his spark-battery did not short-circuit, that the battery-commander took some notice of the corrections he sent down after every round or salvo, or that the attendant German anti-aircraft batteries did not succeed in winging his aeroplane before the shoot had been completed.

To arrive at these corrections, he had to visualise the target as being the central point of an imaginary clock-face, with its axis running true north and south—6 o'clock being the southern point. For simplicity, the figure "12" was regarded as being "O," and various concentric circles, at radial distances of 50, 100, 200, 400, and 500 yards from the target, lettered "A" to "F," enabled the fall of any round to be reported with the maximum of economy. A shell that fell approximately 200 yards short of the target, but in line with it, would be reported as "C 9"—assuming the target to be directly east of the battery position. It was at once delightfully simple and horribly complicated, and it worked exceedingly well.

The Aerial in a Fight

Naturally, the enemy ground-stations made a practice of listening-in; but that did not prevent the shoot from being effected, even when, as frequently occurred, a German fighter-aeroplane, bent upon interference, made its appearance in the middle of the proceedings. The wireless aeroplane carried quite a load of equipment, and this invariably included a Lewis gun. Fighting was not particularly sought after by a machine hampered in its movements by 300 feet of aerial, but it was rarely refused; and all that happened to the aerial was that it described some charming scroll-like designs in mid-air as the machine turned and twisted, and after the scrap was over was still there—in a huge loop, like an inverted capital letter "J"—hanging beneath

Photo: A. J. Insall.

ST. OMER MARKET-PLACE

The wide and *pavé*-clad expanse wears the look of desertion characteristic of French market-towns during the greater part of their existence. The picture may be compared with that on page 146 of Volume One, where another contemporary view of the market-place was given, but without showing, as here, the Hôtel de Ville in the background.

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and behind the aeroplane, the lead plummet holding on manfully.

So far, we have touched but lightly on the subject of fighting as between aeroplanes. In the writer's opinion, much too much has been made of fighting, for fighting's sake, in books relating to the air war. It is quite true that air combat assumed increasing proportions as the War progressed, but it should not be forgotten that first and foremost among the many rôles of aircraft in the field was that of obtaining information for and supplying assistance to the armies in that field. That it was necessary, more and more as time went on, to fight in order to perform these duties was really incidental, and if, in the later years of the conflict, one read and heard far more about the fighting this was because the British public (or shall we be charitable and say the British Press ?) craved the tales of derring-do that possessed romance and required little technical knowledge to understand.

The first Royal Flying Corps squadron designed and equipped essentially for fighting took the field in the month of July, 1915. This was No. 11 Squadron, a two-seater unit provided with the Vickers Fighter biplane, a 65-mile-an-hour aeroplane armed with a Lewis gun projecting in front, and a 100-h.p. Gnome rotary engine racing madly round itself in a kind of cage behind the main planes. One could hear this aeroplane long before it came into sight; but, since the noise was inaudible to the occupants of any other aeroplane, unless so close as to be within pistol-range, this did not greatly matter from the point of view of fighting.

Prestige of the Vickers Machine

The Vickers of this squadron made themselves known to the enemy in a very short space of time, and soon it became legendary for a German flying man, when shot down alive on our side of the lines—whether by a B.E.2c, a D.H.2, or a Bristol Scout—to aver that his conqueror had been flying a Vickers. It was very largely the Lewis gun, which at that period was mounted unstripped—that is, with its protective air-cooling barrel-casing unremoved—protruding from the nose of the Vickers gun-machine, that gave it its highly enviable, and by no means unjustified reputation.

The work of this squadron consisted partly of offensive patrols, carried out during the hours of daylight along the front of the Third Army (from about Bray-sur-Somme to above Gommecourt) and partly of every other form of air activity of which the military aeroplane was then capable. The hour had not yet arrived when the duties of

Photo: A. P., Paris

THE FOSSE DE DOURGES

The above is the popular name for the mine whose wreckage is shown, the official title being Fosse No. 2, Hénin-Liétard. The latter place, as readers will by now scarcely need to be reminded, lies due east of Lens, at a distance of about 8 km.; and Dourges lies on the west bank of the Haute-Deûle Canal 2 km. north-east of Hénin-Liétard. The date of the present photograph is October 27th, 1918.

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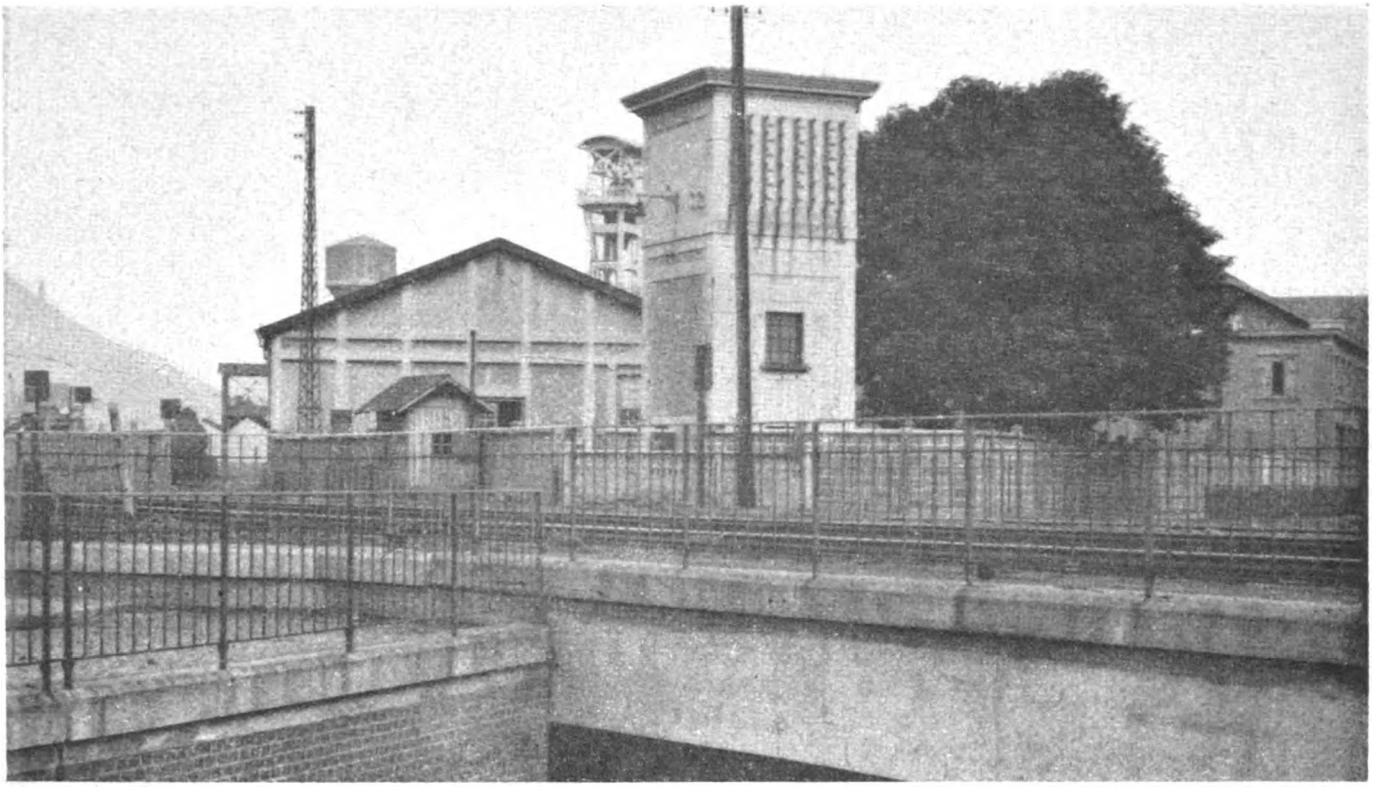

Photo: A. J. Insall.

A MODERN MINE

Here is the rebuilt version of the Fosse de Dourges, which stands on the northern side of the main road from Lens to Douai, somewhat apart from the village. In the foreground is the mouth of the subway which carries the road under the railway line; the scene being, in fact, a "close-up" of part of the view below.

Photo: A. J. Insall.

AVOIDING A LEVEL-CROSSING

The Dourges mine is in this view hidden behind the tree to the left, but a good perspective is obtained of the road-tunnel. The houses are not those of Dourges proper, but are a straggling collection of "ribbon-built" edifices which do not really form part of anywhere. Dourges itself, though a place of some 5,300 inhabitants, is not served by a main thoroughfare.

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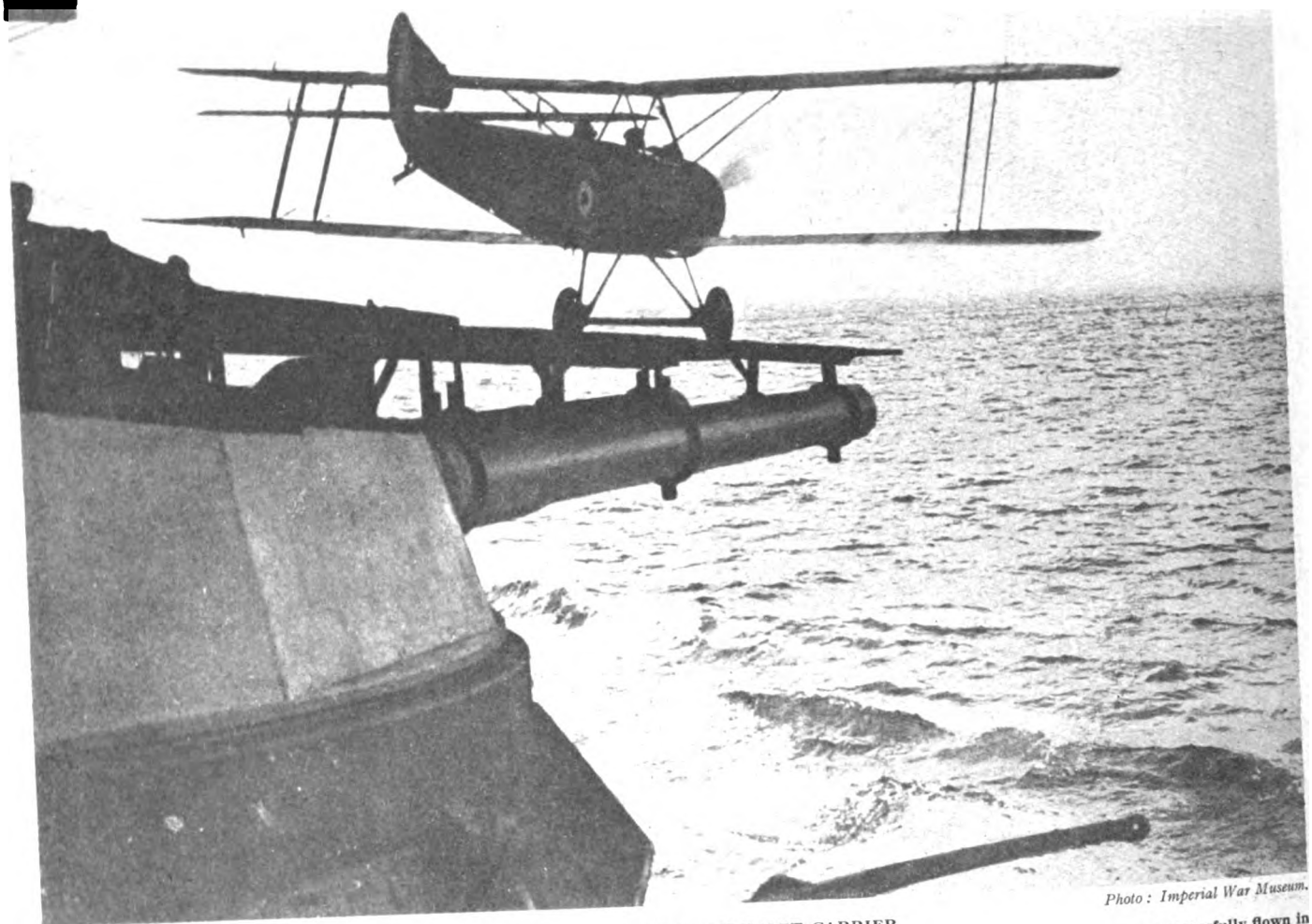

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

FORERUNNER OF THE AIRCRAFT-CARRIER

Here we see a Sopwith "1½ Strutter Scout" taking off from a platform fitted to the guns of a British warship. Aeroplanes were successfully flown in this manner from the battleship *Hibernia* in 1912—a very early date. The first aircraft-carrier proper was the *Hermes*, originally a cruiser, but transformed in 1913, and unfortunately sunk in October, 1914. This vessel was succeeded by the *Furious*, and in 1918 three carriers were in commission, while arrangements had by then been made for the flying of landplanes from the Navy's fighting vessels, as shown in the photograph.

squadrons were limited to the peculiar capabilities of the craft with which they were equipped.

This must not be read as a suggestion that the Higher Command of the R.F.C. did not at this date realise the need for specialisation. That it did, in fact, do so is amply proved by the wealth of memoranda arriving at and emanating from H.Q., R.F.C., almost daily at this period. Indeed, most of the developments destined to come into being during the remaining years of the War had already been foreseen; but Rome was not built in a day, and there were technical difficulties, insoluble on paper, which nothing short of practical experience could possibly hope to overcome.

On the whole, the sequence of these various developments followed a very logical course. First, there came the demonstration of practicability; this was often purely accidental. Then, the period during which, according to the technical and other obstacles involved, further demonstration and more adventurous experiment took place. This, as in the extension of flying to the hours of darkness, frequently depended upon weather conditions. Thirdly, there followed the necessarily lengthy period spent in sifting the views of those who had effected the experiments, and in arriving at a decision which would satisfactorily pave the way for standardisation. It must be remembered that, for every decision taken in the field, corresponding decisions had to be taken in this country, and that once these *fiats* had been issued it was impossible, without the risk of grave complications and waste, to countermand or vary them.

In the meantime, in the squadrons, up and down the line, we were still doing something of everything, not too well sometimes, but on the whole not too badly. We had no Bristol Fighters, no S.E.5's, no Sopwith Camels; but then neither had our good friends on the other side of the line (where we spent most of our available time, coming back for meals and sleep), any Albatros D.V's, Rumpler C.III's, or Fokker D.VII's. The Fokker monoplane was only just on the point of making its début. That development, of which more anon, was entirely our own fault. The Germans were getting a little restless at seeing our aeroplanes unceasingly above them, and felt it incumbent upon them to do something about it. They, too, had been drafting memoranda on future policy.

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CHAPTER XXXI

AROUND ARMENTIÈRES AND THE YPRES SALIENT

The Ypres Salient, or more simply, the Salient, has been since 1918 *the Mecca of a vast company of ex-Servicemen, of the relatives of those who gave their lives there, to say nothing of many thousands of ordinary tourists. It is difficult for those who never served in the area to comprehend even remotely the severity of the fighting that for four years raged by day and by night over the country lying between Ypres and Armentières. Here a soldier who knew every inch of the Salient as it was in war-time goes back over the once-familiar and now sacred ground.*

In October, 1914, it was incredibly cold on the wind-swept plateau surmounting the white cliffs of St. Addresse, overlooking Le Havre. Le Havre was the Base to which transports with reinforcements crossed by night before the Royal Navy had closed the Channel and made safe the passage from Folkestone to Boulogne. From the sea of mud—to be my portion for four years—arose bell-tents flapping in a stiff breeze, like a fishing fleet in a murky sea.

A Homily on Morale

Soldiers of every Arm and regiment were herded in this chilly encampment. We were eager to go to " the Front " ; and, before departure after the second day, a gorgeous figure delivered a homily upon morale, while rain cascaded down our backs and the wind from the sea lashed us with its icy bitterness.

A journey in French cattle-trucks to St. Omer was followed by a march to Bailleul. How we cursed the *pavé* roads, upon which we slithered, and swore fierce oaths at the tails of motor-cars and lorries as they swept past, showering the P.B.I. with black slime. " That's a Staff car, that was ! " This adaptable slogan had not then been coined, but we had other words even more appropriate.

On reaching Bailleul the draft of three hundred men was conducted to the billet for the night—an enormous vinery, under glass. The heating plant was still in perfect order, and if Le Havre had been bleak and wintry, the vinery in Bailleul was comfort sublime and almost tropical in heat. To add to our good fortune, the rations were upon a prodigious scale, while we were almost tucked up in bed by a Staff officer solicitous for our comfort.

In April, 1918, Bailleul, evacuated, was blown to glory by British guns. Galloping through its deserted streets as the shells crashed about the masonry, I heard the sounds of shivered glass. In that heated moment, I remembered my warmest billet.

From Bailleul we marched on to Armentières. It was a very different town from that which now exists ; and, although only 100 yards from the front line, the shops were doing a roaring trade, many of the inhabitants pursuing their ordinary business. A depleted battalion from the line did not permit its new draft to tarry in the town and " parlez-vous avec Mademoiselle," so we slogged along the tramlines to Houplines, where headquarters were installed.

Between Bois Grenier and Ration Farm

There's nothing much in Houplines, Bois Grenier, Rue de Bois, or Chapelle-d'Armentières to remind a visitor either of friendly havens, where humble folk were once so hospitable to soldiers, or of the grisly wreckage which so soon encompassed their dwellings, often inflicting heavy casualties on the civilian population.

But, for example, as you turn the dog-leg road from Bois Grenier to Ration Farm, it is well nigh impossible to avoid the haunting instinct of a dive for the ditch. A German machine gun, with amazing accuracy and unceasing vigilance, for many months marked the corner. In November, 1914, we had but a single-line trench and no communications. If you left the trench by day, it meant crawling on all fours down the ditch beside the road.

The trench itself was almost always knee-deep, and sometimes breast-high, in water. We slept in slits cut into the parados, covered with branches and straw. Much ingenuity and patience was expended in devising means to keep the water under control. No one pretended these dug-outs were even shrapnel-proof ; while one " Jack Johnson " would destroy many days' labour.

I went back to the identical spot, where first I had heard a shot fired in anger in October, 1914, carried the same map, and read from the authentic diary (Army Book 135) my impressions at the time and the detail of what we did and how we lived. I let my imagination run riot. There was little need, for behind me stood Ration Farm Cemetery, now ennobled and made lovely with its flowers, which we had established as a graveyard for our dead.

I had no difficulty in plotting the line of the trench between Bois Grenier and Houplines. In places part of our breastworks remain, while on the German side concrete strongholds still stand. The breastworks recall that strange interlude during Christmas, 1914, when, after a hard frost following on an unremitting deluge of rain, the trench-line became uninhabitable and an " armistice " prevailed.

Ration Farm Nowadays

Ration Farm lay some 200 yards behind the line. Nightly the limbers rumbled to the farmyard, and there unloaded tons of " Maconochie " and plum-and-apple jam. Twenty years after, there was little change. The new farm closely corresponded, architecturally, with its destroyed predecessor, while the appearance of La Grande Flamangrie Farm gives the exact impression of that which served as a company headquarters in line.

Lice throve in their millions ; and when a good-natured and paternal Government decided to issue goat-skin coats as a protection against the chill winter, the vermin, welcoming the innovation, promptly raised their birth rate to myriads. Even if the traveller fails to recognise his trenches, instinct-

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ively his fingers leap to scratch back and belly, while the eye searches vacant ditches for a rum bottle, that familiar squat fellow, bearing the letters S.R.D.

In Armentières, the *pavé* roads yet ring with the heavy tread of marching men ; the walls seem to echo with the roll of drums and the skirl of pipes.

We moved eastwards in small groups, a few shells noisily exploding among the tiles and rafters of houses, and bullets spitefully cracking the air. Like the trenches at Fonquevillers, opposite Gommecourt, until April, 1918, those in front of Armentières were regarded as a "quiet sector," a pleasant relief from the hardships of Ypres to the north and of Loos and La Bassée to the south.

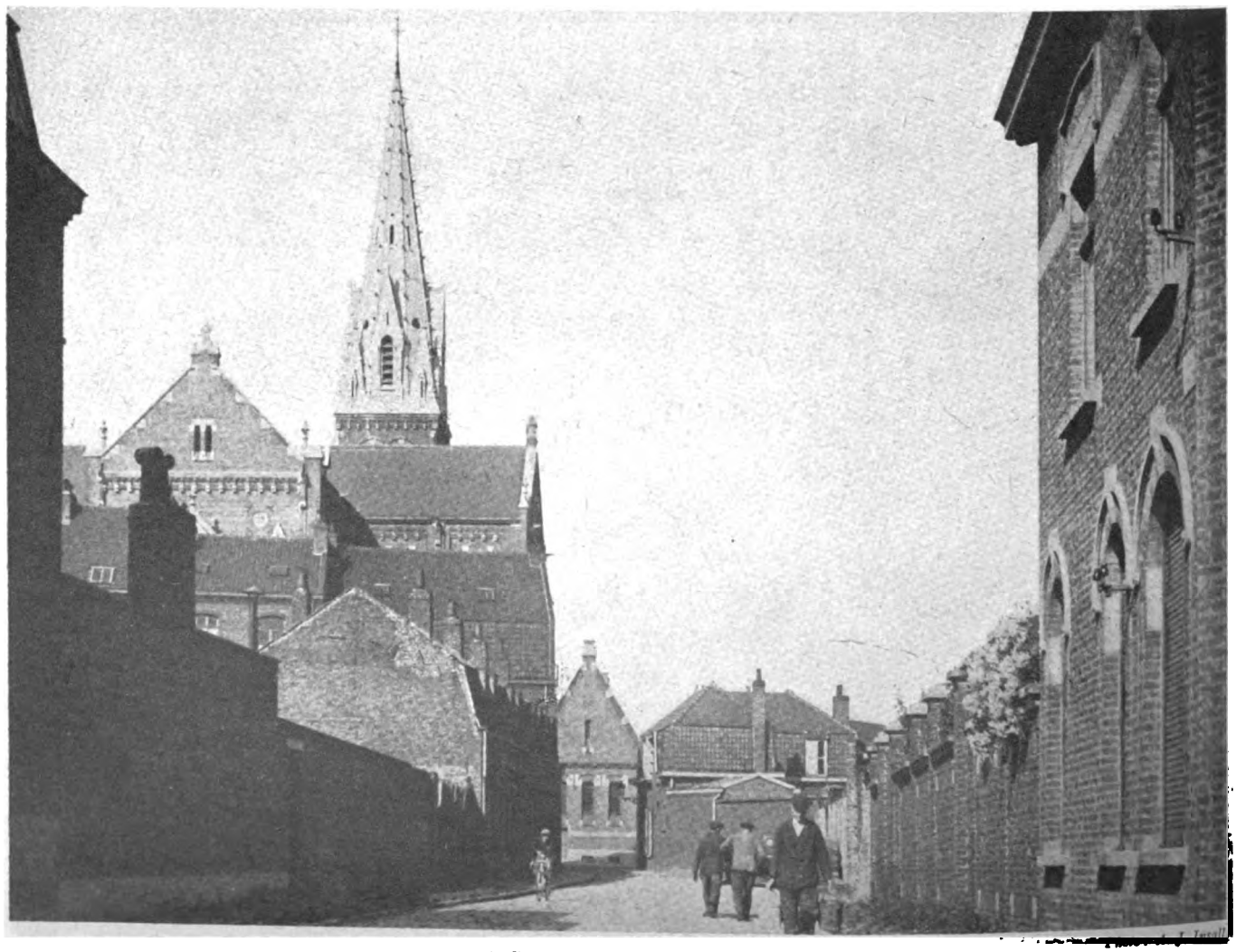
With awful suddenness, war's full ferocity struck the town which had slumbered through three years of battle, north and south. Houses wherein men had slept upon beds, sometimes between sheets, and had played *écarté* and other kinds of games with the ladies of the town, fell in ruins, the inhabitants scuttling for safer regions. With astonishing speed the advancing hosts of Germany seized the town, and the Armentières of legend disappeared.

I well remember how beside the Rue de Bois in December, 1915, a stubborn peasant with his white *percheron* horse continued to follow his plough while shell bursts disturbed the furrows. Neither protests nor warnings would move him from his accustomed task. Passing that same way this year, I encountered, as I thought, the reincarnation of the same man and horse.

I hailed him and, with camera in hand, spoke of the incident. "*Non compris !*" Said I, "*Mon dieu !*" and other things in French ; and finally, after exhausting French, German, and Flemish, exploded in Polish, "*Gindobrein !*" the morning salute. The yokel grinned. He was a Pole ! Since the War, Flanders fields had been short of labour, and many Poles had been engaged in making good these stricken fields.

A Favourite Rendezvous

I turned from him to the little cemetery where my devoted batman of those days lies sleeping. Few English visitors come this way. Yet the beautiful cemetery, with its flowers, shrubs, and green lawns, is a favourite rendezvous for the young people of Armentières on Sunday afternoons. Often must their spirits be in tune with the laughter and affection of those whose spirits haunt the fragrant rose-bushes overhanging the stones which mark the resting-places of those "Known to God."



A GLIMPSE OF ARMENTIÈRES

A fine sunshine-and-shadow study of a street in this celebrated battlefield town, with the spire of St. Vaast Cathedral soaring up above the roofs. Observe also the patched wall of the cottage in front of the spire—a telling hint to those with eyes to see and ears to hear . . . and memories to carry them twenty years backward.

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MODERN VIEUX-BERQUIN ACROSS THE MEADOWS Photo: A. J. Insall.

Situated about 3 km. south-west of Merris, this village is principally famous for the happenings of April 13th, 1918, when the 12th K.O.Y.L.I. was blown out of its shelters among the cottages by the artillery of the *12th Reserve Division*, and then driven from the streets by the infantry of this division and of the *35th*. Later, portions of three more enemy divisions attacked the same English battalion, which nevertheless, assisted by the 31st Division artillery, was able during the afternoon to drive the Germans back to the church. Only quite late in the day were the ruins of Vieux-Berquin finally abandoned.

I travelled as we did during the War, foot-slogging, a little sore from the harsh *pavé* road, and looking out for a friendly lorry, that I might be seated upon its bumping bottom. Then, crowded in a motor-bus among men going upon their varied occasions, I discovered a most satisfactory way of rekindling the sense and spirit of war time.

I made my way to Mont Kemmel, where, in April, 1918, the Bavarian Alpine Corps, burning to atone for its failure against the British 33rd Division at Bailleul on the 12th April, "smote the French defenders and took all its objectives, capturing 2,600 prisoners and 12 French field guns."

I had always thought this eminence impressive, and as a warning used to send notes to my posts with the words "Kemmel is looking at you," and even caused a huge sign to be painted, consisting of a tolerable picture of the hill with a German helmeted head, immense and grotesque, peering above it.

Ouderdom, Bussemboom, Steenwoorde, La Clytte, and other villages, where we both were billeted and fought, are redolent of reminiscence. It is not difficult to conjure once more the lines of kicking mules gnawing the bark from treasured trees, and to see the ghosts of British soldiers, with a few hours' respite from battle, punting footballs in the pastures or gossiping in the estaminets.

I went on to Meteren. It is sometimes said that the inhabitants to-day care nothing for "our war," and will shrug their shoulders and turn to the labour from which they have been disturbed by the enquiring wayfarer. If you tell the Belgian or the Frenchman how we saved him, and how much he owes to us, it is not unlikely that he will prove a little frigid in manner. It is sometimes forgotten that we fought for ourselves!

The Mayor of Meteren

I called upon the Mayor of Meteren, a dapper little gentleman, who had known his small town under shell fire in April, 1918, and had helped to rebuild its fabric from the ashes. He was delighted and interested by what he could be told of the history of the great battles fought upon his soil, which had also shaped the destiny of Europe.

From the Mairie, I wandered up the road to the summit of the slight eminence which commands a wide tract of country overlooking Bailleul, Oudersteene, Vieux-Berquin, Merris, and, to the north-west, the important railway junction of Hazebrouck. The windmill of my memory had vanished, but near by was an estaminet which, though new, seemed familiar.

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Photo: A. J. Insall.

A FAMILIAR VIEW

Many will recognise this photograph of Ypres—a modern view, taken in the height of summer, of the old town's moat and sturdy ramparts, looking toward the Lille Gate. The ramparts are not, as one might pardonably suppose, of mediæval date, but were constructed in the seventeenth century by Vauban, Louis XIV's renowned French engineer. Vauban also designed the Flanders system of dykes; and when, in October, 1914, the Belgians judged it expedient to flood the Yser valley, it was his plans that they consulted to learn the whereabouts of the sluice-gates prepared 250 years earlier for just such an eventuality!

I knocked at the door. An elderly woman appeared. "Yes, the mill had been up there on the hill": she pointed to a clump of saplings some fifty yards distant. "When the Germans had come in 1918, they had appeared with rifles all around the estaminet, one here, two there, then many. I was terrified. Suddenly, the English with machine guns had arrived . . ."

I grinned broadly. The old lady threw her arms round my neck. "It was you!" she cried. The family was summoned: all must hear the story of how she, with a handful of treasures, had been hurried from her house to a place of safety. "Yes, in truth, also, at the Belle Croix farm was another lady, who had been rescued, also. What a day that had been!"

I trudged over the plough, remembering how formerly, while crossing that same field, a German machine gun had suddenly opened fire upon me as I was reconnoitring the position. Then I had flung myself upon my face, wormed my way down a furrow to the cover of a ditch, and brought up machine-gunners and men of the 1st Queens to rout out the enemy.

Souvenirs in the Grass

I lay again in a ploughed furrow, and re-experienced the sense of security that this slight cover gave. I walked to the summit where the mill had stood, and which had changed hands three times in two days of bitter fighting; and there, undisturbed in the rank grass, I found two German steel helmets, and the brass cases of small arms ammunition!

I could stand erect, at last, and observe how division after division of German infantry had assaulted the ridge, two miles long, held by two thin battalions and an odd assortment of platoons of cooks, cyclists, sanitary men, and what-not hurried from schools and formations behind the line to stem the tide of the German advance.

It was an amazing sight. But so I have always found it in revisiting the battlefields. The new buildings, red-tiled and bricked, are confusing; but the folds in the ground are unchanging, and it is they which resummon the ghosts of the battlefields.

I went down the slope through a belt of poplar-trees to La Belle Croix farm, a considerable enterprise. It was as it had been. "Madame" was the same. We had helped her to harness two horses to a carriage, and to drive along the perilous road to Meteren and thence to Cassel. Now, reunited with her farmer husband, who had been absent serving the *soixante-quinze* guns at Verdun, she welcomed me over two bottles of excellent red wine; and we retold our

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stories. It is necessary only to go just off the beaten track, and there you will find the War as you knew it.

Ypres, the focus of all the battle-fields, has been painted by some as a kind of souvenir city, vulgarised, and perhaps a little sordid. It is not so. The rebuilt Cloth Hall and Cathedral of St. Martin are marvels of achievement. But let us go east through the Menin Gate, now so gloriously transformed, through Potijze and Zonnebeke; turn across the fields where the mule track was laid, and make for Tyne Cot—and there's the summit, with its vast panorama! Again it is in the folds of the ground that memories of the battles survive, and in the immense British cemeteries, beside German, which mark the place where men rested when at last overwhelmed.

The Eeriness of Passchendaele

One name always struck cold horror into the heart—Passchendaele. The thunderous roar of the guns exceeded pandemonium. The boom of artillery was accompanied by the ceaseless clang of metal blasting masonry and clattering against tree stumps. It was as if ten thousand giants beat ten thousand tom-toms, while raving fanatics smote all the instruments of death in wild disharmony. The clatter of machine guns throbbed out a maniac melody to the peal of the guns.

Always, from somewhere out of the gloom, unseen voices chanted: "Water, give me water. For Christ's sake, give me water," and staccato voices shrieked through the night: "Hell! . . . God! . . . *Kamerad!* . . . *Mein Gott!*" . . . Cries so often silenced in a gurgle as the pray-er sank beneath the soggy slime, drawing a last breath of gas and oxygen twice laden with hydrogen: the urgent plea for water at last fulfilled.

The dulcet notes of spinning metal, and the hissing of spent bullets, made known their plaintive wail, accentuated against the din of gunfire.

One sound alone beat for each man with deafening certainty—a heart knocking, apparently, in a wheezing throat.

I grew to love the Passchendaele Salient. The eeriness of the bleeding landscape haunted me. Seemingly endless miles of rotting lifeless life, lying crazily in seemingly endless stagnant pools. Danger, deadly danger, was always present, dogging footsteps.

On either side death lurked, tugging at the elbow, luring the unwary to the pools from which waved skeleton fingers, beckoning. And death shrieked suddenly from on high, breathing fire and gas and molten metal, roaring with laughter in great gusts as men ran and ducked and swayed and bobbed.

I recall the mood, and how curious were my sensations and feelings during this one great eastward effort.

Nightmare Progress

I went on through the darkness. My eyes had learned to penetrate its blind-

Photo: A. J. Insall.

IN FULL SWING

In a caption on page 499, allusion was made to the normally deserted state of French and Belgian market-squares. This air of desolation, however, vanishes completely when market-day arrives. The scene then becomes one of immense animation, the town's own populace being augmented by country folk from all the villages round, who arrive during the very early morning in every kind of contraption, from a motor-bus (their wares, in that case, being piled sky-high upon the roof) to a humble and dust-whitened donkey-cart. Above is a contemporary market-day scene in the Grand' Place at Ypres.

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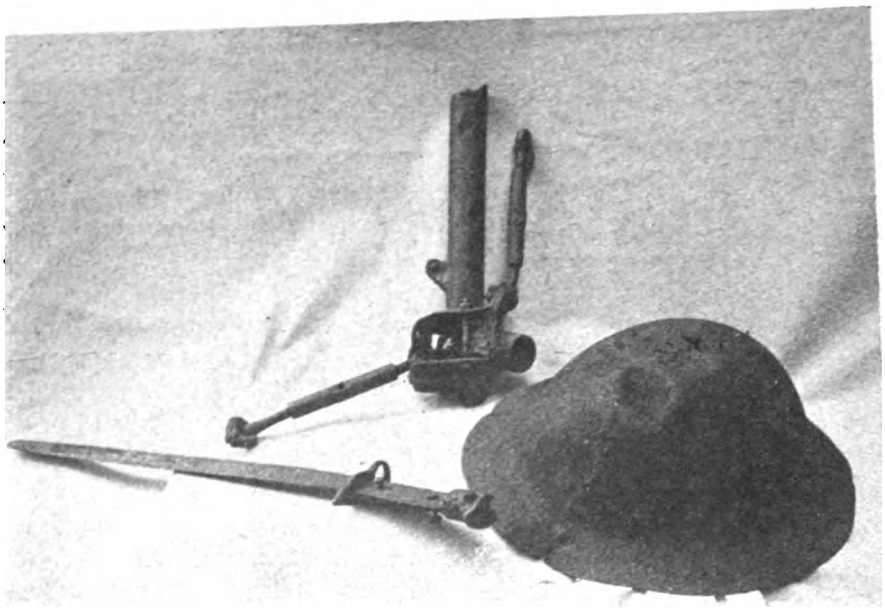

Photo: A. J. Insall.

RELICS

The articles shown here are not War Museum exhibits, but were dug up at various dates by the present occupier of Aeroplane Farm, near Zonnebeke, and were presented by him to our photographer. They consist of a battered British "tin hat," a British bayonet, and a fragment of a German aeroplane—possibly of the very machine after which the farm was nicknamed.

ing blackness. Shapes and forms appeared and disappeared. I heeded them not. Some were tree stumps and holes, corpses and carcases. They were still. I realised their attitude and manner. Others, figures like myself, moved, hurrying, groping, stumbling, slipping. Going on. Some lurched against me as we passed. Of what use a greeting or a curse? It must be shouted to be heard, and then either becomes absurd. We went our ways, deafened, yet the ear pierced always with the eternal chant of No Man's Land: "Stretcher bearer! Give me water!" The ground would heave suddenly before the eyes, leaving a yawning hole to trap the unwary foot and drag down the body: and the earth shrieked and belched above the tempest.

I snatched a moment of exhausted sleep after the attack, among bomb and ammunition boxes and great baulks of timber, my coverlet a grey overcoat, stained red. No sleep in the Salient was for long; the gas gongs would beat their fearful Reveille at all hours, and often the cry "Stand to! Action! Front!" would arouse the slumberer to grip his rifle.

Wandering over the same ground, now so well ploughed and wooded, it is difficult to repicture the scene. Polygon Wood, difficult of approach, is a charming sanctuary, within its midst the quite lovely Australian memorial and surrounding cemetery. It is difficult to imagine that here the 57th and 116th Batteries R.F.A. fought to the death in October, 1914, or that the Australians and 93rd Highlanders, completely surrounded, fought front and rear here for two desperate days in September, 1917.

Near by is a large German cemetery. The gravestones, of red granite, in form much like those of the Imperial War Graves Commission, are now being erected. In that "Court of Peace"—such is the translation of *Friedhof*, the German word for a cemetery—I met a pilgrim beside the grave of a friend. After a mutual greeting, he asked in German, "You know this battlefield?" I nodded, adding, "In 1917." He glanced down, with a shrug of the shoulders, at the resting-place before him.

Photo: A. J. Insall.

CROSS-ROADS AT LA CLYTTE

La Clytte is a tiny place midway between Kemmel and Reninghelst, and it is the Kemmel—Poperinghe and Bailleul—Ypres roads which form the crossing. On April 25th, 1918, our front line ran just beyond the cross-roads as seen here, although later we pushed the enemy back about 1 km. La Clytte was a brigade H.Q. at one period, and to-day possesses a large British cemetery, containing nearly 900 United Kingdom and Empire and as many as 159 unidentified fallen.

Enemy Turned Friend

I read the name, that of a soldier of the *230th Reserve Infantry Regiment*. I stepped forward quickly with the words: "*Kamerad! Reich mir die Hand.*" We gripped hands. At Polygon Wood we had faced one another, he and his friend and I. . . . Later, we took lunch together in Ypres, retelling our stories. Our experiences were much alike.

Nothing recalls the Salient as it was more vividly than the amazing War Museum opposite the Cloth Hall at Ypres, whose witty curator is, also, an encyclopædia of information. The square is noble, the lovely Cathedral of St. Martin, stone for stone a replica of

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that which fell beneath the guns. Often the ingenious architect has included one of the old gargoyles or crowned a pillar with a scarred capital. It is the same with the yet uncompleted Cloth Hall.

There's nothing jerry-built about the great, busy square of Ypres which for centuries was the centre of the textile craftsmen of mediæval Europe. And now Ypres is ennobled by the grandeur of the cloistered archway which forms the Menin Gate, the gift of the Empire, recording the names of its missing in the Ypres Salient. I never hear the "Last Post" without being moved. The bugles sounded that call from the gateway just as I was going south towards Dickebusch.

The gaunt stumps of trees which used to be mirrored in the lake have again flourished; and to replace the plunging shells which sent up great spouts of water, I saw boats, and boys and girls bathing. As one approaches Messines, the impression of its dominant, though topographically insignificant, height is inescapable. From every side Mont Kemmel surveys the countryside; while Mont Noir, the Scherpenberg, and Mont des Cats still appear important features above this flat landscape.

In 1918, we had difficulty in persuading the good monks to leave their bombarded monastery; but the Order is again safely installed, perhaps reflecting sometimes upon the shrieking tornado which once disturbed its meditations. Neuve-Église, in April, 1918, was a vital pivot of the battlefield. The church, now rebuilt, still held coloured glass in its leaded windows when the German storm troops attacked the village.

When the Padre Threw Bombs

Cut off from their brigade, the headquarters of a battalion, with some machine gunners, fought a desperate battle from this stronghold. While Jagger, the sculptor of the Royal Artillery Memorial at Hyde Park Corner, though wounded, fired from a window, and won the Military Cross, the padre threw bombs from a verger's door, and Crowe, the adjutant, led a sortie, hurling back the attack—for which he was awarded the V.C.

That was the same battalion, the 2nd Worcestershires, which had fought the epic battle at Gheluvelt, not far away, on 31st October, 1914. To counter-attack in those early days, when there were no reserves, called for heroism worthy of the gods. Yet, at a steady double, the officers leading and the men following in one irregular line with fixed bayonets, the battalion charged with increasing impetuosity down the slope from Polderhoek ridge, and closed with the enemy in the grounds of Gheluvelt Château.

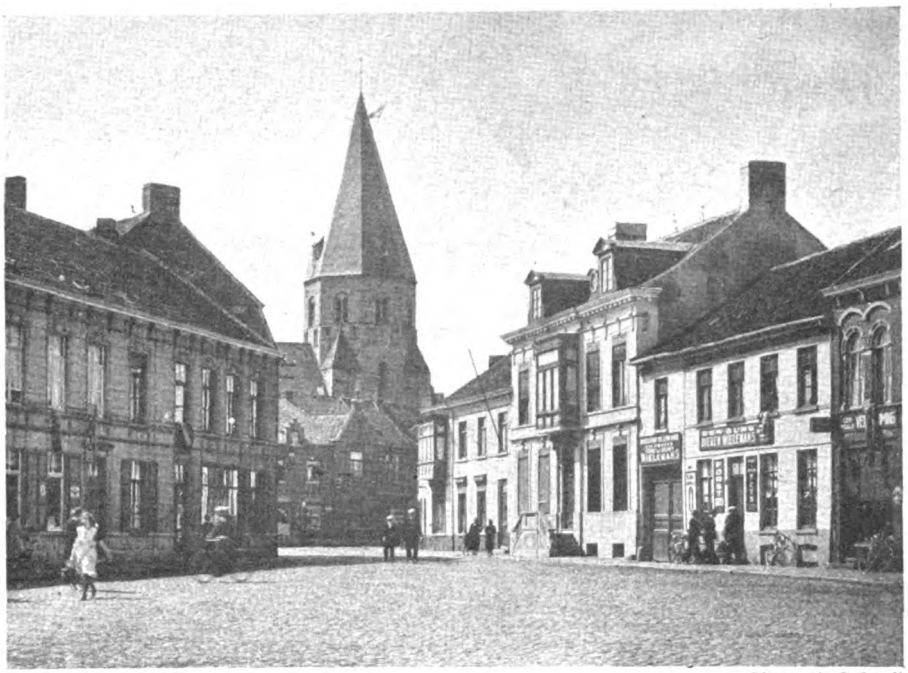

Photo: A. J. Insall.

THOUROUT

This charming village is situated at the bifurcation of the Roulers—Ostend and Roulers—Bruges roads. The retreating Belgian Army, the French Marine Brigade, and the British 3rd Cavalry Division had all passed through it by October 13th, 1914, and thereafter it was in German occupation until retaken by our Allies on October 16th, 1918. British airmen bombed it periodically.

The British batteries behind Polygon Wood opened fire in support of the charge. The Germans gave way, and the Worcestershires charged across the lawn and joined the 1st Battalion South

Photo: A. J. Insall.

HOOGLEDE FROM THE NORTH-EAST

Hooglede lies 10 km. south of Thourout, and 4 km. north-west of Roulers, on the road from Bruges to Ypres. Entered by the enemy in the middle of October, 1914, it was reached again by Franco-Belgian troops on October 3rd, 1918, the Allies taking up a position along the Hooglede—Roulers road. British aircraft were active here during most of the War; and a few British dead lie in the churchyard. The village was an important German centre.

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Wales Borderers, who had made a wonderful stand throughout the day. By an odd coincidence, two brothers, J. M. and A. J. Reddie, each second-in-command of his respective battalion, met on the lawn. "My God!" said A. J. to J. M.; "fancy meeting you here!" [1] The Germans made no further effort to regain Gheluvelt, and the peril of the collapse of the British defence around the Menin Road was averted.

Sir Herbert Plumer was, of course, the warden of the Ypres Salient. I remembered being in rest billets near his headquarters, perched upon Mont Cassel, with its astonishing view all around. It's a long climb up the road which circles round the hill. I retraced steps which had first brought me the friendship of Sir William Orpen, most famous of the War artists, whose masterpieces were given by him to the nation, and now form a most important exhibit in the Imperial War Museum. There was an estaminet in Cassel, one of Orpen's favourite haunts, and I confess that the sight of the lady who ministered to our needs was well worth the long trudge to the main square set upon the hill's summit!

[1] *The Worcestershire Regiment in the Great War*, i, p. 34.

Orpen—Good Companion

"Orps" saw as much of the battlefields, and tasted as much of our life, as any combatant, while his sensitive mind and witty tongue made of him a wonderful companion. When the artist sketched a soldier, he absorbed the complete story of the man and dug into his very soul. Some of his War poems are as rich as his painting. Cassel is still a charming town, unchanged, mediæval — though, even if some generals appeared a little antiquated in their notions, such an environment did not infect "Plum's" mind.

Before leaving the Ypres Salient I had to walk again from where the gasometers at Passchendaele had stood to the southern end of Broodseinde Ridge. I remembered how, when we had won the ridge, I used to peep at the spires of Moorslede and Dadizeele churches away to the east, and then hurry between my posts just as dawn was lighting the scene.

The gasometers, punctured all over like a top hat after a student rag, have vanished, and farmers now cook and thresh by electricity. But I spotted Busy Wood and De Mispelaire Crossroads, and that unpleasant place I had known by its map reference E.19.b.19.09 (easy to remember), from which a field gun had sniped during the arduous movement at Passchendaele. You couldn't run then, but now you can saunter at leisure, light a cigarette, and snap your fingers at E.19.b.19.09!

THE GRAND' PLACE, MENIN

A glimpse of that mysterious town at the "other end" of the Menin Road. Like Ypres, Menin was fortified in 1685 by Vauban—who, indeed, strengthened almost the whole of the French frontier, supervising the erection of 160 fortresses during his career. Menin is now just within Belgium, and from the War point of view is of greater interest to German pilgrims than to British, being one of the most important centres of our ex-enemies' Western Front cemeteries.

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CHAPTER XXXII

INTELLIGENCE AND SPIES

When, in 1914, war broke out between the two great European groups known as the Allies and the Central Powers, the people of this country succumbed for a time to that infectious complaint best described as "spy fever." For a considerable period prior to the actual opening of hostilities many believed that Germany had built up a system of espionage almost diabolical in its perfection. German spies were supposed to be everywhere in our midst, and the common supposition was that, when the hour struck, the enemy within the gates would make his presence felt in no uncertain manner. In the event, as is now a matter of history, but a very brief space of time elapsed before every enemy agent had either fled these shores or, rounded up, was under lock and key. Nevertheless, for as long as nations wage war one upon the other spies will continue to ply their trade; and few themes have provided more thrilling situations than the great game played by the Intelligence Services of warring Powers.

BEHIND the actual combatant operations of the Great War, there was waged by both belligerents throughout the struggle another type of warfare which finally permeated the whole world. This was the "intellectual" war, so aptly described as "The Battle of Brains," on which depended to a great extent the actual success or failure of the operations of the contending navies, armies, and air forces.

The Battle of Brains

This Battle of Brains covered the entire range of activities of both sides, going far beyond the limits of the physical fighting. Moreover, as the War grew older, it assumed more varied forms, and developed in entirely unexpected directions. Yet throughout the conflict the major object of the Battle of Brains remained unchanged, namely to acquire knowledge—or "intelligence," to use the technical term—of the enemy's intentions, resources, and his ability to conduct the struggle to a victorious issue.

Now it is obvious that all such intelligence as could be gained on the battlefield was to be acquired only by methods ultimately based on force combined with skill. It was mainly to be obtained by a specially trained personnel, working under the Intelligence Branch of the General Staff, whose members wore uniform and were in every respect regarded as soldiers performing their duties alongside the fighting troops, whether the latter were in action or otherwise.

Every soldier of the Great War will recall the twin branches of the staff, "O" (operations) and "I" (intelligence). "I," of course, dealt primarily with the combatant activities of the enemy in the field, the scale and quality of his forces, their methods of fighting, their armament, and the intentions of their commanders.

There was, however, another aspect of the acquisition of information regarding the enemy. All such intelligence as could be gleaned on the battlefield by methods "based on force" must be supplemented by further information which could be acquired only behind the enemy's front—either in his own country or in neutral States. Such information concerned his physical and moral condition at home, his attitude towards the War, his resources of all kinds, his output of war materials, his relations with foreign Powers, his intrigues with suspect states or individuals, and other similar subjects.

"Based on Deception or Fraud"

Since all these facts clearly demanded close concealment, they could be ascertained only by methods which would defeat the desire to keep them secret—namely, methods "based on deception or fraud."

The acquisition of this last-named type of information was, from the very outset, combined with yet another task. The methods and personnel employed could also be diverted to carrying out more active measures for damaging the enemy in his own country. These efforts took the shape of attempts to destroy his munition factories, communications, public utility works, and the like, and in another direction to foment social and political discontent within his borders, to impair his financial credit, and even to defeat his efforts to acquire raw materials or food from abroad.

As a reply to these efforts, there necessarily came into existence a complicated system of precautionary and preventive measures, which ended by intruding themselves into the daily life of every inhabitant of the belligerent countries to a degree unparalleled in any previous armed conflict. This entire system was known as "counter-espionage."

The resultant organisation, combining all aspects of the above duties, came to be grouped under the general title and control of "Intelligence." Consequently the "I" Branch of a belligerent State grew into a vast system which worked along two parallel channels: first, the active branch, which sought to acquire information, either (*a*) by uniformed personnel working with the troops, or (*b*) by clandestine methods in every part of the world, including the enemy's own country; second, the defensive branch, which set out to defeat the enemy's efforts to acquire knowledge by similar devious methods.

This latter branch worked mainly in "plain clothes" at home, although there was a highly developed and effective section, mainly in uniform, with every army that took the field. Such, at least, was the practice with the British and French. In Germany, on the other hand, the distinction between acquisitive and defensive intelligence was never so clearly observed.

A large proportion of the work done by Intelligence in wartime was a direct expansion of what had been prepared in peace. In fact, it is not too much to say that the entire system of counter-espionage imposed on Britain in August, 1914, was the product of much painstaking and detailed work done in the preceding years.

But with the declaration of war the whole outlook of Intelligence in the field altered. As a matter of fact, nearly everything had to be remodelled or improvised. The campaign had been foreseen as a brief conflict consisting of mobile warfare. The astonishing expansion of Intelligence work in static

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Photo: A. P., Paris.

NEAR HARBONNIÈRES CHURCH

Two more views of a village first illustrated by us on pages 658 and 659 of Volume One. The wartime picture there reproduced showed the tower of the church rising above the house roofs at the end of the main street. Here we are looking down the street, with the church just out of sight on the right. Readers may be reminded that Harbonnières lies 3 km. south of the Amiens—St. Quentin road, on the route from Warfusée-Abancourt to Chaulnes.

warfare had not been provided for. In short, the exigencies of War demanded an increase in the scope and the scale of Intelligence that had never been dreamed of.

It is now proposed to relate the activities of Intelligence during the Great War, dealing in succession with the principal tasks which it was called upon to perform.

Intelligence with the Troops

With the armies in the field all Intelligence work was performed by the "I" branch of the General Staff. This branch was represented by General Staff officers of varying seniority, at all headquarters ranging from divisional upwards. But these officers were few in number, so that the bulk of the ever-increasing work at the front had to be performed by their subordinates and assistants, the subalterns of the "Intelligence Corps," those "green-tabbed" young men who were always to the fore when any serious fighting was in prospect.

But the direction of all Intelligence, as well as the deductions to be drawn from the results obtained, always remained the business of the "I" Officers of the General Staff. Theirs the task to supervise, to encourage, and to exploit the results, and to initiate the methods and devices employed.

Untaught as it was, the Intelligence corps could not undertake many of the strictly military duties of the vast whole which Intelligence comprised. In the early days of the War its officers wore no "green tabs"; neither was the technique of Intelligence anything like so developed as it very soon grew to be. In fact, in that prehistoric age the Service was rudimentary, and was very often confused with reconnaissance or even despatch-riding.

Not that this somewhat limited outlook cast any slur on the Intelligence officer of that epoch; rather the reverse, since despatch-riding, not to mention reconnaissance work, was no child's play at a time when one despatch-rider after another would fail to reach his destination, having either run straight into the arms of an Uhlan patrol, or else been treated as a moving target for the benefit of a brand-new German machine gun eagerly looking out for so tempting an target. Reconnaissance duties, too, often led straight into the hostile outposts.

They were a gallant lot of young men who offered their services for Intelligence at the outbreak of the War, although few of them then realised what lay ahead. At that time the ostensible qualification for an Intelligence Officer's commission was little more than a knowledge of the German language. Some applicants were accepted on the grounds of a similar familiarity with French; but the latter were few.

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Volunteers' Subterfuges

Many were the stories current as to the tricks and subterfuges practised by these zealous volunteers. Of one enthusiast it was told that he arrived at the War Office on the day following the outbreak of War arrayed in a top-hat, frock coat, and his grandfather's sword and sash of Crimean date girt around his waist. After vainly demanding an interview with the Secretary of State, his pertinacity at length gained him an audience with an over-busy general officer.

First saluting in military fashion, then bowing to the ground with an aristocratic sweep of his silk hat, he expatiated on five years spent at school at Stuttgart, with a resultant knowledge of many South German dialects. More bothered by his visitor than appreciative of Intelligence work, the much harassed dispenser of favours at length shouted to his clerk, "Oh, give him a commission and relieve me of this lunatic!"

It should be added that after a month's work in the field, and several snubs, this young man developed into a treasured member of the Service. And, indeed, half these "first catches" developed into the backbone of that remarkably efficient creation of 1916–18.

The task was truly no light one, as these young men soon found. The first-comers had to learn their trade by hard experience, frequent dangerous missions, and appallingly long hours of work, not to mention failures and rebuffs without number. As time went on, a regular system of selection and training was evolved, whereby the rapidly dwindling number of truly competent German scholars in the Army were thoroughly tested and partially instructed before being faced by the reality and perils of Intelligence work in the front line.

It was also necessary to verify the qualifications, desires, and intentions of these young men, since there soon spread abroad a belief that work in the "I" branch meant a safer and easier job than that of platoon commander. On the other hand, a battalion commander was not always anxious to release some of his most promising and zealous subalterns for a task which was all too often —and erroneously—stigmatised as a "loaf."

Regarded as "Scrimshankers"

This impression that "I" was a scrimshanker's job was possibly increased by the circumstances that the single Intelligence Officer normally allotted to a division would be kept at divisional headquarters, while a large proportion of the Corps was always retained at G.H.Q., ready for distribution to lower units as the situation demanded. Consequently these officers, when sent down to battalions or brigades, frequently received a cool reception, and were even sometimes

THE CENTRE OF THE VILLAGE

Photo: A. J. Insall.

Although exactly pairing with its "opposite number," this photograph shows a glimpse of the church on the right. Uncovered by the enemy on his withdrawal in 1917, Harbonnières was retaken on March 28th, 1918, from the 50th and 66th Divisions, after the former had been involved (as related in the caption on page 659 of Volume One) in stirring events there on the 27th. The Allies' final recapture was effected on August 8th.

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regarded, if not actually addressed, as "G.H.Q. spies," or greeted with similarly sweet-sounding appellations.

In trench warfare, indeed, the duties of the Intelligence Officer proved no sinecure, and were sometimes extremely hazardous. Often it happened that he would be told off to accompany some speculative attack or raid for the purpose of getting an early "squeeze" of any prisoners who might be secured. Such a lad once went out in the company of a fire-eating brigadier on what seemed a suicidal attack. For four hours the youngster dodged from one shell hole into another beside this veritable salamander of a general officer.

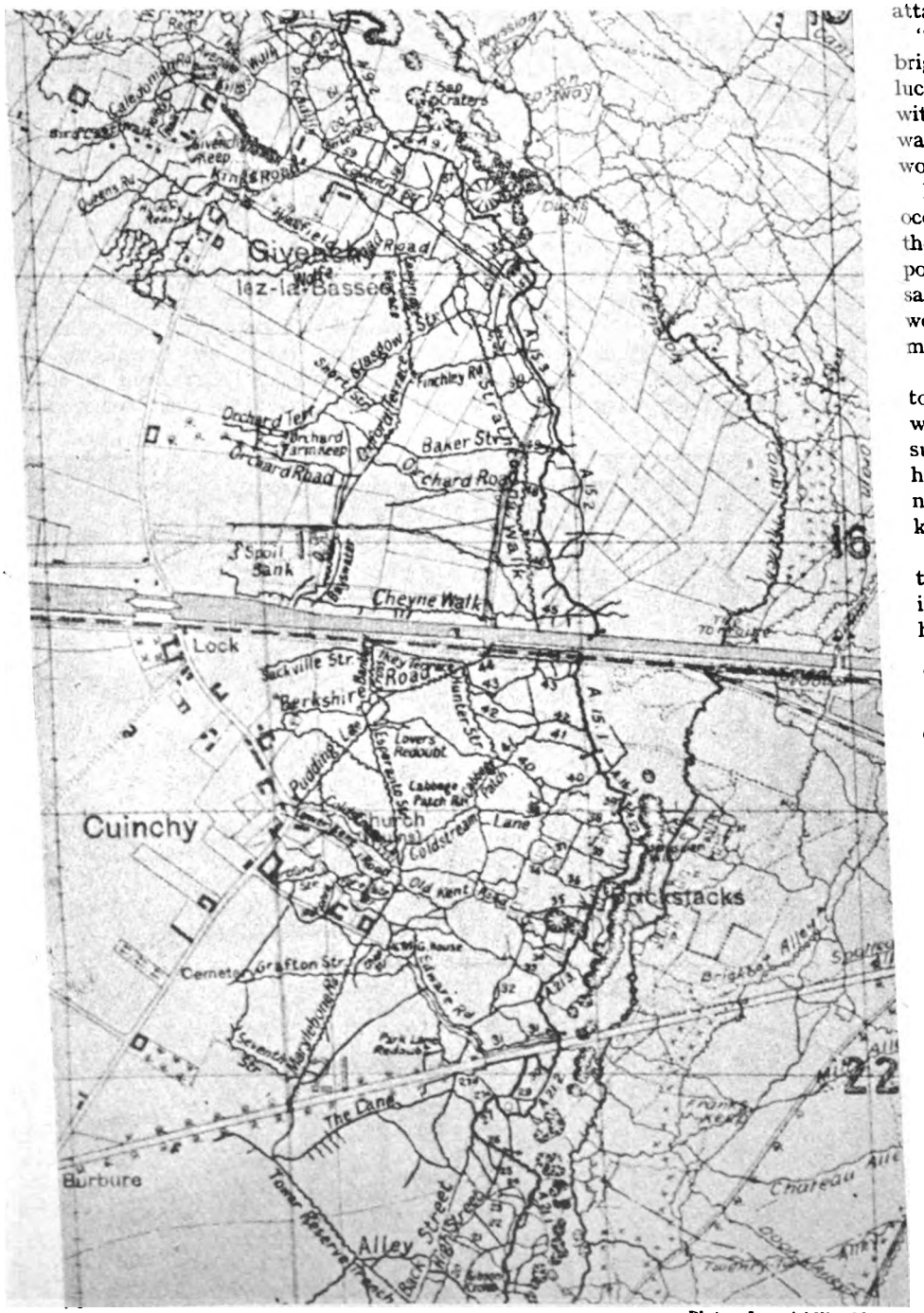

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

ANOTHER TRENCH-MAP

We reproduced on page 434 a section of a trench-map showing the Neuville—Vitasse area, and here we give one showing the trenches in the Givenchy—Cuinchy sector. The official marking is Sheet 36c N.W.1, and the features have been corrected to March 4th, 1917. The waterway crossing the centre of the map is La Bassée Canal; the straight road lower down is La Bassée—Béthune route. This region saw its heaviest fighting during 1914, 1915, and the Spring of 1918.

At the end of that time, when three-quarters of the brigade had been knocked out, he was able to interrogate some seven or eight captured Germans. But such was the din of the bursting shells and bombs, and so great the terror of the prisoners, that not a word of value could be gleaned from them. He could do nothing. The battle then suddenly ended as a really successful British attack.

"Hard luck, my boy," said the brigadier, dismissing the I.O., "hard luck that we could not provide you with any better victims. I'm afraid this was a case of hard fighting and not brain work. Thanks all the same!"

Neither had divisional headquarters occasion to say anything to G.H.Q. of the I.O.'s services except that his temporary attachment had been unnecessary. The brigadier shortly received a well-merited V.C.; the I.O. not even a mention!

"He got a V.C.," growled the latter to his colleagues, "for doing what he was itching to do and then scoring a success! I had to go with him—which I hated like poison—did nothing and got nothing, except congratulations on keeping a whole skin."

But the Head of "I" at G.H.Q. read the story aright; so he gave the deserving youngster ten days' extra leave home.

"Listening" by Night

Perhaps one of the most searching ordeals for an I.O. was that of crawling out by night to "listen" along the German line; by this means it was hoped to secure from the enemy's trenches first-hand indications either of a change of unit, or of reinforcements, or of a coming attack.

On such a mission a youthful I.O. was once sent. It was a foul bit of ground, and a particularly unhealthy part of the front. Little had been learnt for some time of the enemy's troops opposite the British trenches. Through the slime the I.O. crawled, until he nearly fell into a German wiring-party. One of the Boches suddenly swore loudly as he tore himself severely on the jagged wire. A thud followed, and a volley of imprecations as the sergeant's victim, speechless from the blow, rolled back into the sap on two or three other workers. Discipline failed; the tension suddenly relaxed; for an instant the Germans became voluble; then a hush, dead silence.

But the lapse had been enough, and the I.O. suddenly realised that in front of him two East Prussian battalions had

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relieved the former Württemberg troops. An attack was meditated! Here was a stroke of luck—could he but get his information through! Slowly he crawled back, until he paused motionless, paralysed, as a Very light shone above him. Then forward again. Twice he rolled into muddy shell holes, ran his face into a stinking corpse, lacerated himself on barbed wire. Again there burst a Very, and before him he thought he saw, *coming away from the British line*, three Germans.

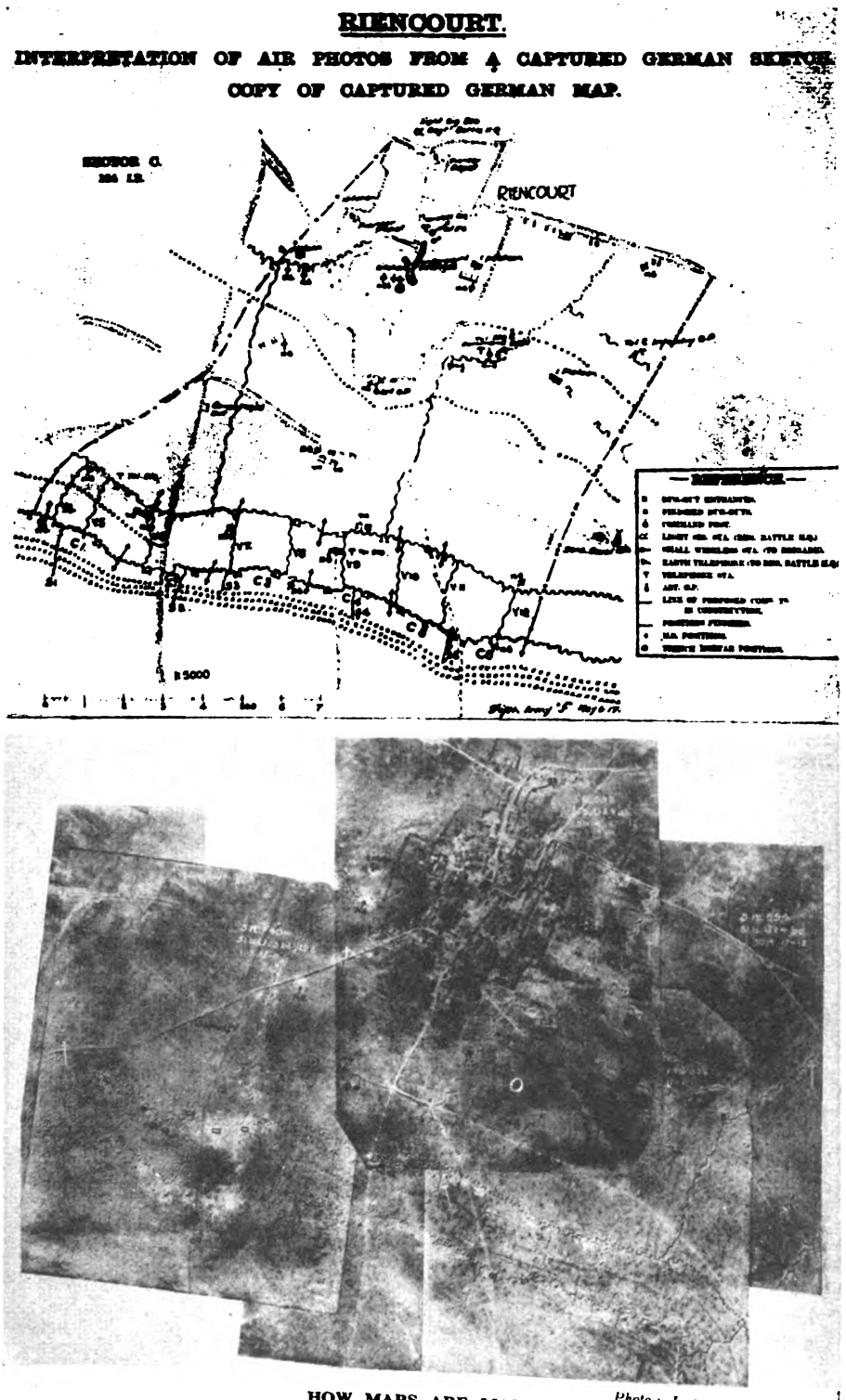
Twenty minutes went by, while he hardly dared breathe; yet another Very—the Germans were still there! Rooted to the spot, he felt for his bomb. But then it flashed across his mind, "If I throw that bomb, both lines will fire! And I must get my information back!" The cold sweat trickled down his spine as it dawned on him that this German trio must have been out on the same task as himself. What were they after, now that they had seen him? Were they meaning to do him in?

Virtue Unrewarded

Three Verys flashed in front of him. One seemed to come from the Germans ahead. Blinded for the moment, he lay, scarcely capable of thought. At long last another Very. He could see the enemy had gone. They must have been as anxious as he was to get back to their own side. It was time; that narrow, glimmering slit in the eastern sky was a warning. Soon he was back, haltingly telling his tale to a battalion commander—only to be cursed for not having bombed the German party and so given the alarm; for they were clearly taking back the latest information about the British line!

"My job, sir, was first and foremost to get back information as to the Huns," he pleaded; "I dared not make a sound!" Crestfallen at such a sulphurous reception, he went back to his own headquarters. Fortunately higher authority was more sympathetic and appreciative.

Apart from such incidents, even in safer surroundings the I.O.'s lot was at times strenuous to a degree—and mentally exhausting, too. Examining prisoners of war during a battle in a feverish attempt to extract information of value to the troops engaged was a mental trial of no mean order. As the prisoners, jaded, hungry, muddy, some blood-stained, were first seen by him, the I.O. had to pick and choose at random a few whom he thought might repay questioning—one in every dozen, perhaps.



HOW MAPS ARE MADE *Photo: Imperial War Museum.*

The lower half of the illustration shows a number of aerial photographs, pasted together in such a position that they form a single accurate picture. Above is a British copy of a captured German sketch depicting exactly the same area. If the German map had not been secured, it would have been necessary for the British to compile their chart from the photographs alone; and in that event many of the valuable details would have remained uninterpreted. The locality is that of Riencourt-les-Cagnicourt, south-east of Arras.

It was a lottery pure and simple; but it had to be done. So, as the dejected captives filed by, or as he went down their line, the I.O. would single out the most likely-looking victims. All the while an N.C.O. or two would search each captive and collect into sacks every trinket, particle of paper, and

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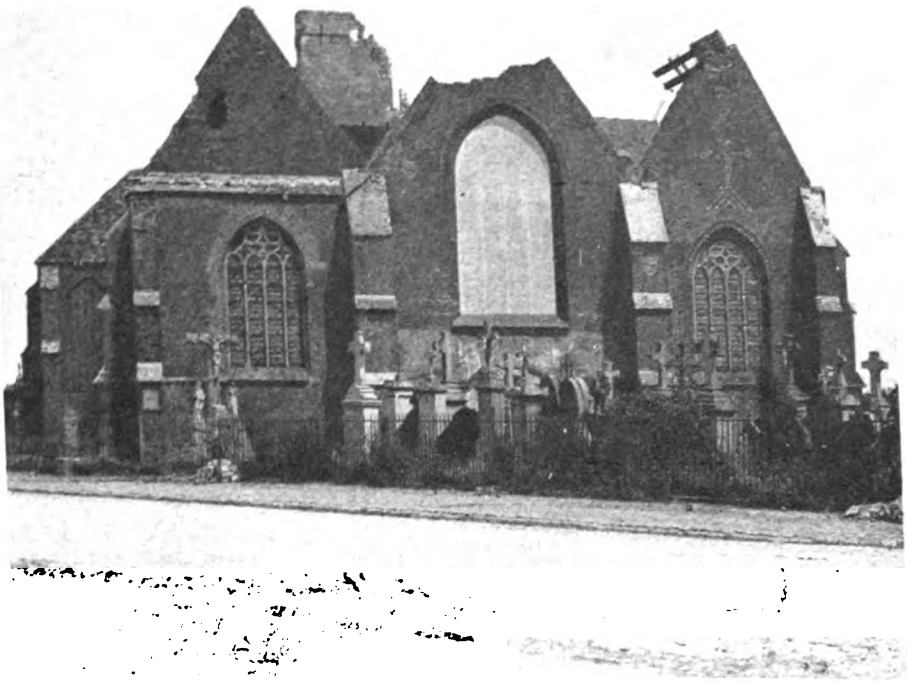

Photo: A. P., Paris.

DECAPITATED CHURCH
The photographs on this and the next page are of Morbecque, a village 3 km. south-south-west of Hazebrouck. The above view was taken on July 30th, 1918.

souvenir that he carried. Then to work!

Seated at his table, the I.O. would go through his victims. With a schedule of a score of questions before him, one German after another would pass by. Taking down a few names, hurriedly jotting a few data, snatching the 'phone transmitter to send off a trivial detail or two to the "authorities concerned," the I.O. struggled on. Occasionally a prisoner might blurt out the whereabouts of an unknown battalion, battery, or ammunition dump. Quickly! A message must be slipped off to the neighbouring air unit, giving them a likely target for their bombs. The gunners, too, must be warned. What a trial, when the 'phones might not respond to his urgent call!

Struggling Against Disappointment

Working against time, struggling against many a disappointment, his most likely prisoners turning out "duds," he would continue. The strain was great, the reward uncertain; while failure might bring humiliation, if no worse. And behind it all was the thought that on the accuracy of his results might depend the success of an attack, the lives of scores of his fellows.

The stubborn resistance of some self-possessed and conscientious men had to be accepted, too, since the Hague Convention, that Magna Charta of all captured soldiers, ordained that, beyond his true name and the correct title of his regiment, no prisoner could legally be compelled to answer any question addressed to him by his captors. Strong in this knowledge, scarcely a single captured officer would vouchsafe a word to his interrogators. But the men reacted differently to their environment, and many would open their mouths.

Even then, how many possessed any knowledge which would be of use to their captors? Nevertheless, prisoners of war—P.W. for short—remained

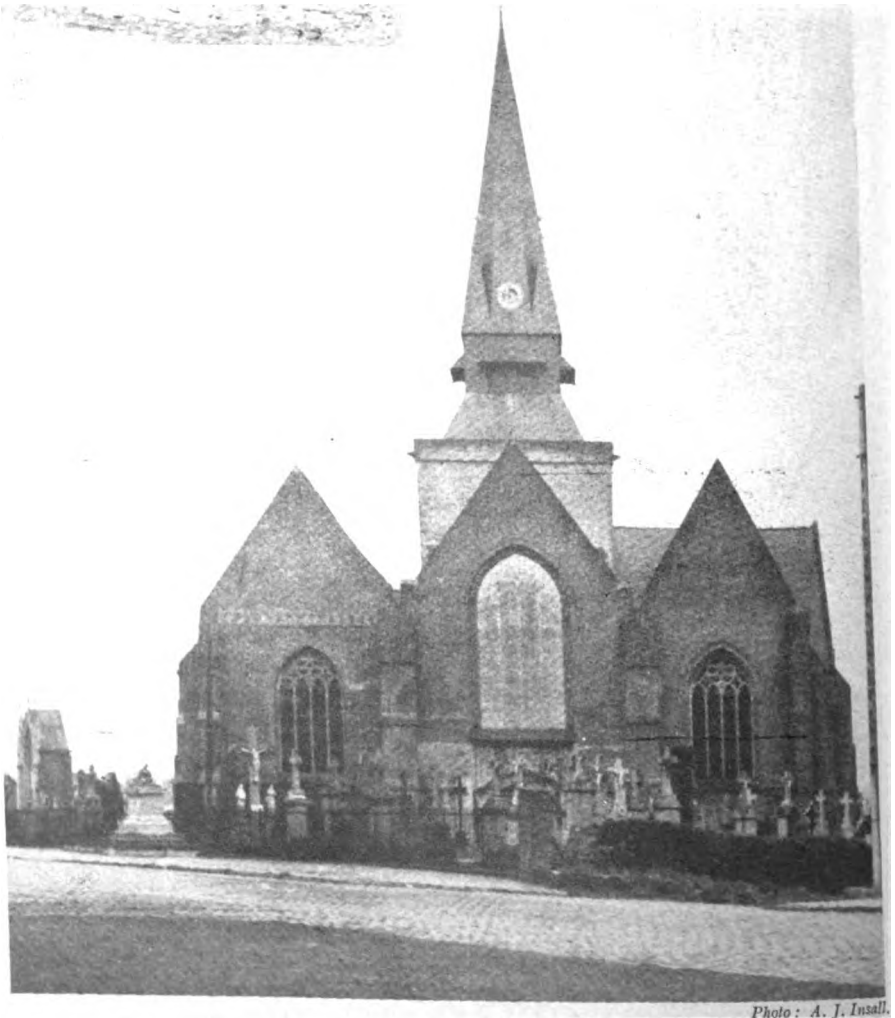

Photo: A. J. Insall.

SOARING HEAVENWARD AGAIN
The broad highway which passes through Morbecque is that which connects Hazebrouck with Aire, to the south-west, and Béthune, to the south-east. Another road leads from the village into the Forêt de Nieppe, and beyond it to Merville; so that in April—May, 1918, it was touch-and-go whether Morbecque would fall to the enemy. Actually the place shared the lucky escape of Hazebrouck.

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possibly the most prolific source of information at the actual front.

Later would come a more detailed interrogation, conducted at leisure. To extract information from the reluctant captive developed into an art; and its practice required patience untold. It often grew into a battle of wits, a very different matter from the high-speed examination which was conducted under the stress of battle. There were different methods of conducting it. The common interest, the common grievance, might elicit fruitful answers from one. The sarcastic touch, the disparaging comment, might work wonders with another. A cigarette, the jocular approach, could disarm yet a third. In some cases nothing succeeded like ridicule! Endless was the study of human nature required for the successful conduct of such an interrogation.

Mechanical Eavesdroppers

There were the "listening sets" built into special quarters destined to house prisoners of war—quarters innocuous enough to look at, perhaps even a tumble-down farm or a half-demolished cottage where captives might spend but a night. Once in that building they would be put together, two or more in a room, while the "listening sets"—in a separate building if need be—would be manned.

This, however, became a common procedure on both sides, and therefore no real secret. So well known, indeed, did this artifice become that in the last year of the War many weary and fruitless hours were spent by the listeners. On one occasion, it is said, two German officers occupied themselves for two whole days discussing, in loud, clear accents and in the most polite language, the vagaries of the weather during the previous twelve months.

A more fruitful source of information, although it involved far more difficult manipulation, was the introduction of a "pigeon" into the prisoners' "cage" or lodgings. It needed a consummate actor to play so exacting a part as that of "pigeon," whether it was as officer, N.C.O., or private. Not only good acting was demanded, but a familiarity with the prisoners' language and army such as could be acquired only by a very exceptional man. The Germans possessed a few such.

In one case a young man, who had spent many years in England, both at school and at a university, was equipped with a better knowledge of England and of the English than of Germany itself. He gained a great reputation among his people for his remarkable success in

ANOTHER VIEW

Photo: A. J. Insall.

The enemy's approach in April, 1918, was not quite the closest he had ever come to Morbecque. On October 8th, 1914, the *IV Cavalry Corps* under von der Marwitz, which—moving always on the right of the infantry as the battle-line extended northward—had clattered through Menin and Ypres, continued in a south-westerly direction to the outskirts of Hazebrouck. There De Mitry's French Cavalry Corps—on the left of the Allied line—met it, and forced it to turn back on Bailleul. At their nearest the Germans had been within some 4 km. of Morbecque.

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the rôle of a British infantry captain. Such were his achievements that he was reserved for the most important officer prisoners.

That he thus rendered highly valuable service to his Army there is little doubt. But he was found out at last. One British prisoner, with whom he had come into contact in England, recognised him without being himself detected. The Englishman shortly escaped and within two months the British Army had received full details of the wiles of this German artiste.

Mutually Suspicious

The result was in one case comic; a fortnight later two British officers, strangers to one another, were lodged together on being taken prisoner. The two days during which they were housed in common they spent glaring at one another in fierce silence; finally, it is rumoured, one tried to strangle the other. Subsequently it turned out that each had taken the other to be the celebrated German "pigeon," on the strength of the description that had been circulated by British Intelligence.

A converse trick was to pass a specially trained "deserter" into the enemy's lines. A volunteer, loaded with false information, would play the part of a discontented soldier with a bitter grievance; and he would talk in that key. But deserters began to be regarded with suspicion. They grew unpopular with "I." They often chattered too much, told conflicting stories, babbled about things of which they were ignorant. Deserters were out of fashion, when at a critical moment of the war it happened that British "I" was badly stung by a consummate expert in this line.

A deserting German corporal successfully entered our lines: a superior man, who spoke no English, but showed education and keen insight into things military, criticising discerningly the current operations. His former position as brigade office orderly rendered it more than probable that he knew a good deal about the enemy's intentions. Yet, when approached on that subject, he would blandly state that he had heard only of an impending thrust at X.

In vain did divisional H.Q. try to pump the man further. Corps H.Q. next decided "to put him through the hoop." Listening sets were tried. The best "pigeon" at G.H.Q. was turned on to him. The deserter's fame spread throughout the "I" world. Artillery details, administrative routine matters—oh, yes; of these he prattled gaily. But, touching the crucial question, after ten days' daily "treatment" he had not wavered from his original vague statement. Some authorities, impressed by his steadfastness, began to

From the drawing by F. Matania

INTERROGATING A BRITISH PRISONER

One of F. Matania's highly melodramatic drawings, which appeared originally in the *Sphere*. Clearly the picture of a lone, wounded, and dishevelled Scottish private undergoing fierce cross-examination at the hands of a ruthless group of Prussian officers was well calculated to arouse the sympathy of the war-time British public. In point of fact, however, as all old soldiers—and most other people, when they choose to think—must be aware, the interrogation of captives is a time-honoured and highly important practice indulged in by every belligerent. As the author of the accompanying chapter makes evident, it proved in the Great War a more fruitful source of information than any discovered by the subtlest wiles of spies.

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believe in this statement concerning the attack at X. In the end the attack materialised at Y.

A Secret Unveiled

Seven years later, an I.O. of War days was ski-ing at Davos. One day, coming down Parsenn, he picked up on the snow a German with a badly sprained knee. Laboriously he helped the man down; procured a sleigh; saw him to his hotel. Next day he called to enquire. Shaved and brushed, the German sat up in bed. The ex-I.O. stared; memory slowly brought back recollections of seven years earlier at G.H.Q. The veil suddenly lifted; it was indeed the famous "deserter"!

Simultaneously the German started, smiled, and then in excellent English remarked, "Allow me to show you this!" —and he picked out of the note-book by his bedside a faded extract from German Army Orders of late 1919. It read:

> "Hauptmann . . . for remarkably valuable services in misleading the enemy in January, 1918, the Iron Cross, First Class."

Such skill was, fortunately, perhaps, very rare; and the British, maybe, were not a bit behind the enemy. But, even now, certain things had best be left untold!

British prisoners, as a whole, spoke little and remained true to their cloth. They generally impressed their German captors. There were exceptions, as on one occasion when a captured German document revealed the painful fact that a party of men, taken prisoner on the eve of a serious attack, had proved to be "unusually informative."

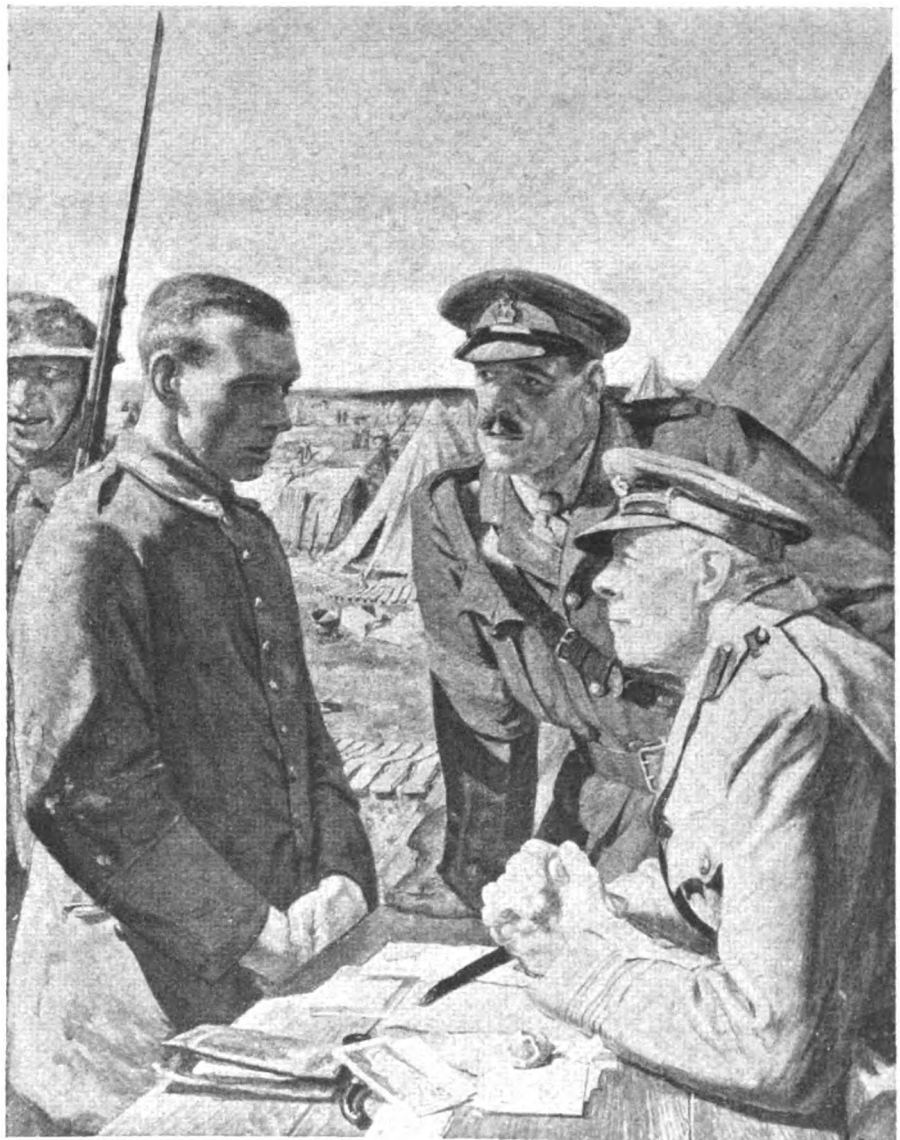
"Gassed men were often very talkative, and so were men in a high fever . . . the latter appeared to use the last ounces of their strength in order to give minute descriptions of their final impressions. . . . This was also the case with regard to one of the first tank crew prisoners. He had escaped unhurt from a tank which had exploded; for days he trembled and shook as a result . . . and in this state gave minute information. . . . The Intelligence doubted the whole story until facts were ascertained which broke down our unbelief." [1]

First Gas Attack "Too Improbable"

This hesitation to accept detailed stories from prisoners was common throughout the War. As early as April, 1915, the French had dismissed as too improbable to be worth further consideration the very complete statements of a German deserter concerning the first gas attack at Ypres on the 22nd of the month. What a mistake!

The Germans, too, erred in the same way. "Shortly before the beginning of the Battle of the Somme a Frenchman was brought in. He gave particulars of the whole plan of attack in every detail, and with such definiteness that he was not believed." [1]

Next, out of the documents, pay-books, and trinkets that were taken from enemy prisoners much information could be obtained. It was heavy enough work. After a battle, Intelligence officers would be assembled and given sacks full of such matter to sort and scrutinise. Captured orders of recent date were eagerly sought, whether of battalion, divisional, corps, or army. The higher the issuing authority, the greater the order's value. Here, again, a good haul of prisoners, supplemented by the occupation of some enemy headquarters, might occupy for days any number of Intelligence officers from two to a dozen—working 10 or 12 hours a day, too.



From the original in the Imperial War Museum.

PUTTING HIM THROUGH IT

Here, in a painting by Francis Dodd, R.A., is the other side of the picture to that shown opposite: a German prisoner is being put through the "mill" by British Intelligence officers. A captive is bound, by international law, only to reveal his name and the correct title of his regiment. Many stopped at that. Others, on both sides, were induced to speak further by a variety of tricks—sarcasm, the offer of a cigarette, simulated sympathy with grievances, perhaps a knowledge, on the part of the interrogating officer, of the captive's home district. Notice, in the foreground of the painting, the German's personal belongings—wallet, pipe, photograph, letters, etc.

[1] Nicolai, *The German Secret Service* (translated), p. 186.

[1] *Ibid.*, p. 186.

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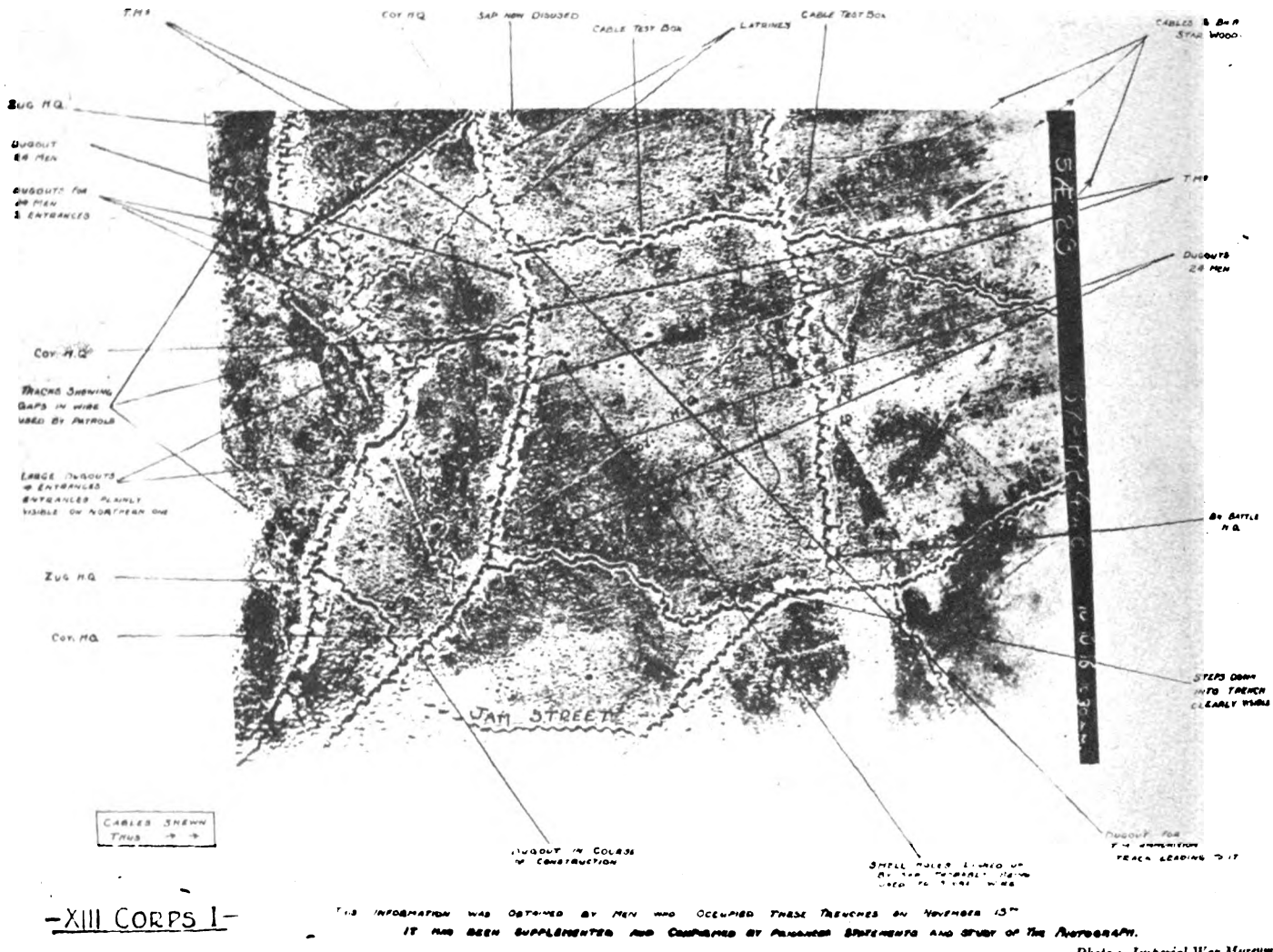
---ANNOTATED AEROPLANE PHOTOGRAPH---
TMs
Coy H.Q.
SAP NOW DISGUISED
CABLE TEST BOX
LATRINES
CABLE TEST BOX
CABLES & BOX STAR WOOD
Sug H.Q.
DUGOUT 24 MEN
DUGOUTS for 24 MEN 3 ENTRANCES
TMs
DUGOUTS 24 MEN
Coy H.Q.
TRACKS SHEWING GAPS IN WIRE USED BY PATROLS
LARGE DUGOUTS 4 ENTRANCES ENTRANCES PLAINLY VISIBLE ON NORTHERN ONE
Bn Battle H.Q.
Zug H.Q.
Coy H.Q.
STEPS DOWN INTO TRENCH CLEARLY VISIBLE
JAM STREET
CABLES SHEWN THUS
DUGOUT IN COURSE OF CONSTRUCTION
SHELL HOLES USED AS OBSERVATION POSTS
DUGOUT FOR OBSERVATION POST LEADING TO IT
-XIII CORPS I-
THIS INFORMATION WAS OBTAINED BY MEN WHO OCCUPIED THESE TRENCHES ON NOVEMBER 13TH
IT HAS BEEN SUPPLEMENTED AND CONFIRMED BY PRISONERS' STATEMENTS AND STUDY OF THE PHOTOGRAPH.

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

AN AERIAL PHOTOGRAPH PREPARED FOR USE

As the reader will easily gather from a study of this air view, considerable experience and expert knowledge were required in the interpretation of such apparently unpromising material. The duty was among the many comprised under the heading of Intelligence, and was often closely connected, as here, with the interrogation of prisoners. The two lines of writing at the foot of the illustration are significant, and emphasise the fact that trench-raids were frequently made with the sole object of obtaining prisoners who might be induced to "talk." The area shown is north of Courcelette, October 10th, 1916.

How some of the investigators grew to detest the Gothic script, the badly-written postcards, the blurred pencil scrawl, often smudged with rain or mud, occasionally scarcely legible, if at all, owing to bloodstains! Once an enemy airship was brought down, and a squad of British I.O.'s set to work to decipher her log book and the note-books of her officers. Although the ship had been burnt to a cinder, these documents had escaped the flames, as they had lain beneath the charred bodies of the crew.

What a task! The books, saturated with melted and congealed human fat, stank fearfully, even when treated with petrol! Such was the ghastly odour that the I.O.'s worked in hourly spells, fortified with whisky and strong cigars. Before their work was done, two of them had collapsed with violent nausea.

Yet these tasks did not complete the I.O.'s daily round. Aerial photographs to decipher; trench maps to keep up to date; the enemy's train-movements to log up. Such duties were occasionally varied by work with the French "*2me Bureau*" (i.e. Intelligence) and by days spent in studying reports received from any and every source outside and beyond the actual fighting front.

Examining Refugees

The French-speaking I.O. might also be turned on to examine the *évacués*, i.e. French civilians who, through one cause or another, had returned into their own native country after a sojourn behind the German lines. After any advance that bit deep into the enemy's lines, the number of such *évacués* would be considerable. By all such means it was sought to establish what was going on in rear of the enemy's trenches.

Last but not least among the I.O.'s tasks was the compilation of the Intelligence Summaries, those daily statements of the enemy's activity. Often scurrilously dubbed the "Daily Liar," or "Comic Cuts," these circulars were valuable, and frequently constituted the sole source of information as to the enemy's movements in the front line which could be obtained by units in the trenches. Sometimes the troops owed a real debt of gratitude to an unjustly ridiculed publication. On the

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From HERLEVILLE to FAY

Then and Now

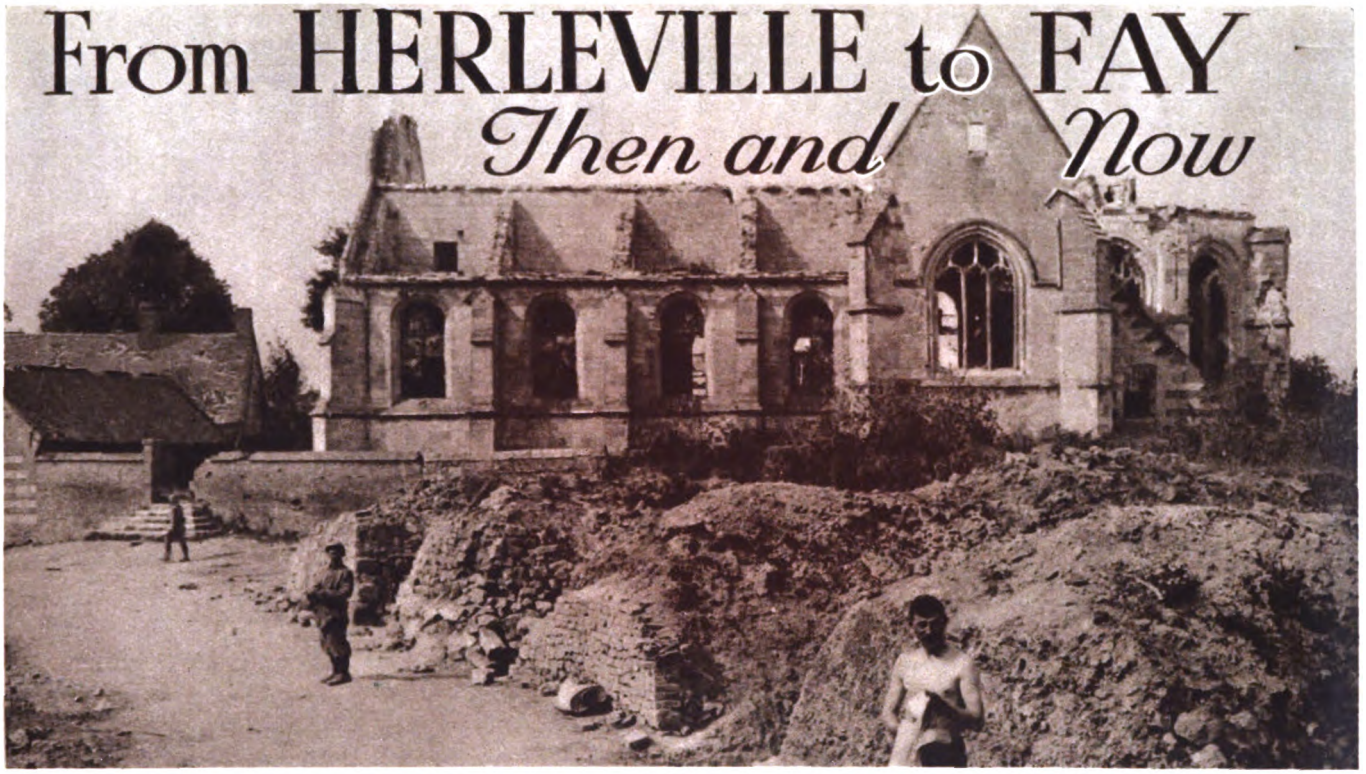

Photo: A.P., Paris

BEFORE HERLEVILLE CHURCH

Herleville *lies* about 1½ km. south of the Amiens–St. Quentin road (the Roman Road, as often called), 17 km. east of Villers-Bretonneux, and 8 km. south-south-east of Bray-sur-Somme. It was already in Allied hands at the outset of the First Battle of the Somme, being some way behind the lines of the French XXXV Corps. The present photograph, taken on July 21st, 1916, shows members of that corps near the ruined church. The gaps between the mounds in the foreground are the entrances to underground shelters.

IN THE PRESENT-DAY VILLAGE

Photo: A. J. Insall

It would seem from the *Official History* that Herleville was "given a miss" in the March Retreat. It lay in the centre of the area abandoned by the XIX Corps during the retirement to the Rouvroy–Froissy line on the morning of the 26th; but during this withdrawal a gap of 3,000 yards appeared, approximately in the region of the village, between the 66th and 39th Divisions, and was filled only at Rainecourt, 2 km. further west. To add to the confusion, the 50th Division also retreated over much the same ground. Herleville was regained on August 23rd, 1918, by the 32nd Division.

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Photo: A.P., Paris

IN FRENCH OCCUPATION

This photograph of Foucaucourt—2 km. north-east of Herleville, at the intersection of the Roman Road with the Bray–Chaulnes route—was taken on July 27th, 1916. By that time the French line, originally only just east of the village, had been pushed well beyond it, and Foucaucourt—for what it was worth—had become a true back area. It was to remain such until March, 1918.

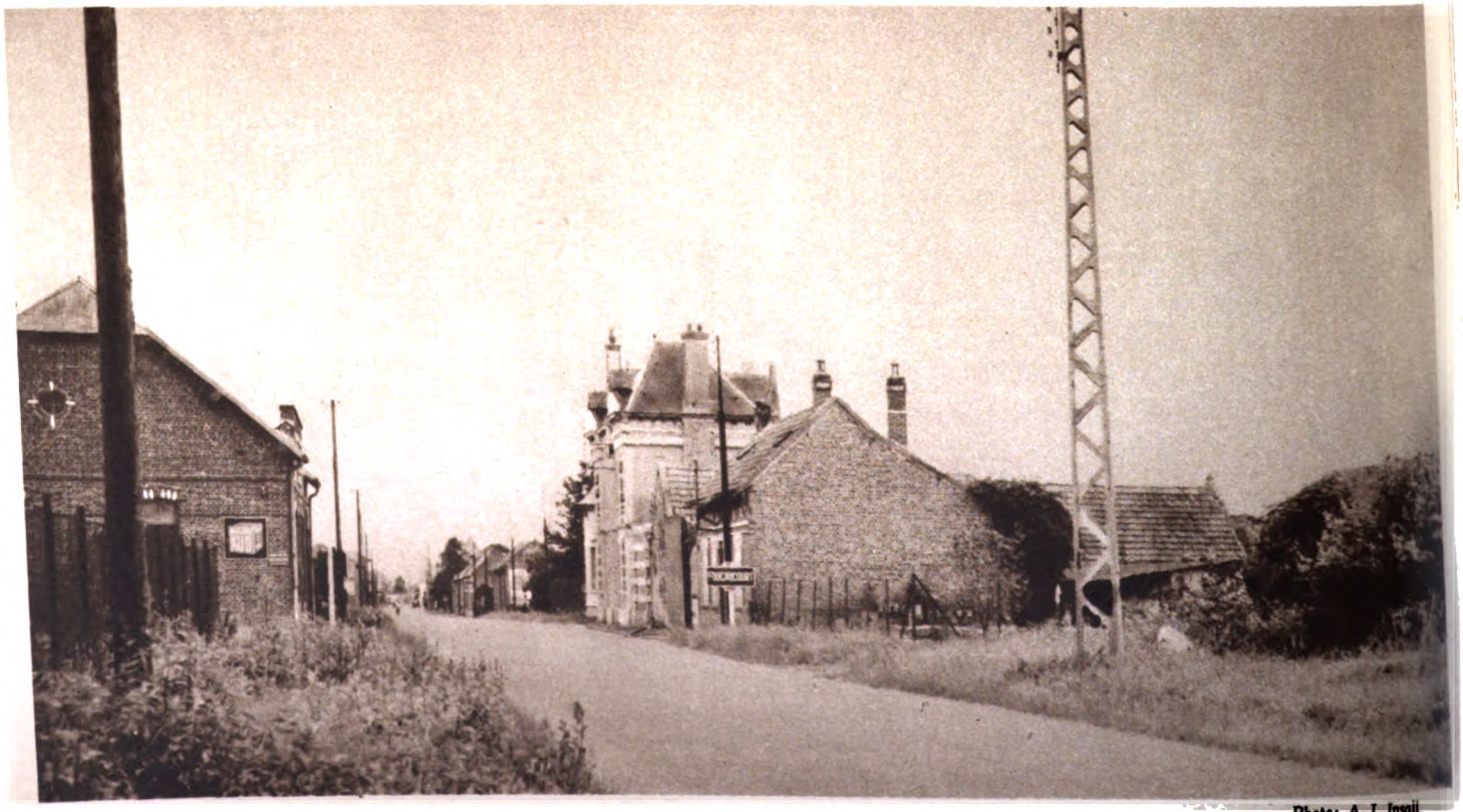

Photo: A. J. Insall

LOOKING TOWARDS AMIENS

On March 26th, 1918, the Composite Battalion of the 198th Brigade was sent from reserve to Foucaucourt to cover the withdrawal of the 66th Division. This it managed to do, holding out gallantly in the shattered village until nearly 1 p.m., when it was sent south-west to Rainecourt to fill the gap (alluded to on the previous page) between the 66th and 39th Divisions. Earlier in the day, the 50th Division had passed through Foucaucourt while retiring south-westward.

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Photo: A. P., Paris

RECENTLY CAPTURED

The ruined buildings seen in this illustration are part of the village of Fay, as it appeared on August 6th, 1916. Fay lies 2½ km. north-east of Foucaucourt, just off the road from Bray to Ablaincourt, and at the northern end of a considerable wood. Prior to July 1st, 1916, it was in the German front line, but on that date the French 61st Division of the XXXV Corps was successful in capturing it.

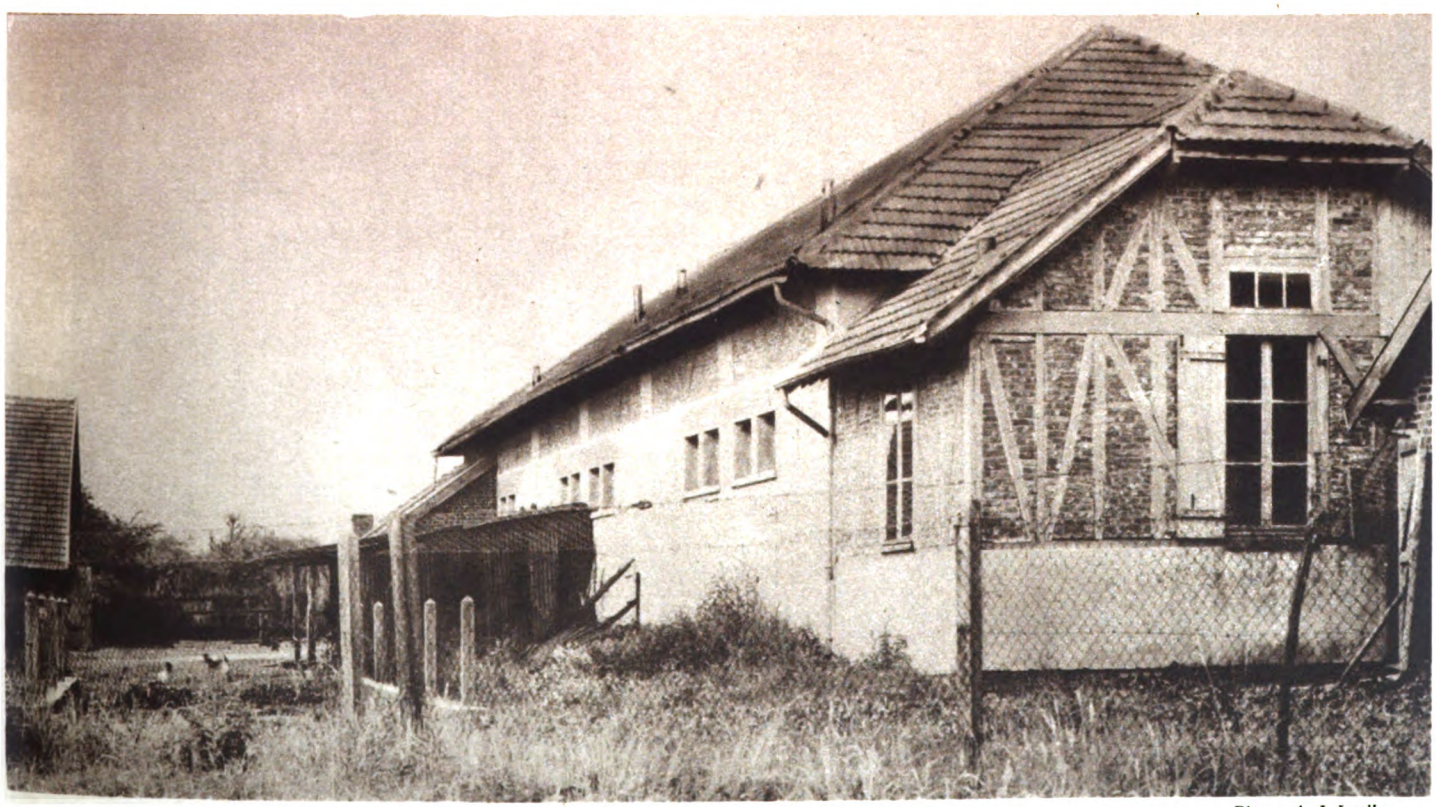

Photo: A. J. Insall

A HALF-TIMBERED COTTAGE

Being on the extreme right flank of the Allied attack, the French XXXV Corps suffered considerably from the fire of the unassaulted German troops to its south. Its performance in not only attaining, but even advancing slightly beyond, its objectives was therefore highly creditable. By October, Fay, like Foucaucourt, had become a back area. With reference to the picture, it may be remarked that half-timbering is rare in France, especially among new buildings.

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Photo: A.P., Paris

FAY THE FORLORN

Fay church, photographed one day later than the battered houses in the previous War illustration. The village came back into the news on March 26th, 1918, when it was among the places relinquished by the XIX Corps. This date was the most critical of the Retreat, and with its passing the crisis may be said to have ended. The Germans were tiring; thanks to their deliberate devastations in 1917, they were far short of their appointed objectives; their transport could not keep up with them (in point of fact, by the evening of the 26th they had been without rations for 48 hours); and, finally, their guns and ammunition-waggons also lagged on the choked roads.

Photo: A. J. Insall

A PRETTY LITTLE CHURCH

Modern Fay is a quiet little spot, well endowed with its share of Somme valley drowsiness, and supporting a tiny population of 85. There is not a British cemetery there—nor, for that matter, in any of the three villages illustrated in this section. Obscurity has claimed its own again.

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other hand, " I " might be commended for its labours. This, however, was not too frequent an occurrence.

Occasionally, at important moments, the General Staff officers would also take a personal hand in the game, more particularly when an elaborate " Intelligence stunt " was to be played off on the enemy—as, for instance, once in Palestine, where a time-honoured ruse was practised on the Turks before Allenby's advance on Gaza.

A staff officer appeared before the Turkish line apparently bent on personal reconnaissance. Being heavily fired upon, he played the part of a badly wounded man, and succeeded—with apparent difficulty—in getting back to the British front. The Turk followed him, and found a bloodstained haversack which contained all the paraphernalia of a General Staff officer occupied on reconnaissance.

The outfit was completed by a series of orders, nearly all genuine, but harmless, and by another set, entirely bogus, dealing with the coming battle. Some amorous correspondence and a few banknotes lent a touch of realism to this treasure-trove. There is little doubt that the bogus orders, which formed the pith of the ruse, contributed largely to the Turkish miscalculations which led to Allenby's victory.

Other Branches Which Helped

But there was also much work for whose performance Intelligence was dependent on other branches of the Service: the radio experts, who achieved astonishing feats, such as the first discovery of the German withdrawal in April, 1917; the listening branch, " I. Toc.,"[1] the flash-spotting and sound-ranging sections; and above all the aeroplanes, with their reports and air photography. Every I.O. had to learn to interpret air photographs; some were specially detailed to work with the Flying Corps Squadron, and to forward by telephone with the least possible delay reports which might help the infantry, or still more the artillery.

A complex job, indeed, was Intelligence in the field. For success it depended on the efforts of many agencies and authorities. Only by a wholehearted collaboration of all the numerous branches of the Army could it yield its full results.

By gleaning a few details from the front-line troops, and supplementing these with prisoners' information or with indications furnished by documents found on them; by confirming all such little facts by means of secret service reports, censored letters, and neutral observers' indiscretions; by a painstaking putting together, or "collation," of all these trifles; in short, by a combination of every available method, it might finally become possible to present a sort of mosaic of facts, more or less complete, furnishing some insight into the state of the enemy's army, his intentions, and his resources.

The bulk of this routine work fell upon

[1] See *infra*.

From the original in the Imperial War Museum.

" THE CENSORSHIP "

A painting by A. J. C. Bryce, showing a corner of one of the rooms in Strand House, Portugal Street, London (in the Aldwych neighbourhood), where the examination of mails used to be carried out. The censorship began, in a small way, on the eve of the declaration of war, but by 1918 the staff had grown to 4,680, of whom 3,587 were women. The majority of this staff worked at Strand House, and the average number of letters censored daily was 375,500, of which nearly 260,000 were private correspondence and the remainder commercial.

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the Intelligence Corps, and on that Corps the Intelligence Section of the General Staff was almost wholly dependent for the performance of the routine and detailed labour which was necessary before formulating any detailed report for the conduct of the operations in hand.

Intelligence Behind the Front

Behind the fighting front Intelligence was just as busy as in the first-line trenches. It was here that the more detailed work was done; it was very frequently associated with counter-espionage, the floating of false rumours, and the analysis of all reports concerning the enemy that percolated up from the rear; and, lastly, there were endless mischievous agencies and reports to examine and to scotch.

There was censorship to supervise; prisoners of war to examine or re-examine; and a mass of detailed work to do which can scarcely be separated under any one head. So in that spirit an attempt will be made to describe many phases of "I" work behind the actual front, without going into unnecessary technical detail or pettifogging division of the subject.

In the very early days in France many tales were told of information being conveyed to the enemy by windmill arms, clock hands on church towers, laundry hung out to dry, and other somewhat crude methods. The British troops in France and Flanders were inundated with such reports and rumours. The French Army was by no means impervious to stories of this type, and very often gave credence to them. So-called spies and secret agents were being discovered daily; and a few of these unfortunates were actually shot after summary trial by court martial.

How far they might all have been guilty of treachery is quite another matter, and a few recent official "rehabilitations" of convicted men and women gives some colour to the view that treachery of this kind was of the rarest occurrence; and then the further question arises—if it be admitted that such treachery existed—as to how far it could have been usefully employed, except in the most exceptional circumstances.

What happened in France in the way of these espionage myths was matched by parallel occurrences in Britain and in Germany. Whoever spent the first months of the War in England must recollect the rumours that flew about as to enemy agents working in our midst. Signalling to sea, or to enemy aircraft,

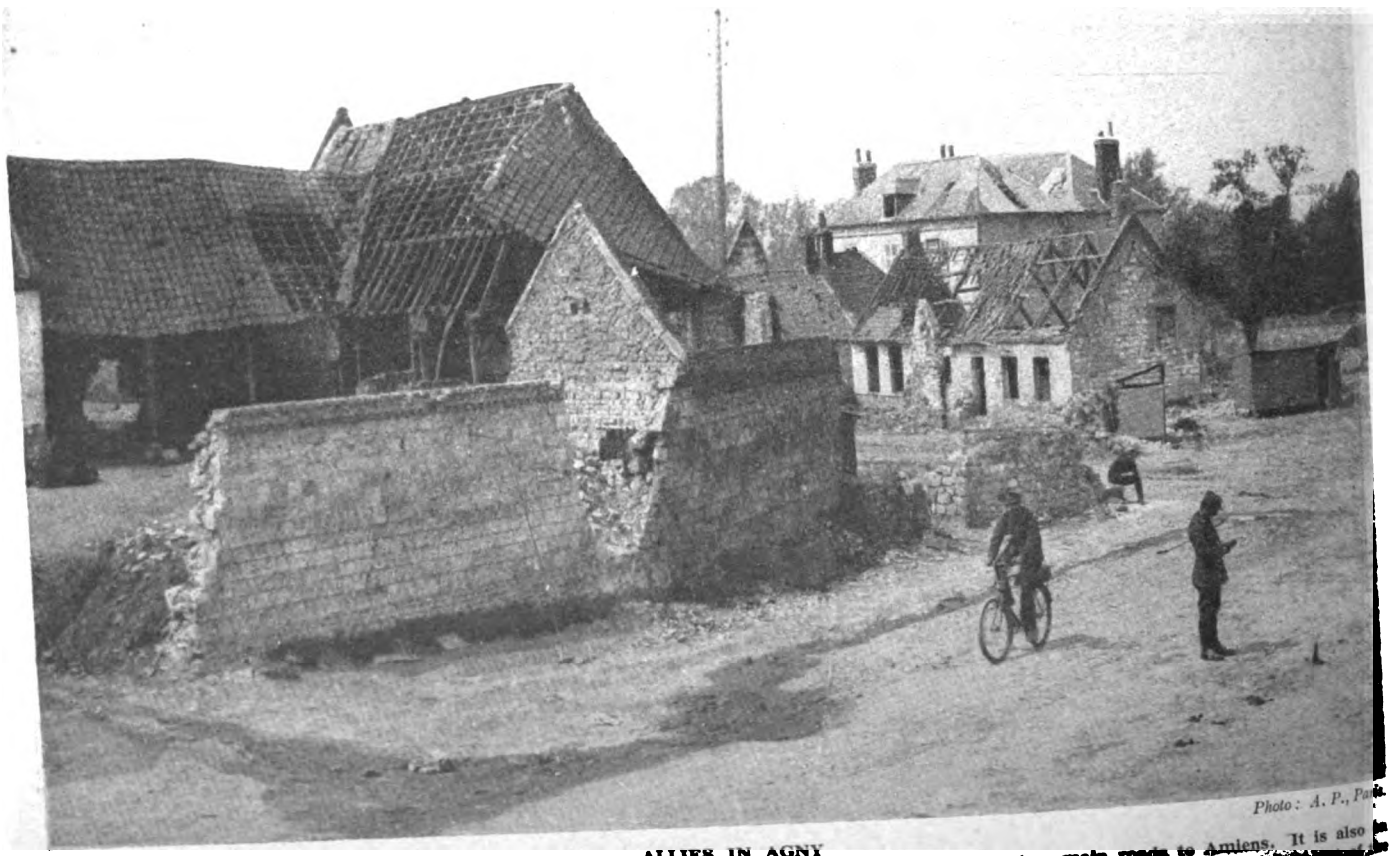

Photo: A. P., Paris.

ALLIES IN AGNY

The village of Agny stands on the River Crinchon 3 km. due south of Arras, and midway between the two main roads to Amiens. It is also on the Arras—Amiens and Arras—Bapaume railway. Almost in the firing-line until the Battle of Arras, April, 1917, Agny thereafter [illegible] danger zone, except in respect of bombardments. The present photograph, showing a French officer and two English Tommies among the ruins, is dated June 30th, 1917.

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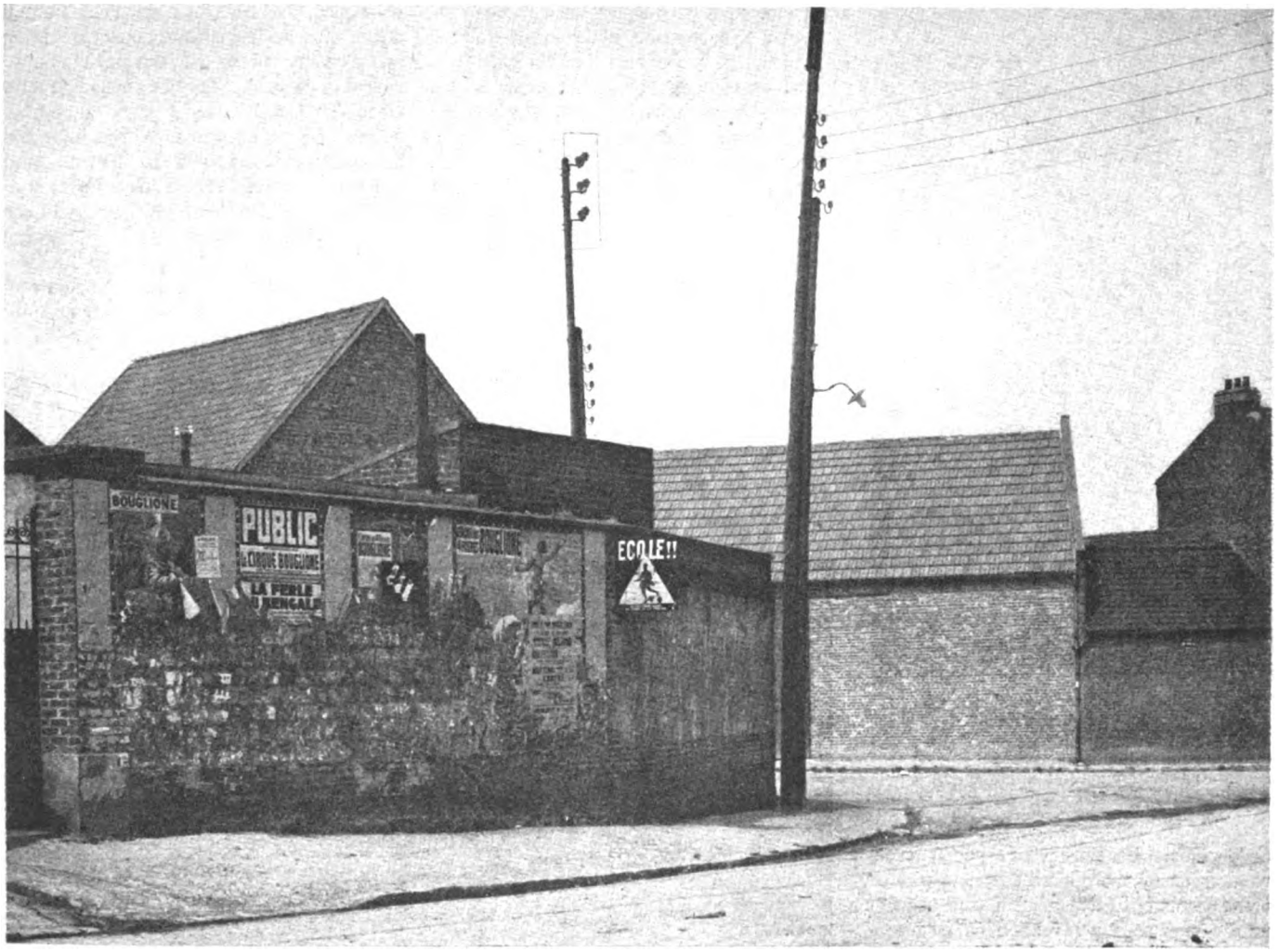

Photo: A. J. Insall.

THE VILLAGE CROSS-ROADS

On March 28th, 1918, Agny lay in the area of the 15th Division, XVII Corps; and many a Scotsman must have known it at that season. This division experienced some of the heaviest fighting of the battle, and at one period—just after its withdrawal to the Green Line between 2 and 3 p.m.—the situation on its front appeared, in the words of the *Official History*, "to be the most critical of the day." The corps cyclist battalion and all details from the waggon lines were sent up to reinforce the Scots, who held fast until the attack died away about two hours later.

was a common enough accusation, and has been mentioned elsewhere.

Much Zeal but Little Discernment

Concrete gun-platforms masquerading under the guise of hard tennis-courts were being reported to the Intelligence authorities every day, until they could be dismissed except in the most exceptional circumstances. It never occurred to patriotic informers to consider whether three inches or more of concrete spread over a few inches of broken brick on garden soil could have supported the weight of even a six-inch howitzer, and that without its being fired.

And the "spy-fever" grew yet more fantastic as time went on. "A" had employed a German governess for many years until the outbreak of war; she had then disappeared; she must be in hiding somewhere near, ready to blow up some little, unimportant, railway bridge. Never mind; "A" is dangerous; he must be arrested. "B" became the target of similar suspicions, rendered worse by his being the possessor of a German dachshund. Secret radio stations were being discovered by the hundred, the favourite hiding-place for the aerial being up a chimney.

The possession of carrier-pigeons became a matter of such sinister import that many owners of these birds, in fear and trembling, surrendered them by night to the nearest police station as a token of their political integrity. There was even one rumour that "C" was a most dangerous individual. A skilled German scientist, he was trying to cross the homing pigeon with the talking parrot!

So the business went on, and reports grew more abstruse and circumstantial as time passed. One serious-minded and otherwise sane old gentleman, as late as 1917, discovered two German spies meeting at fixed intervals in Epping Forest. His method was to proceed to a certain cross-roads, where he would take up his position for four hours at a stretch "disguised as a tree"! This was mainly effected by the use of a green rug.[1]

In Germany the spy-fever ran much the same course. But at the outbreak of war there developed a special fear of the fast motor-car careering across Germany to convey French gold to Russia. So acute grew this hysteria that volunteer guards were recruited throughout southern Germany to hold up these filibustering motorists in their

[1] This is literal fact, and was obtained in a written affidavit.

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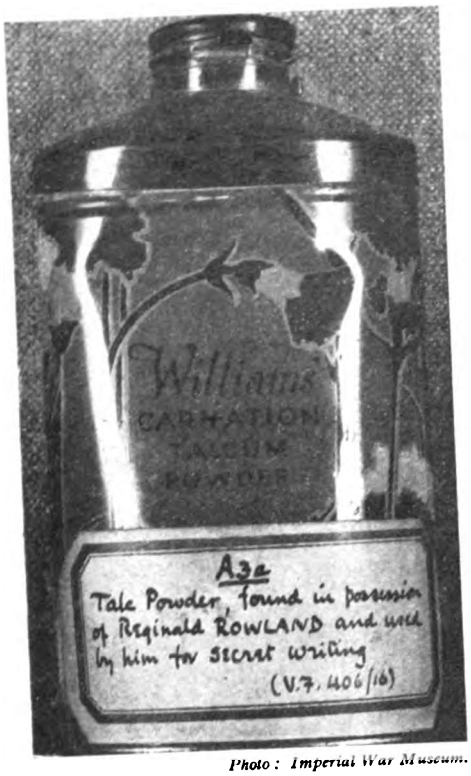

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

A SPY TROPHY

On this and the opposite page we illustrate six articles used by spies for passing information concerning their enemies' activities. Above is a tin of talcum powder employed by a German in this country for secret writing.

Gold-autos. Barriers were erected across roads; shots were even fired, in one or two cases with fatal results, and regular traffic was so far impeded as to cause the authorities to intervene in several districts.

Hysteria Common to All

Then there were scares arising out of the presence of Alsatians or Poles—so easily recognisable by their foreign accent as to be avoided like poison by any true secret service agent! In fact, there was little to choose between the consequences of war-hysteria in 1914 in any of the greater belligerent states. And in each the energies of the military counter-espionage branches grew to be so severely taxed as to cause a phenomenal expansion of the personnel. Being new to the business, these newcomers, in their zeal, caused somewhat similar results in all the warring countries. Much time was wasted: undue prominence was bestowed on trivial or worthless information; in the end a weak and badly-organised secret service escaped the attention which it might otherwise have merited. And much that the Intelligence Service was asked to deal with at that time was so simple!

In France and Belgium during the early days information would be inscribed or photographed on minute scraps of paper which could be inserted in apples, potatoes, or meat. A common trick was to inscribe a communication on a dirty piece of wrapping paper round a parcel. Cigars and cigarettes were habitually used for conveying news. Secret communications intended for prisoners of war in France and England arrived from Germany concealed in nuts into which they had been introduced by means of a tiny opening drilled in the shell. More hopeful Germans tried sending to captured relatives in England, skeleton keys, files, and silk ropes (in tiny sections) all hidden in cakes or clothing.

These simple artifices were generally detected with no difficulty at all. English money, which might have proved a more effective solvent of prison bars, was scarcely ever sent "in contraband"; partly, perhaps, because it was not to be had in Germany after a few weeks of war, and partly owing to the financial stringency which rapidly increased in that country after the outbreak of hostilities.

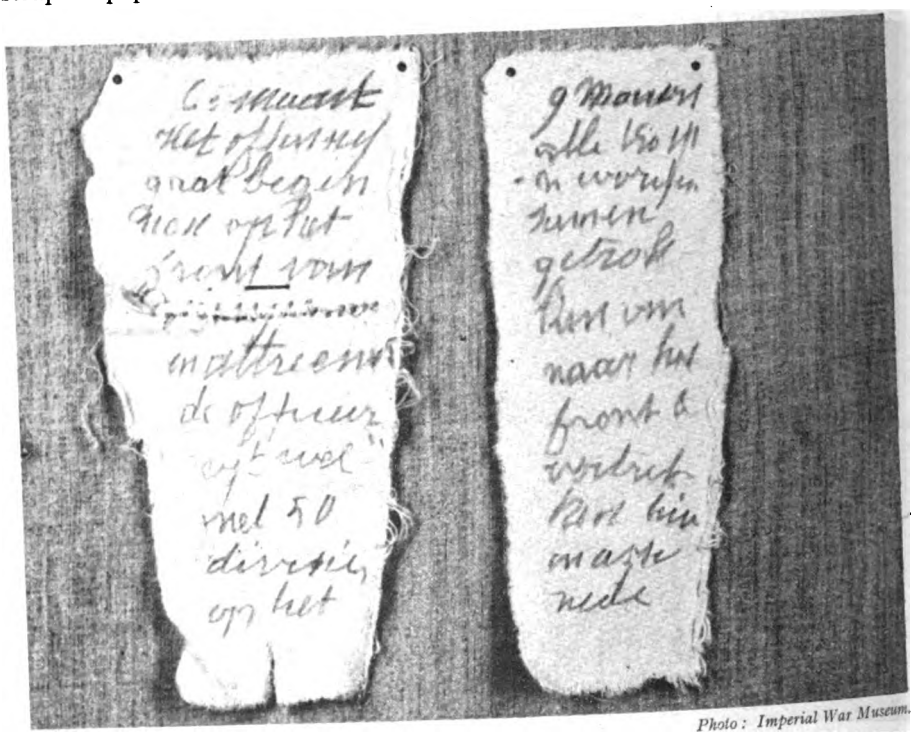

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

MOMENTOUS NEWS

On these pieces of linen a Belgian woman spy wrote accurate information concerning the German offensive of March 21st, 1918. She sewed the linen into the lining of a garment, which her husband took over the frontier into Holland and gave to the Belgian Consul-General at Rotterdam.

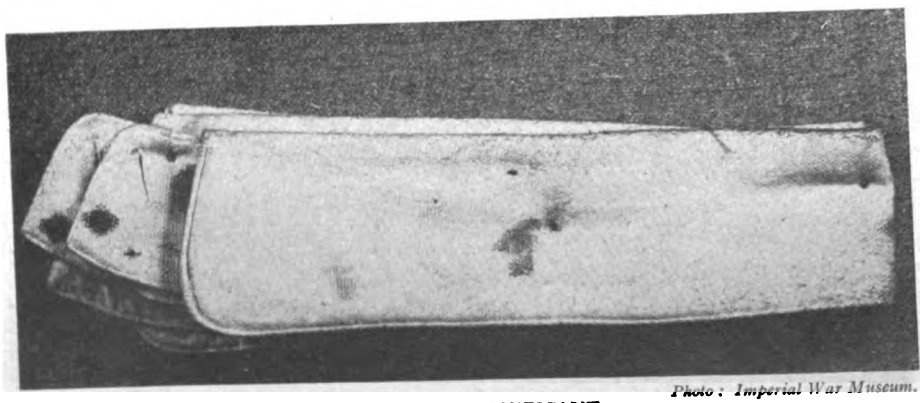

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

SOFT BUT SIGNIFICANT

These two grimy soft collars, now on exhibition at the Imperial War Museum, once contained secret ink used by a spy. A similar device was the use of impregnated socks, which the recipient, on receiving them by post, would boil until the water had been transformed into invisible ink.

The Russian Army Corps Legend

Among all the tales which became current at the beginning of the War not one is more remarkable for its origin and whole-hearted acceptance both by the

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nation and by the Press than the legend of entire Russian army corps being conveyed by rail through Britain in order to join the Allied forces in Flanders. According to the best-credited version of the story, these Russians were being brought from Archangel in British transports to Scottish harbours, whence they were taken by train to the South Coast. The rest of their journey was obvious, but was generally so vague as to be unintelligible.

The publicity enjoyed by this myth grew universal; and so much attention did it evoke that the enemy can, in the

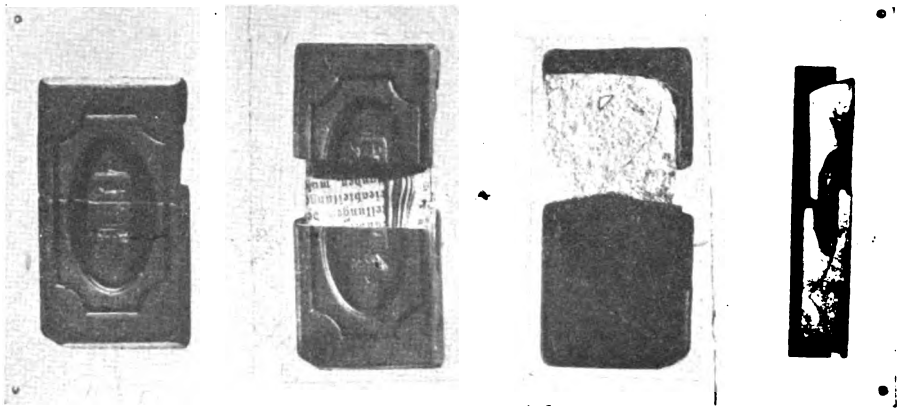

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

A SUBTLE FILLING

Four photographs showing the method of one German spy—ultimately detected—who used a hollowed-out bar of chocolate in which to convey his message. Articles of food were favourite hiding-places.

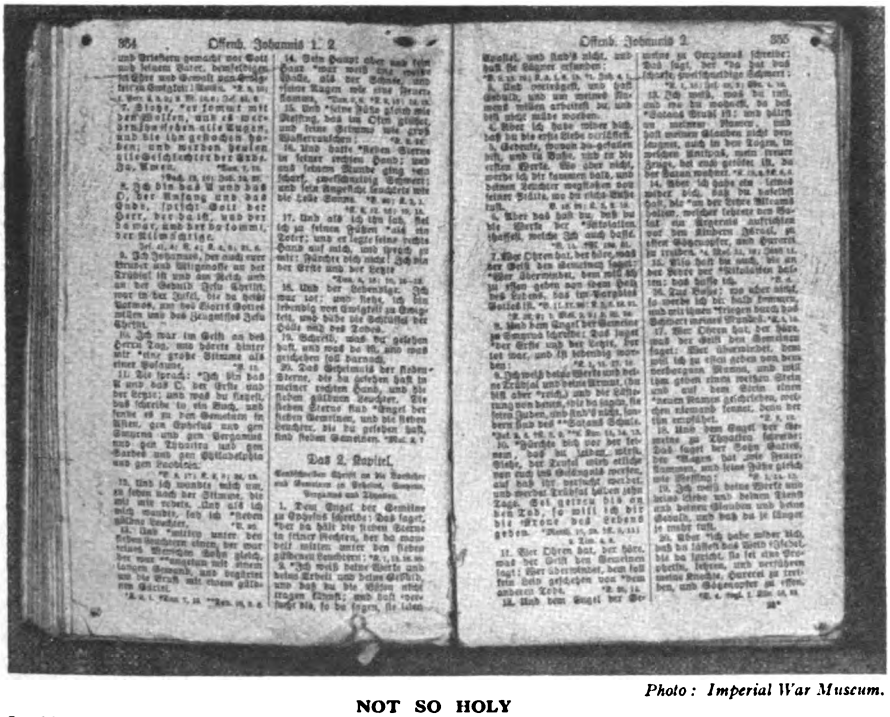

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

NOT SO HOLY

In this German version of the New Testament, Intelligence messages were inscribed in code and cipher in the margins, where they had the appearance of innocent comments on the Scriptures. Some of the writing can be faintly seen running up the left-hand page.

end at least, only have smelt a rat. But, in view of the successful transfer of the original B.E.F. to France, all unknown to the Germans, there is little doubt that the enemy Intelligence Service spent a few anxious days before the matter could be dismissed as a fable.

Delightful touches were added to the rumour as it spread abroad in London. "They must be Russians," quoth one old gentleman. "I know that, because my cousin, an assistant station-master at Euston, told us that he had to have the snow, which they brought in on their boots, swept out of the railway carriages on arrival!" "The Midland Railway had to have 356 automatic machines repaired after the transport of the Russian troops," said another, "owing to their having been broken by the thick copper Kopeks which had been forced into them!" The Press, though more reserved, could ill conceal the gloating that was felt. "The Allied steam roller will soon sweep all before it." Thus ran a frequent variant of journalistic opinion.

Meanwhile, two naval officers in a certain office at Whitehall might have been heard choking with merriment at the successful flotation of their little Intelligence rumour. But this sort of cleverness and secrecy cut both ways. At first, when the Germans credited the wild tale, they concluded that such a move indicated a descent on their own coast-line by the fictitious Russian corps. Swiftly reserve troops were moved to the ports, and coast defences were strengthened.

A Mountain from a Molehill

Soon reports of these hostile measures trickled through to London. The War Office, still ignorant of the merry little naval "stunt," grew much preoccupied. Could this be the long-threatened invasion of Britain? The entire resources of the Secret Service were set in motion. Confirmation was soon forthcoming: the enemy's ports were chock-a-block with fresh troops; their rank

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

CATALOGUE WITH A MEANING

Innocent enough in appearance, this cigar catalogue, purporting to come from Holland, in reality served as a cover and code for a German Secret Service agent. The few words are fraught with military meanings cleverly hidden.

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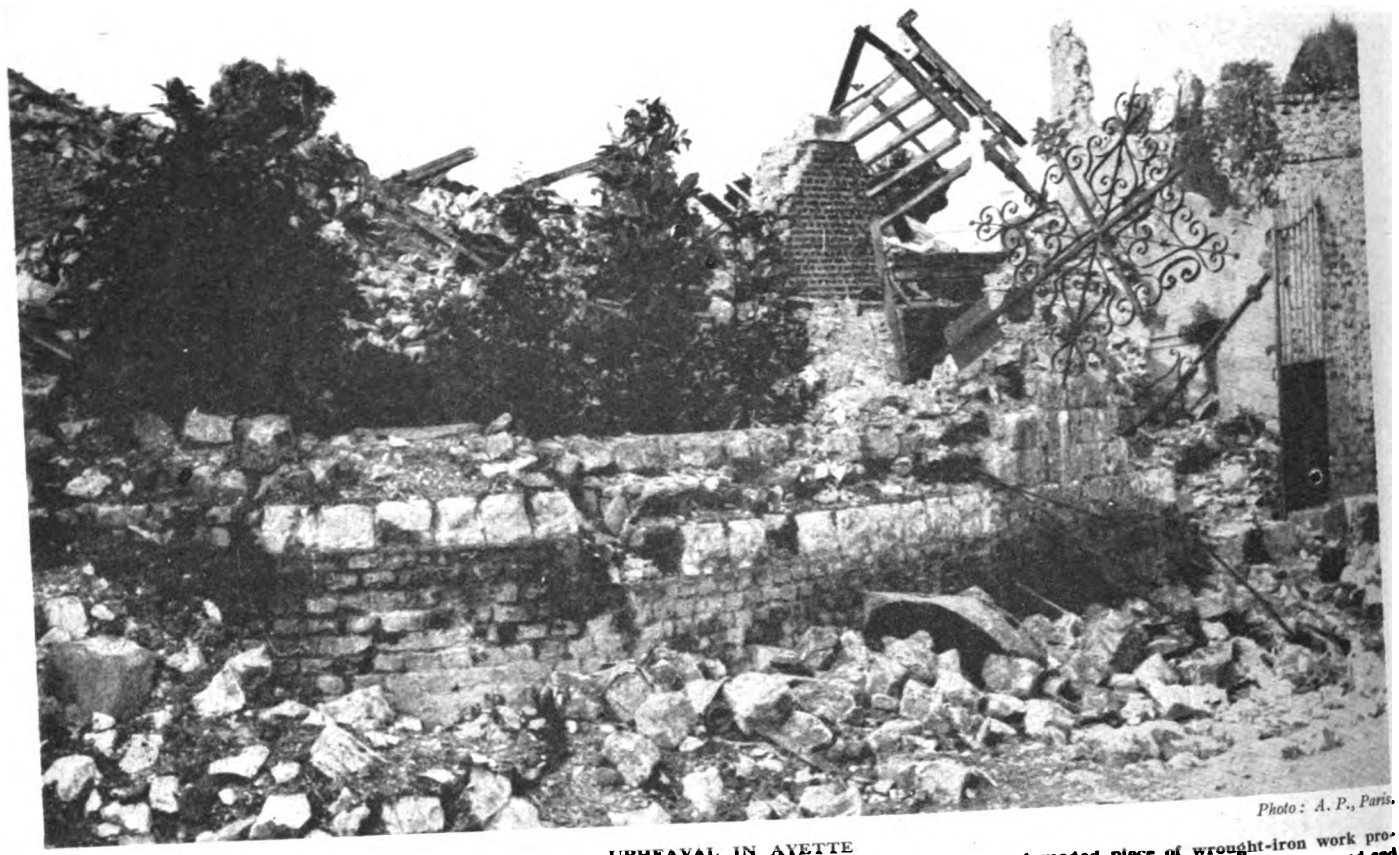

Photo: A. P., Paris.

UPHEAVAL IN AYETTE

The most interesting detail in this photograph of ruined Ayette is the extremely fine and apparently undamaged piece of wrought-iron work protruding forlornly beside the gateway on the right. The village stands on the Arras—Puisieux—Amiens road, 15 km. south of the first named and 1 km. east of its well-known neighbour, Douchy-les-Ayette. There are two British cemeteries, one being devoted to Indian and Chinese casualties. Here lie 52 Indians, 33 Chinamen, and 1 German; in the other are 53 United Kingdom dead and 1 Chinese. Formations closely connected with Ayette include the Lancs. Fusiliers, the 1/8th Manchesters, the 11th East Yorks, the 1/1st East Lancs., and the Irish, Grenadier, and Coldstream Guards.

and file were full of serious gossip as to the significance of this unexpected transfer towards the sea.

Could it be the invasion of England? Some thought it was. The reaction of the War Office was immediate. All moves to Flanders were stopped; the home-defence forces were pushed forward to battle stations in East Anglia. Not until various complications had ensued, with resulting naval and military misunderstandings, was the situation cleared up. By that time the naval ruse had run dry, so that the two Services were able to confide some of their holiest secrets to one another. The story clearly illustrates what the Intelligence Service could and could not do. There were limits which it should not overstep.

Something similar happened in the case of the celebrated tale of the "Corpse Utilisation Factory." This was a tale which credited the Germans with the conversion of their killed in battle into glycerine or other products of value in the manufacture of explosives. How the myth arose and how it spread is not a matter for these pages; but it may be said that, once afloat, the story was pounced upon as good anti-German "copy," and so it flourished like a green bay tree, doing much to harden the heart of the British public against the enemy.

But these things—all save the last, which dates from 1917—happened in the early stages, when the crudest of artifices would be considered fit to serve their purpose. As the War went on, the flotation of rumours, the concoction of Secret Service "stunts," grew and grew in scale and complication.

One of the most curious tasks of the Intelligence services on the various fronts was that of luring men away from their own side, i.e. of stimulating desertion. At the beginning of the War the desertion of Alsatians and Lorrainers from the German Army was a feature of the Western Front. But as time went on the Alsatian, like all deserters, fell into some disrepute, and it was no longer thought advisable to take special steps to encourage his defection.

Deserters on the Italian Front

On the Italian front the deserter was a constant source of interest. In the Austro-Hungarian Army, made up of cosmopolitan elements, the process of disintegration set in even early in the War, and increased with time to an enormous extent. Czechs, Rumanians, and Croats came over to the Italians, and later to the Allies, in large numbers. Intelligence there had an easy task.

On the Eastern Front the Germans encountered no greater difficulty in seducing many Russian soldiers to desert; for the Russian army, too, comprised many non-Russian elements. It is said that at the beginning of the War the Germans maintained a unit of agents, mostly cosmopolitan Jews, whose sole

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Photo: A. J. Insall.

SIGNS OF ACTIVITY

Although situated so far north of the main thrust, Ayette and the troops in it suffered a gruelling time during the enemy's spring offensive of 1918. The village lay in the 31st Division sector, and its garrison, already enduring heavy fire from the south, was on March 27th subjected to a continuous frontal attack, which eventually, after five hours' fighting, caused a divisional retirement and the abandonment of the ruins. Ayette was retaken, in a brilliant isolated operation, by the 32nd Division (which had relieved the 31st), during the night of April 2nd/3rd, the capture being completed the following evening. 192 prisoners, 18 machine guns, and two heavy trench mortars passed into British hands with the village.

business it was to bring deserters over from the Russian side. Payment was made at a rate of so much per turncoat brought in.

One agent, after having brought in a dozen batches of renegades in a very few months, reappeared one day with an unusually large number. To the amazement of the German Intelligence, when offered due payment for his large and expensive contingent the man seemed surprised, and blurted out, "Thank you greatly! But the gentlemen have already paid me!"

It then dawned upon the Germans that many Russians were beginning to offer large sums to these agents for the privilege of obtaining their help in desertion! This was Russian patriotism! The German system for promoting desertion therefore came to a stop.

In the Allied territories occupied by the Germans at the outset of the War the task of the Allies' Intelligence Services was hardly the same, and far more exacting. Owing to the rapid advance of the invading armies into Belgium and France, it was found difficult for the Allies to maintain touch with the subject populations behind the German front. Such contact was clearly desirable; so in 1915 attempts were made to introduce secret agents behind the German lines by every conceivable method, particularly by aeroplane.[1]

Baskets of Homing Pigeons

Most of the agents thus conveyed by air were provided with baskets of homing pigeons, which were to be distributed among patriotic Belgians and Frenchmen for the purpose of conveying military information back into the Allied lines. It would not appear that the scheme met with any noteworthy success. Several agents who had been introduced into Belgium by air were apprehended by the Germans. Then it came to light that, so long as they wore the correct uniform, and did not carry any civilian article of clothing, they could, if arrested, plead that they were airmen who had been compelled to make a forced landing. This rather cramped their style. Then women dressed up as airmen were sometimes employed on such missions. These, when landed, might resume feminine attire, and so attempt to defeat the German police.

Nevertheless, the main difficulty remained, that of picking up the agents on completion of their mission in occupied territory. The problem was never solved, and after several "regrettable incidents," as a result of which many agents were sentenced to death, and not a few aeroplanes were lost, the whole business was ultimately abandoned. The Germans claim, however, to have arrested, as late as in the summer of 1917, no less than seven "air-spies,"

[1] In view of the recent development of "parachute-battalions" abroad this matter is not without interest.

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and to have destroyed one aeroplane engaged on such a mission.

It is worth noting that the enemy were never able to employ a like method of collecting intelligence or of committing acts of sabotage, for not a Frenchman who was approached with such a proposal was found ready to undertake the duty.

The next move was to land agents by means of balloons. These spies were given one month's trial. In this case, of course, there was no prospect of the agent thus conveyed by balloon ever being picked up and returning to the Allied lines. So prolonged a sojourn behind the German front exposed him to the gravest risks. Moreover, since he made his balloon flight by night, it was most difficult for him to arrange for a suitable landing-ground where he might have time to destroy his craft and find a place in which to hide.

Dropping a Spy by Parachute

This latter drawback was such that recourse was once more had to the aeroplane, and the spy was dropped from the aircraft by parachute. Matters were so arranged that he was stowed in the fuselage and released by the pilot pressing a lever, thus giving his passenger no time to hesitate about making his jump into space. This method, again, did not last very long.

The final variation was to drop baskets of carrier-pigeons, in the hope of their being picked up by patriotic Belgians or Frenchmen who might thereby send back information of German troop movements. Each basket contained full instructions as to the despatch of messages by pigeon, for which purpose adequate materials were supplied in every basket. At first aeroplanes were used for the purpose of dropping the baskets; but, owing to the desirability of avoiding the tell-tale sound of the 'plane, recourse was had to balloons.

By the latter means, of course, the locality for depositing the birds could not be selected with the same care. However, as the secret was now out, and the Germans had by this time captured some hundreds of pigeons, there was no longer any need for furtiveness. In fact, "pigeons" became a perfect obsession in certain sections of the German Army. The construction of the balloons improved throughout the War, and they were finally fitted with clockwork mechanism which first released the baskets on the ground, and then allowed the balloon to rise again and be burnt up in the air. The locality of landing could to a certain extent be controlled.

At this time, too, balloons were being employed to convey propaganda leaflets behind the German lines. "Balloon-hunting" then became a continuous task of the German troops throughout Belgium and France.

Yet the necessity to conceal troop-movements and thereby to attempt surprise was fully justified, since, even in 1917, the enemy was only too likely to

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

HANDING OVER PAPERS

Pilots and observers of No. 22 Squadron R.F.C. hand over the contents of their pockets as they go on patrol. This precaution was taken to prevent information from reaching the enemy in the event of a forced landing. The photograph, which originated at Serny Aerodrome on June 17th, 1918, shows some of the squadron's Bristol "Fighters" in the background.

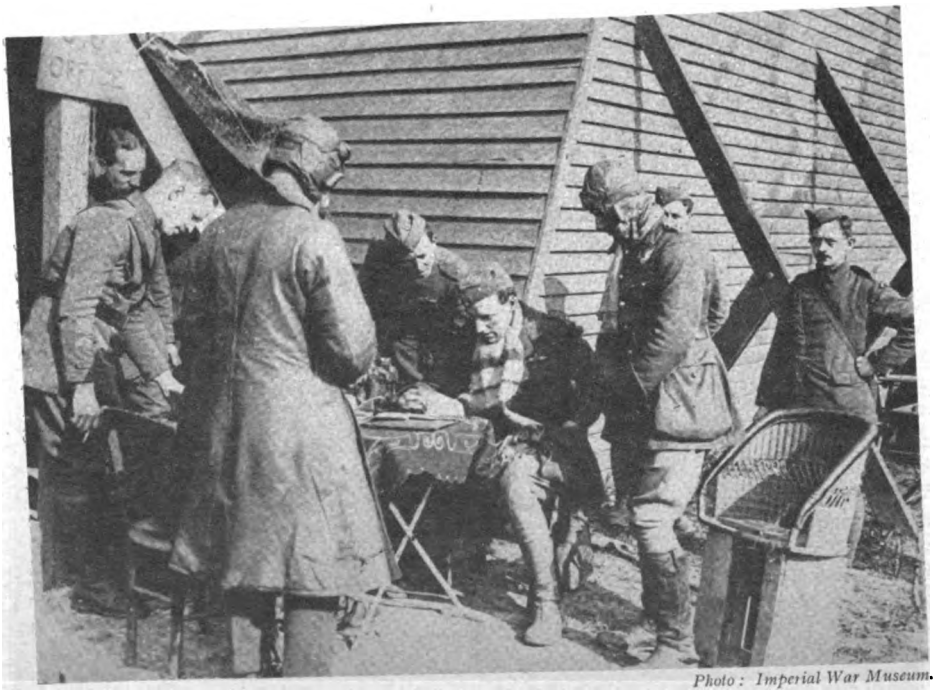

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

GIVING IN REPORTS

Here we have a glimpse of Major H. V. Stammers, O.C. No. 15 Squadron, outside his office on March 26th, 1918, examining reports brought in by pilots who have flown over the enemy lines. The volumes of the *Official History* which deal with the March Retreat contain many references to information brought in by R.F.C. pilots, and to aerial fighting.

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Photo: Imperial War Museum.

IN AN R.F.C. SQUADRON OFFICE

A characteristic scene in a Flying Corps office where a mosaic of air photographs is being laboriously pasted up to form an aerial map of the enemy lines and territory. The office is situated near Arras, and the date is February 22nd, 1918. Some of this work proved of great use when the enemy launched his Arras push five weeks later.

receive, through too widespread advertisement of coming events, information of what was intended. Consequently, "Security" Intelligence grew in popularity.

Dissevering Truth from Fiction

On the Allied side, truth was becoming hard to distinguish from fiction. By 1917 matters had so far developed, and the twin tasks of discovering the enemy's intentions and of concealing our own had become so closely intertwined, that it frequently became a matter for serious thought as to how a proposed plan of battle could possibly be understood by those called upon to carry it out.

The desire to conceal even that which could not in fact be concealed was so insistent that it really threatened to entail grave risks of failure, as when one bright youth of the Intelligence evolved a complete code of faked German names for British regiments for use when communicating with his General Staff officer. When one of his reports was read by one who did not know the code, the confusion was great.

This craze for "security" was increased tenfold by the discovery that the Germans had organised a most comprehensive and efficient listening service in their front trenches. Equipped with remarkable scientific apparatus, capable of recording the feeblest of electric waves, they had held our front-line telephone and radio services at their mercy for many months before their advantage was discovered. *Moritz*, as the service was known to its users, had been one of the main instruments whereby our intentions had been divined by the enemy to a degree that we little realised at the time of the Somme fighting.

In 1917 a British counter-service was instituted, generally known as "I. Toc," and this soon grew to be as effective as the enemy's. The success of our Service intensified the fashion for deception among the General Staff, as well as amongst the Intelligence personnel. This resulted in what might be termed "Third Degree Intelligence"—that is, concealment of the actual facts of any given situation, together with the publication of a mass of detail concerning it through every devious channel. All such detail, however, would be so concocted or faked as to delude the enemy into accepting as true what was false.

The Real and the Faked

As a consequence of this policy there might begin to appear before a battle virtually two parallel schemes of action in the field, together with two sets of all the necessary paraphernalia in the shape of genuine and faked radio stations. Troops marching in one direction by day, and returning to their starting place by night, aeroplanes flying in wrong directions, pigeons carrying faked messages, pseudo-deserters, and every artifice that ingenuity could suggest for the deception of the foe, would be employed.

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

MAP-MAKING

Pilots of No. 149 Squadron constructing a map from aerial photographs at the St. Omer aerodrome, July 18th, 1918. By this time, of course, the R.F.C. and R.N.A.S. had been amalgamated into the new R.A.F. The St. Omer aerodrome, of which an illustration appeared on page 499 of the present volume, was for long the R.F.C.'s headquarters.

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Away from the Western Front, Intelligence work never grew so complicated. Deception of the enemy was never as difficult a matter to bring off successfully. The Turk was not so sophisticated as the German. As an example, in Mesopotamia the transmission of cleverly faked wireless messages over a period of several months misled the Turks so far that, even as late as early 1918, they were completely hoodwinked as to the distribution of the British forces, and also still overestimated their total strength.

Even in Italy, owing to the much smaller size of the British forces, it was possible to mislead the Austrians in a manner that would have been utterly impossible in France, despite the fact that the shorter time factor allowed only of rough-and-ready methods. So far were deceptive methods carried out that Lord Cavan's two divisions, on being moved on to the River Piave in October 1918, were heavily disguised in Italian steel helmets and greatcoats. Judging from the enemy's subsequent remarks, he had been somewhat puzzled by the sudden appearance of these pseudo-Italians.

But this was not the Western Front, where at the end of the War it seemed as though the manufacturers of false information were not far short of having reached the limits of what was possible without defeating their own end.

"Security" officers were not only occupied with preventing any leakage of information, but also made it their business to spread every kind of false rumour among the troops, in the hope that some men, if taken prisoners and interrogated, might repeat the lying tales which they had recently heard in their billets. There were not wanting signs that the whole system might be fraught with grave risks if it were driven much farther.

The Secret Service

Let us now turn to the reverse of the medal, so to speak; let us consider the Secret Service which supplemented the active work of the Intelligence Branch in the field. The change is great, like leaving the healthy air of the open, sun-bathed moorland and plunging into the close atmosphere of the drinking saloon. Still, however repellent it might prove to be, such work had to be done.

Moreover, it needed all the best that human brains could apply to some of the most complex problems that man has known. Complex indeed they were, since methods that are based on deception can never be either certain or straightforward, except in the sense that a detective story can appeal to the intellect; for what normal being would desire to fill the odious rôle of criminal?

In telling Secret Service stories, it is most difficult to know where to

Photo: A. P., Paris

MAJESTIC DESOLATION

One of the buttresses of Méslères church has been left standing erect and solitary as a monumental obelisk, its great height apparent from comparison with the Frenchmen on the left. Méslères-en-Santerre—the suffix distinguishes it from the 14 other Méslères in France—stands almost at the intersection of the Amiens—Roye and Moreuil—Rosières roads, 5 km. east-north-east of Moreuil and 10 km. south-south-west of Villers-Bretonneux. This photograph was taken after the final Allied recapture in August, 1918.

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Photo: A. J. Insall.

NO PNEUMATIC DRILLS HERE

During 1918 Mézières was almost at the line of junction between the British and French Armies, and in August of that year an extension to the Communal Cemetery (500 yards from the present scene) was begun by the Fourth Army and the Canadian Corps. Enlarged after the Armistice, the extension now contains 95 United Kingdom, 38 Canadian, and 1 Australian dead. On March 28th, 1918, a heavy thrust was made against the XIX Corps covering this region. Retirement was ordered, but was seriously complicated by the fact that the French Groupement Mesple, originally on the XIX Corps' right, had already begun to withdraw obliquely north-westward. Consequently our 24th Division, which had been ordered to occupy Mézières, found it already filled by the French. After the abandonment of the village on the 29th, the British 20th Division made a fine counter-attack, actually regaining the ruins for a time.

begin or where to stop. The unvarnished and truthful " spy story " is hard to find. On the one hand, the secret agent himself, more often than not, is apt to strike a heroic posture after the day's work is over. How many tales of espionage have not been embellished, if not entirely invented ?

Many a journalist on the look-out for good copy, and many a writer in search of a best-selling plot, has turned to the " spy-tale " as a source of inspiration. That thrilling stories of Secret Service can be found and related is, of course, true ; but the fact remains that the story of the great majority of these agents is neither very exciting, nor exhibits startling instances of bravery or of self-sacrifice. In most cases the spy was traced and apprehended, after a somewhat unheroic career, by means of postal or telegraphic censorship.

It is a curious fact, too, that women proved far more dangerous agents than men. Was it partly because the number of daring characters was more abundant among women, since their sex had not been drained dry for combatant purposes as was the case with men ? Or because many women were found ready to rely on the attraction of sex in order to gain their ends ? Or, again, because women, at any rate at first, were not exposed to the same risks of detection as men ? Certain it is that the feminine " high-class " spy supplies by far the greatest number of espionage cases of real interest.

Handling the Secret Agent

The handling of secret agents, and the selection of the missions entrusted to them were, in fact, a matter of great delicacy. The manager of an espionage bureau required not only a keen insight into the needs of the Intelligence Branch, but also a considerable appreciation of the enemy's counter-espionage organisation. Even in the simplest cases it might be almost impossible to instruct a spy, before his being sent out, as to what he must look for. In many instances spies were so ignorant of things military that, even when they could obtain the desired information, there was no knowing how far their lack of knowledge might distort the significance of what they should hear or see.

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Photo: E.N.A.

THE QUEEN OF SPIES

No woman, at any rate in the estimation of the general public, ever came near to rivalling the famous Mata Hari for this somewhat hackneyed title. Her extraordinary career is given in outline in the accompanying pages; and the above photograph shows her in the costume of an Oriental dancer.

Then there was the everlasting problem of accurately gauging the fidelity of any "resident" agent, or agents, whom the "travelling" agent might be called upon to visit. A "carrier" spy—that is, one who travelled to collect information from resident agents—was also frequently open to the suspicion that he was inventing or forging the reports he brought back. It was, therefore, with a view to checking and counter-checking information received that spies were sent out in "waves": that is, any number up to a few dozen were despatched, in the hopes that four or five might return with the desired information. Truly a lottery, this business! Often one might well wonder whether the game was worth the candle.

Yet there is no doubt that some remarkable *coups* were achieved by secret agents during the War, and one single master-stroke might be worth some thousands of partial successes and failures. Moreover, the threat of the secret agent compelled every belligerent state to inflict on the nation at large a huge, expensive, and irksome system of counter-espionage. This threat also bred uneasiness, and sometimes dissensions. So it may be admitted that espionage *was* worth the candle. But it has to be granted that the really successful espionage bureau remained rare.

One of the most successful and formidable directors of any such bureau was the notorious "Fräulein Doktor," a German woman of unequalled brain-power and astuteness. At Antwerp for three years and more she conducted an espionage bureau which became dreaded by every Allied Intelligence Service. The skill with which she selected and trained her spies was matched by the results which she undoubtedly accomplished through their use. She was daring, ruthless, and pitiless to the agent who failed or played her false.

Master Spy—Forgotten Imbecile

Hardly one who did not do her bidding to the best of his ability, or who "double-crossed" her, can have lived to tell the tale. What memoirs she might have written! But that she will never do, for this astounding individual is now, at the moment of writing, an aged imbecile mouldering away in a lunatic asylum in Switzerland.

Her bureau at Antwerp was amazingly resourceful. Forged passports of any nationality were one of its specialities. Papers of any kind would be devised and manufactured. Money, real or

Photo: "Daily Mirror."

IN THE DOCK

Carl Lody, a lieutenant in the German Naval Reserve, was one of the agents selected by Germany after the outbreak of war to fulfil the rôle of Secret Service agent in the British Isles. He succeeded in getting through a number of reports, and a telegram sent by him was directly responsible for the torpedoing, by the *U21*, of H.M.S. *Pathfinder* off the north coast of Scotland, September 5th, 1914. This cruiser was the first warship to be sunk by a submarine.

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counterfeit, of any belligerent power, could be obtained or manufactured. Postage stamps of any country[1] could be turned out sufficiently well to deceive almost every postal authority. There was, in fact, scarcely any piece of knavery or deceit that the Antwerp bureau could not undertake.

It was no unknown practice among the Secret Services during the War to resort to what was known in "the trade" as the "fool-spy." It is unfortunately only too true that men, and not a few women also, were sent out on secret missions which were known to be likely, if not certain, to end in the undoing of the agent. Such missions would be selected either to distract the attention of the enemy's counter-espionage service from the true point of secret service attack, or to get rid of a "tainted" agent,[2] or again to supply misleading information to the enemy.

That many of these agents escaped unscathed from the peril to which they were knowingly exposed is a fact. In such cases their escape may be regarded as usually due to their own lack of enthusiasm in carrying out their instructions, since the "fool-spy" must generally have become aware that there existed more than a normal risk in certain missions; and it was due to this circumstance that the employers of spies had to exercise the greatest care in the selection and use of "fool-spies," and still more in drawing up their instructions for "special" missions.

The "Fool-spy" and his Mission

Only worthless or undesirable agents were sent on such errands. Moreover, if it should become known to the would-be spy that he was being sent out on a "fool-mission" there was no knowing whether he might not turn into a "double-crosser" and, therefore, a dangerous man to employ.

The men and women—perhaps more often the men—who volunteered for espionage were normally actuated solely by motives of gain. To find a patriotic individual ready to risk arrest, imprisonment, and death, for such an object was not too frequent; such would be more often found among French inhabitants of the occupied territories, or among Belgians, than among any other nationals.

[1] Forged postage stamps were highly desirable, in order to prevent a travelling agent from visiting post offices and thereby incurring possible detection, as, for instance, by purchasing marked stamps.

[2] An agent became "tainted" (or in French *brûlé*) when he grew suspect by the enemy or was believed to be "double-crossing."

In the Eastern theatre of war the Germans had a hard task to discriminate between the loyal and disloyal German or Russian subjects. Poles and Lithuanians seemed to have no love for either side, and would, when captured or deserting, talk quite openly to their captors in either camp. But as the prisoners of these nationalities were normally very ignorant, their captors gained little from their lack of reticence. The case was different with the Esthonians, and still more so with the Letts. Many prisoners of these two races were taken by the Germans, but they were invariably found to be silent; or, if they spoke at all, it was only to lie. To recruit spies in Eastern Europe was an extremely delicate task, just as it was at Salonica and in the Levant generally.

In Britain, probably owing to her insular position and to other causes—mainly, perhaps, to the preconceived German notion that she would not fight, except possibly at sea—the enemy Secret Services never established such a footing as they seem to have done in France. The drastic round-up of all

Photo: Keystone.

TO LIEUTENANT CARL LODY

Lody was arrested in Killarney shortly after the *Pathfinder* episode, and, on being found guilty of espionage, was shot in the Tower of London on November 6th, 1914—the first spy to be executed in this country during the War. Carl Lody was an upright and patriotic man, whose conduct at his trial and execution very favourably impressed the British authorities and all who had contact with him. The above memorial has been erected to him by his country.

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aliens on the outbreak of war resulted in the internment of nearly every known "dangerous" alien. A few managed to escape to Germany on hearing that they were being sought by the police.

Carl Lody and Others

Every submarine cable was cut, whilst a most stringent watch was kept on all possible sources of radio communication. The postal, telegraphic, and press censorships were applied on the instant of the declaration of war. By these means Britain was isolated from Germany, and every clandestine communication had now to pass through the sieve of a very ably conducted system of counter-espionage precautions.

To make good the complete bankruptcy of her pre-War espionage organisation in England, Germany made strenuous efforts to substitute some emergency agencies. The first effort was to introduce into England one Carl Lody, a naval officer of the reserve. Lody suffered from the very outset under many handicaps; and in addition he was entrusted with one of the clumsiest code-systems for sending his information back to Germany that could be imagined.

Charged with the mission of discovering the whereabouts of the British fleets, it was not long before his movements and communications were all known. At length he was arrested, tried by court martial, and shot in the Tower of London, the first German spy to be thus executed.[1] He was a remarkably sincere, patriotic, and brave man; and the manner in which he met his end impressed everybody concerned with his arrest and with the subsequent *dénouement*.

Lody was followed to the Tower by eighteen other German agents during the rest of the War. Not one proved to be either such a patriot or such a brave man as he. Americans, Norwegians, Dutch, and Swiss were employed by the Germans to act the spy in England; but none of these foreigners could be regarded as having been of the highest class or animated by any motive but the sordid one of gain. The damage that they did was in no case considerable.

One of the most outstanding figures in the world of espionage is undoubtedly the Dutchwoman commonly known as "Mata Hari." Her career provides an amazing example of how a woman can succeed in the world by means of astute effrontery. It also affords such an insight into the mechanism of espionage that the tale, though often told, is well worth repeating. After marrying a Dutch officer of Scottish extraction named MacLeod, Mata Hari, still very young, went with her husband to the

[1] A memorial tablet to Lody has recently been unveiled in Germany. (*See illustration.*)

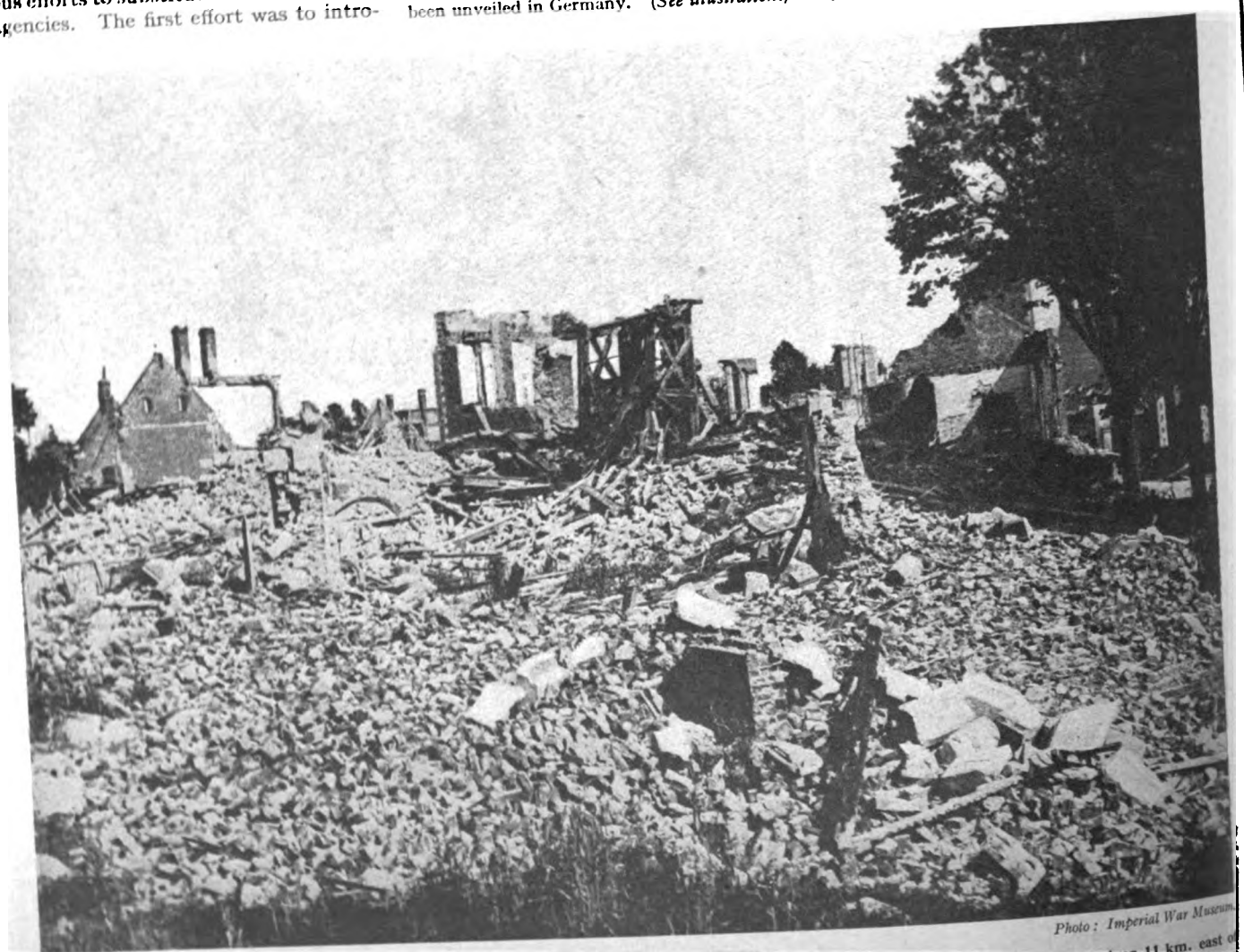

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

WRECKAGE AT ROISEL

The large village of Roisel, of which four illustrations appeared in photogravure on pages 1421 and 1422, stands on the Omignon river 11 km. east of Péronne. It first fell into British hands, like many another place, when the enemy retired to the Hindenburg Line early in 1917, and was [illegible] for the customary period during the summer of the following year. The present picture shows the remains of the church on July 29th, 1917.

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Dutch Indies. There he took to drink, whilst she gradually lapsed into the sensuous existence of the Javanese dancing girls.

The Rise of Mata Hari

Returning to Europe, she became a well-known figure in Paris, and notorious for her daring Oriental dances. But beyond her brazen effrontery and cleverness there was no real art in Mata Hari; so she soon slipped down from the very temporary pedestal of fame to which she had attained. Her mode of life, however, tended more and more to be a series of extravagances and amorous entanglements in which money came to mean everything to her. Gain became her passion.

Thus it was but a step to a life of daring and "high-class" espionage, upon which she had already ventured before 1914. At the beginning of the War she went and lived near Vittel, the well-known watering-place in France, where she made friends with many flying officers. By this means she is credited with having extracted from the French Flying Corps much valuable information concerning special flights being carried out over the German lines, and so contributed largely to the death of several aviators and Allied secret agents.

It was in the winter of 1915 that Mata Hari first set foot in England. On landing, as our Intelligence had heard much of her, she was taken to Scotland Yard and there "put through the hoop" by a lawyer who was noted for his skill in cross-examination. But, after a duel lasting some hours, he had to admit himself defeated. "I am a professional of love," she replied unceasingly; "hence my funds, friends, journeys. I am nothing else. If I am, then show me!" Accordingly the British authorities, nonplussed but yet more suspicious, sent her back to Spain, whence she eventually drifted once more to Paris.

There she unquestionably collected a great deal of information concerning the coming Somme offensive, which she succeeded in sending to Germany via her Dutch connections. Suspicion now grew very strong about her in both Paris and London; so she resorted to a favourite ruse of the professional spy when scenting danger: she offered her services to the French Secret Service. From that moment both her French and German employers attempted to make use of her, and to some extent she served both sides.

Photo: G. T. Watson.

OBSERVATION POST

Can it be in remembrance of those valuable "O.P.'s" of wartime that the architects of Roisel's new church put plate-glass windows in the top of the tower? At all events, it forms an excellent vantage-point from which to view a wide area of the surrounding country. The War history of the village has already been outlined in the earlier series of captions; the present-day community numbers just under 2,000.

Suspected by Both Sides

But the game was too dangerous to last long. The task of "double-cross" in such conditions grew impossible, for she was now suspected, and more than suspected, by *both* sides. Indeed, the French wished only to get rid of a very dangerous agent. So they proposed to send her into Belgium via Spain and Holland, thereby obliterating her tracks. In Belgium she was to visit certain agents, Belgians who were known to be in German pay.

The French thus hoped to bamboozle the German Secret Service into believing that these agents were successful in deceiving the French; and at the same time they trusted that the enemy would, through the same agents, lay hands on Mata Hari and execute her. So she sailed from Spain for Southampton, intending to go to Holland, and all might have gone as intended, had it not been that Scotland Yard, knowing her of old, ordered her return to Spain. The French Secret Service was thus defeated.

Mata Hari was now once more in Madrid, desperately in need of money. There she fell in with some German Intelligence people from the Embassy, and, being at her wits' end, agreed to supply them with information concerning Allied shipping. Her directions undoubtedly caused many ships to be torpedoed by submarines. But Mata

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Photo: A. J. Insall.

A PLACE WITH A LEGEND

The place is Pervyse, a village in the Belgian area about 7 km. south of Nieuport. It saw fighting in both 1914 and 1918, but is chiefly interesting for the British visitor because of its associations with the "Two Angels of Pervyse." These were two women—the Baroness T'Serclaes, a Belgian, and Miss Chisholm, British—who in the early days of the War established a dressing-station here, and subsequently remained at it for more than a year under frequent shell fire.

Hari was now succumbing to the effects of her wildly extravagant life, and her powers of seduction were failing. Her information grew more and more sketchy, so much so that Spanish ships were sunk by mistake.

The Germans now thought it time to dispose of an agent whom they mistrusted more and more, so she was despatched to Paris *via* Amsterdam, in order to collect information concerning tanks. The idea was that an end should be put to Mata Hari, but that the French should do the dirty work. Certain cleverly faked information concerning her mission was consequently sent out by radio, veiled in a cipher which was known to be "unsafe." The rest of the story is simple. The French naturally intercepted the radio; it was readily decoded, and Mata Hari was arrested the instant she arrived in Paris on February 13th, 1917. She was tried by court martial in July, and duly executed on October 15th. Many tales are told of her end—of how she waved her long white gloves to the firing squad, and saluted France. But things were not quite so poetic. She went to the place of execution with remarkable composure, but it was as a strong pro-German that she met her doom.[1]

The Strange Case of Alexander Szek

Among masculine secret agents there is no case of greater note than that of Alexander Szek. This youth of about 20 (that is, in 1914) had an English mother and a Hungarian father. Being highly gifted, and an amateur expert of great attainment in radio telegraphy, he succeeded in making his way into the German wireless service. There he got on so fast and so well that in 1916 he was actually employed in the "holy of holies," the great German radio station at Brussels.

Whilst there he was approached and seduced from his allegiance to Germany by an Allied agent. He was then entrusted with the following task: in his charge, when on night duty, stood the safe in which was kept the most secret of all German code-books—a code which, in order to preserve its safety, was hardly ever used. When alone at night, he was to set about copying by hand the whole of this book.

The job occupied him over three months. At the end of this period there arose the usual problem of how to dispose of his copy. The Germans suspected nothing. The cipher was known by them to be in the safe and correct. Szek saw the difficulties before him, and knew the value of his copy, which he wished to realise in cash.

1 For a full account of Mata Hari, see Tuohy, *The Battle of Brains*, p. 212 *et seq.*

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Photo: A. J. Insall.

ON THE FRONTIER

This photograph was taken about a yard inside Belgium, where the Franco-Belgian frontier cuts across the Valenciennes—Mons road at Quiévrain. The latter place, a large industrial village on the River Hogneau (a tributary of the Scheldt), and an important railway junction, first saw British troops when the 19th Brigade retired through it from the Condé Canal to Élouges during the early hours of the 24th August, 1914, after the Battle of Mons. For its next sight of them it had to wait more than four years, until liberated from the invader by the Canadians during the last week of the War. The Communal Cemetery contains the remains of 35 Canadians (chiefly 2nd Mounted Rifles) and 8 men of the United Kingdom.

He knew that, without any difficulty, he could be absent for a day or two, so he decided that in this interval he must get out of Belgium into Holland, for he dared not stay in Brussels once the Germans so much as suspected that the Allies had deciphered a despatch concealed in that code.

But to leave Belgium he must be able to go through the formidable high-tension electric fence that the Germans had erected to prevent any traffic taking place between Belgium and Holland, except at the guarded passages. To cross this fence Szek slowly constructed himself a species of insulated vehicle resembling a torpedo on wheels. Then, having brought and pieced together this strange machine near the frontier, one night he took the plunge, deserted his wireless station, and together with his precious copy, crept into his insulated cover to make his attempt.

After an all-night struggle he crossed the wires, and found himself in Holland. There, after getting into touch with Allied agents, it was not long before he, or his copy, was aboard a British destroyer that sometimes crept into Dutch shallow waters for very special purposes.

What Became of Szek?

The Germans soon grew aware that Alexander Szek had vanished; but what had become of him they never ascertained. Certainly the loss of the code they never discovered. Not long after, it was by means of the copy of this most secret code that the famous "Zimmermann despatch" to the German Minister in Mexico, concerning the desirability of causing the Mexican Government to take sides with Japan against the United States, was decoded. The discovery was instrumental in bringing the United States into the War against Germany.

But what of Alexander Szek himself? There is no record of him since the moment when he handed over to the Allies his copy of the German code. A few years after the War, his parents searched for him high and low in Belgium; yet no trace of him was ever obtained. Graves of executed spies were even opened, but no human remains resembling Alexander Szek could be found. The mystery has remained unsolved up to the time of writing.

In the Salonica area the complications of Secret Service work grew to an extent unknown in other theatres of war. In the first place there was the extreme difficulty of ascertaining what the true national and individual sympathies of the mixed population of the Eastern Mediterranean basin might be. Secondly, there was the amazing complexity of

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Photo: A. P., Paris.

HALF DESTROYED

The village of Agny, south of Arras, was illustrated only a few pages back—to be exact, on pages 526 and 527. Here we complete the scene with contrasting views of the church, the above picture of the half-demolished tower dating from June 30th, 1917. Notice, in contrast with the rack and ruin of the stonework, the delicate and almost untouched tree on the right. Between the tree and the church one of the bells is to be seen lying amid the graves.

the language problem. Lastly, in a part of the world where political morality stood low, and where honesty was, in many cases at least, a very variable quantity, it was difficult to probe the motives, not to mention the political sympathies, of would-be aspirants to Intelligence honours.

For in the Levant revolution was much to the fore at the time of the War. In fact, British Intelligence officers in those parts had to delve into Venizelist conspiracies, Cretan insurrectionary movements, and religious strife between Moslem and Christian, before making sure of the trustworthiness of any agents. Assassination, too, was quite an accepted method of solving an Intelligence difficulty.

Methods in the Near East

"It came to my ears," writes an ex-Intelligence officer of the Navy who worked in Crete,[1] "that the German consul in Canea had done me the honour to put a price of two thousand francs on my head." Again he says, "There was an important enemy agent whom I wanted. A brigand-like, but pro-British, stalwart called on me and offered to shoot him for eight hundred francs. 'No,' I said, 'I don't buy corpses.' Very good: he would kidnap him if I preferred, and as that would mean less risk of trouble afterwards with the *Gendarmerie* he would take four hundred. . . . My brigand failed of his enterprise, and I captured the said agent by other means.

"Yet obviously kidnapping, however stringent the term of the bargain, is not a game which is usually played unarmed, or without risk to life; and, as I say, I authorised it without question. What then is my conclusion? Roughly this, that the ethics of Secret Service in war-time do not permit the furtherance of schemes whose object is homicide, but neither do they prohibit enterprises from which the risk of incidental homicide cannot be excluded. Otherwise, indeed, I must have refrained later on from inciting to revolution: revolutions mostly involve some casualties."

Even in Western Europe there is little doubt that in some way or another a "casualty" occurred, which was directly the result of Intelligence enterprise. There were "undesirables," "dangerous enemy agents," too, who undoubtedly disappeared. Again, rumours of some curious suicides in the Secret Service would arise; such as the tale of the German agent who received a revolver with a brief message that the weapon must be employed.

The alleged motive of this gift was the fact that he had failed to forward to German G.H.Q. a detailed description and report that had reached him in June, 1916, concerning the arrival in France of the first British tanks. He had dismissed the tale as "hot air"; so on an October morning of 1916 he lay

[1] Lawson, *Tales of Ægean Intrigue*, pp. 35–7.

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with a bullet in his brain, and the verdict was " Death from misadventure."

Assassination of a " Brass Hat "

Actual assassination of higher commanders of the enemies in the field was certainly regarded as entering into the region of probability. Hence the care that was bestowed on guarding the General Headquarters of all belligerents during the War. One case of such a removal has been established. This was the murder by a Russian of the German Field-Marshal von Eichhorn at Kieff just after the War, when the Germans were " invading " the Ukraine.

The German Secret Service certainly envisaged such possibilities. " It finds out ways and means of removing politically embarrassing persons, seeks the instruments for carrying out such schemes, and brings about the deeds at the appropriate moment. The connection between such deeds and official sources is, of course, kept specially secret." [1]

On the side of the Allies there is no record of any high commander having been thus " removed " ; but during the last year of the War strange rumours were heard on a few occasions, to the effect that a German coup was being engineered whereby a squadron of aeroplanes would come down on Allied Headquarters with a view to carrying off no other than Marshal Foch as a prisoner.

It is hard to see what purpose would have been gained by such a coup, when the Germans might just as effectively have put the Marshal out of the way by means of a well-directed aerial bomb. Probably the prevalent opinion in Germany was that a bomb was too uncertain a device. Nevertheless, it has been rumoured that the Marshal's selection of a railway train as a " mobile " headquarters was not altogether disconnected from one of the two above-named possibilities.

In neutral countries Secret Service agents could afford to be yet more enterprising, since the death penalty need not be feared if they should happen to indulge in illegal practices, for the neutral code of law was still on a peace footing. In Switzerland, for instance, which became a paradise of the belligerent Secret Services, the punishment of various agents, when caught indulging in various malpractices, never amounted to more than imprisonment, with or without expulsion from Swiss territory ; such was the normal peace-time procedure under Swiss law.

[1] Nicolai, *The German Secret Service*, p. 223.

Photo : A. J. Insall.

A DELIGHTFUL EDIFICE

Even in a photograph Agny's new church shows up well, and our photographer confirms the impression by calling it one of the most attractive that he saw in these parts. Whatever the merits of the pre-war structure, the authorities responsible for rearing a new Agny from the dust of the old seem to have been justified in making no attempt to reproduce the design of the original church—a point wherein they differ happily from their colleagues in certain other villages.

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Plight of the Swiss

Within this unfortunately-placed country, indeed, the situation grew so acute that, at the end of the War, the French Swiss were busily engaged in manufacturing fuses for the Allies, while German-speaking Zurich was building I.C. engines for Germany. Neither the Allies nor their arch-enemy could forego this source of supply, and virtually agreed to such arrangement; so that the wretched Swiss, threatened with an economic boycott from either side, could do nothing but comply with the scheme.

But nowhere, perhaps, did the secret agent thrive more than in the United States before the entry of that Power into the War. Here the German attachés, Captain von Papen, soldier, and Captain Boy-Ed, sailor, were unquestionably at the head of an organisation which attempted, with occasional success, to sabotage American firms engaged in the supply of munitions to the Allies.

Photo: A. P., Paris.

FOUCAUCOURT MILL

Views of Foucaucourt itself appeared in the recent photogravure section, "From Herleville to Fay." The old mill in these two illustrations makes interesting comparison with the fortified specimen at Puzeaux (see pages 574 and 575).

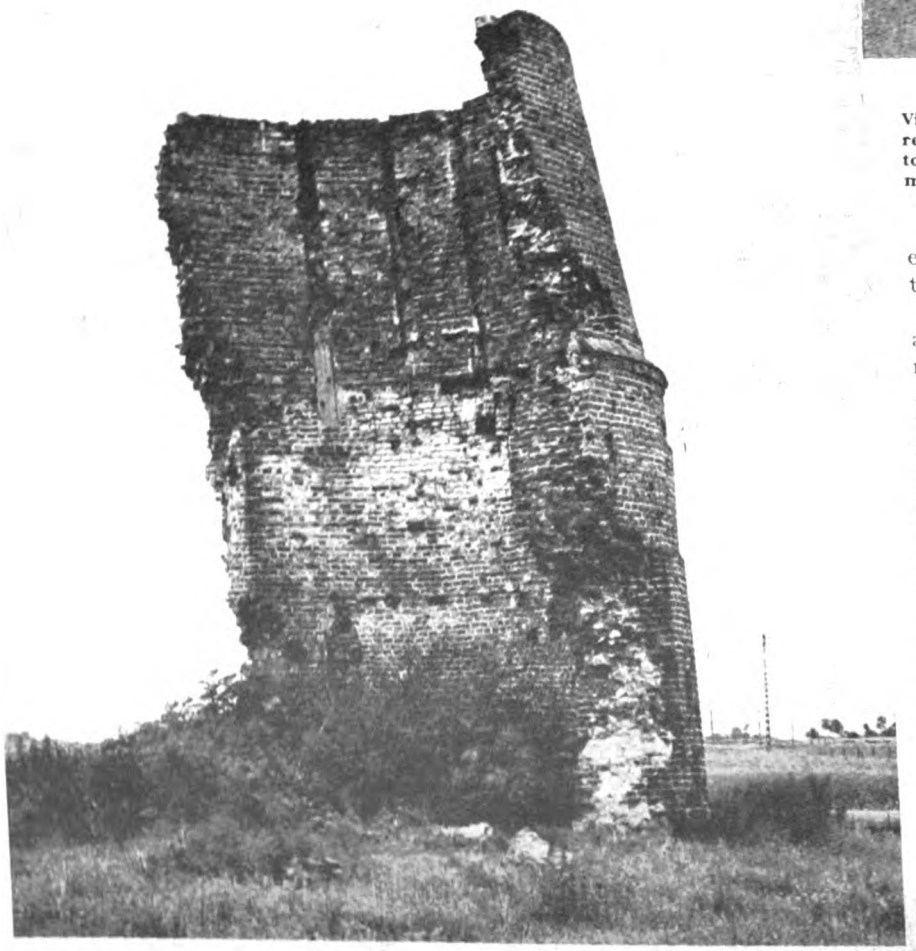

Photo: A. J. Insall.

DEFYING TIME

Reduced to a mere shell—or perhaps half a shell would be a more accurate description—the ruin of Foucaucourt's mill still defies the efforts of weather and undergrowth to obliterate it. The upper picture, taken on September 16th, 1916, bears witness to the work of the French artillery before the first Somme battle. The modern picture reveals the results of post-war stripping.

Further, they repeatedly instigated attempts to damage most seriously, if not to sink, various Allied or even American ships conveying such munitions to Allied Ports, and in any case, information concerning the sailing of ships would invariably be sent to Berlin with a view to their being attacked by submarines. According to American authority, such was the procedure in the matter of the sinking of the Cunard s.s. *Lusitania*. In the end Captains von Papen and Boy-Ed were so strongly suspected of having instigated these misdeeds that the German Government was requested to recall both officers; and this was done.[1]

Counter-espionage

The first and greatest difficulty always experienced by any Secret Service

[1] Captain von Papen became Chancellor of the German Reich for a short while during Hindenburg's Presidency. He is now German Ambassador at Vienna, after having survived the Nazi *coup d'état* and its aftermath. Captain Boy-Ed (his name is Turkish) was a prime favourite of Admiral Tirpitz, and a man renowned for his ability, his fashionable exterior, and his utter unscrupulousness—an ideal organiser of Secret Service.

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organisation working on hostile territory is that of conveying or smuggling information, once acquired, from one place to another. It was on the prevention of such conveyance that the counter-espionage organisation of all belligerents very largely concentrated.

Every artifice, and many applications of known scientific devices, were speedily adopted to defeat the hostile spies, in proportion as the latter had recourse more and more to scientific invention in the furtherance of their machinations. The crude methods of the early days of the War rapidly gave way to the most advanced electrical or chemical processes, which, it was hoped, would defeat the enemy's resources of detection or prevention. And these processes were constantly varied or improved.

Accordingly the importance of the counter-espionage service in Britain increased rapidly as the War went on. This was but natural. In the first place, the enemy grew more and more resourceful and daring in expanding his methods of "intelligence warfare"; so British counter-espionage grew more thorough, as it had reason to do. In no branch did a greater expansion take place than in all those departments connected with trade intelligence, and, as the German submarine campaign grew in intensity, with shipping.

The postal and telegraphic censorship departments worked steadily, with more attention to detail. As prisoners of war increased in number, so the inspection of their correspondence became a matter demanding greater care. Towards the end of the War the counter-espionage personnel in Britain numbered between 6,000 and 7,000. No single office existed to house such a huge staff; the members were distributed in various places throughout the country, and many of the offices did not even know of the existence of others.

As an extreme instance of a counter-espionage, or "preventive" Intelligence system we must turn to the enemy. In occupied Belgium and France the Germans were able to enforce the most complete measures of this nature that were ever imposed on any country during the War.

Photo: "Daily Mirror."

NURSE EDITH LOUISA CAVELL

Nurse Edith Louisa Cavell, the daughter of a Norfolk clergyman, went to Brussels in 1906, after experience in many British hospitals, to assist in founding a training-school for nurses. The outbreak of war resulted in her being put in charge of the Birkenhead Medical Institute, in the Belgian capital, which became a Red Cross hospital for both Germans and Allies. On October 7th, 1915, Nurse Cavell was charged with having assisted in the escape of 130 persons from Belgium, and was convicted on her own confession. She was shot at dawn on October 12th, and in 1919 her body was brought home to Norwich Cathedral. Her execution roused a thrill of Allied and Neutral horror at the time, and is even yet the subject of strong feeling in some quarters; but in point of fact the trial was conducted with full fairness, though the German authorities would have displayed more wisdom had some clemency been shown.

In the Occupied Territories

It has to be remembered that they were in occupation of nearly the whole of Belgium, and of a large tract of France. The entire population of these regions was—with some justice—regarded by them as possible carriers of information. Since the surest method of rendering these large populations harmless was to prevent information from being got away, it stood to reason that the best method was to immobilise all Allied sympathisers, or at any rate to render them incapable of *forwarding* their knowledge.

In addition, there was the necessity of incapacitating French and Belgians from committing any acts of sabotage on railways and roads. Consequently the Germans instituted a very strict régime of control in these occupied territories, by which all travel, beyond very short distances of a few miles, was rendered extremely difficult. A minute system of barriers, with examining posts, was instituted along all railways, roads, and canals.

At every post each traveller, even when in possession of complete and

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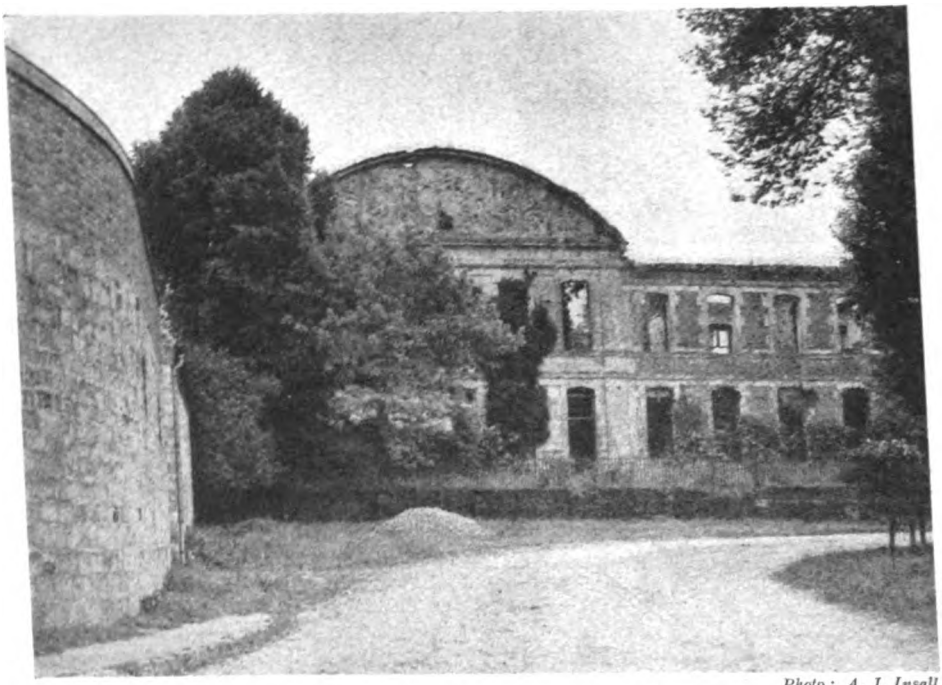

Photo: A. J. Insall.

THE ABBAYE DE VAUCELLES

The small hamlet of Vaucelles, 10 km. due south of Cambrai, is a delightful spot, perched among billowing hills above a picturesque lock and bridge over the Scheldt Canal. The once large and ornate abbey is now a gaunt and forgotten relic, half-hidden amid trees and luxuriant undergrowth. There are many shell-pocked ruins near, and the general atmosphere of Vaucelles is one of having been more-or-less overlooked in the general reconstruction.

correct identity papers, travel permit, etc., was liable to be minutely examined and searched, even to his or her nose, mouth and ears, not to mention his or her being stripped. This entire system was organised and controlled by a special Intelligence Bureau in Brussels.

Its efficiency was extremely high; and this may be judged from two facts. In the first place it did not require a force of more than 500 Secret Intelligence Field Police (working mainly in plain clothes) to support the normal control system enforced by the uniformed military personnel of *Kommandanturs*[1] and other headquarters. Secondly, during the years 1915-18 more than 140 spies and secret agents were shot by the Germans by sentence of court martial.

This German Intelligence régime was indeed drastic, and at times oppressive; but it is difficult to see how, in view of the circumstances with which they were faced, they could have done better and acted with less severity, even with the help of a far more numerous personnel of occupation.[2]

[1] *Kommandantur* was the military headquarters installed in every occupied town or larger village.

[2] The first period of the German occupation of Belgium in 1914 can scarcely be said to have been managed as an Intelligence problem, and so needs little comment save that it was marked by brutality and bloodshed.

The Affair of Nurse Cavell

It was during the early period of this régime that at Brussels Nurse Cavell risked her life in aiding Allied soldiers and Belgian civilians to break out of occupied territory to join the Allied forces. These men were probably able to give much information of value to the Allies. Nurse Cavell's success was remarkable and shows how difficult a matter it can be to control a newly occupied country. By these actions, carried on over a period of several months, the Nurse certainly exposed herself to the sentence of death, which she eventually incurred before a court martial. Legally speaking, the Germans could fully justify the execution of Nurse Cavell. Whether they acted with judgment, or would have been better advised to have given way to the world-wide protests which the sentence evoked, is quite another matter.

But the thorough-going system of counter-espionage which the Germans imposed on Belgium and occupied France could not be applied to the populations of the Greater Powers, if only because a far-reaching measure of liberty had to be accorded to a nation, in order for it to carry on the industry and trade which were essential for the prosecution of the War.

Nevertheless, some sort of effective restrictions to prevent not only hostile communications, but also innocent yet harmful revelations, from reaching the enemy, had to be enforced—and that with the utmost rigidity and attention

Photo: A. J. Insall.

IN AIZECOURT-LE-BAS

Lying, as its name implies, on low ground, 7 km. north-east of Péronne, Aizecourt-le-Bas was entered by the British on the German withdrawal of Spring, 1917, and re-entered by the Germans on the British withdrawal of Spring, 1918. The 21st Division, VII Corps, was the formation then involved, the exact date being March 23rd. The picturesque waggon seen in the photograph—a waggon worthy of Constable—is typical of these parts.

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Photo: A. J. Insall.

THE CHURCH, MORCOURT

A brief outline of Morcourt's history in the March Retreat—the only time, with the exception of a few hours during August 8th, 1918, when it was retaken, that it saw any fighting—appeared in the captions to two road scenes near the village on page 450 of this volume. A medium-sized commune of 240 inhabitants, Morcourt lies on the south bank of the Somme opposite Chipilly. The corner seen is not a road junction, but a kink in the Amiens—Péronne highway.

to detail. In Britain this was achieved by the imposition of a detailed code of counter-espionage laws and regulations. These laws were based on the celebrated DORA—that is the Regulations approved by Parliament and based on the Defence of the Realm Act of 1914.

This Act, and the dependent Regulations, had originally been passed in August, 1914, as a body of laws to be applied both to the simple prevention of straightforward espionage, and also to the measures to be taken in the event of an enemy invasion. Then, as the War dragged on and became a complicated tangle of urgent every-day problems, the Regulations made regularly under the Act grew and grew until they affected every aspect of trade and shipping, not to mention such matters as the illumination of towns or even the breeding of pigs.

Vindication of DORA

There can be no question but that the Regulations were practical and indispensable. Much of the abuse that has been heaped on DORA is due to the slowness, and even reluctance, that has been exhibited by the Government departments in relaxing their hold on the nation from 1919 onwards. In its day DORA was, on the whole, well conceived, ably administered and highly successful in bringing the country through many difficult situations. Of the past necessity of DORA there is consequently no need to speak further.

As the War went on through 1915, the Germans, owing to the more than partial failure of their Secret Service, found it more and more difficult to obtain any speedy or first-hand intelligence as to the intentions and resources of the Allies. On the other hand, the movements of the Allied armies also became slower and more cumbersome, until it needed weeks and months to mount a great attack; and so it became possible for information of impending troop movements to percolate through to the enemy by means of innocent indiscretions committed by the Allied populations at large.

It is quite probable that the most prolific source of intelligence that remained open to the Germans after 1916 was the indiscretion of those in "high life"—society gossip, and chatter in the offices and homes of those in authority. Already in 1905, the Japanese, in their war against Russia, had declared that their most fertile source of accurate news concerning Russian movements had been St. Petersburg. "Those white-faced chatterers" in Europe were giving away far more than was necessary to enable the Japanese to divine the next great operation of war.

To a lesser extent history repeated itself in 1916–18; gossip among the troops, supplemented by loose and careless talk in Paris, and London,

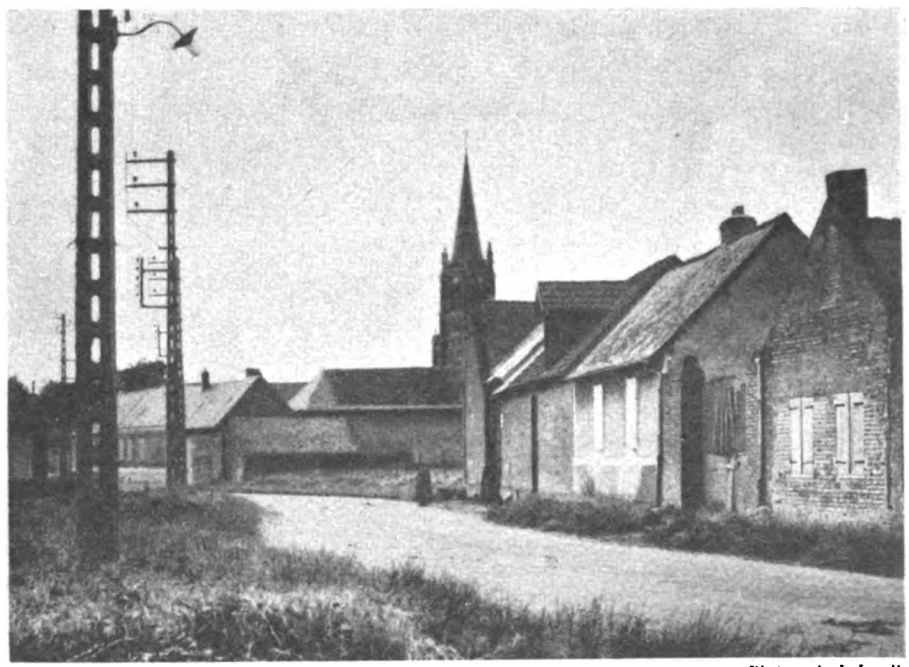

Photo: A. J. Insall.

SLEEPY TIMES IN LE QUESNEL

Le Quesnel, 6 km. south-west of Rosières, and 1 km. north of the Amiens—Roye road, was anything but sleepy in 1918. On March 28th the 30th Division (XVIII Corps), 24th Division (XIX Corps), XIX Corps divisional engineers, and French Groupement Mesple, all had a hand in its unsuccessful defence; and on August 8th terrific fighting preceded its capture, before dawn of the 9th, by the Canadian Corps, assisted by tanks. There are two Canadian cemeteries.

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were as productive of "Intelligence" as the ante-chambers and salons of St. Petersburg had been in 1905. The task of counter-espionage thus grew and grew out of all recognition. It was no longer a matter of detecting and apprehending any particular spy; it was an enormous machine applying controls and restrictions to the whole country, in order to prevent any "ill-disposed persons," mischievous busybodies and others, quite apart from the real secret agents, from releasing information of value to the enemy.

The Threefold Censorship

Owing to the great need for preventing harmful scraps of news from leaving the country, one of the most important branches of counter-espionage became that of the censorships: postal, telegraphic, and Press. The delicacy of these tasks was considerable, for, whilst putting a check on all undesirable enemy agencies, there were untold difficulties in the path of the censors, who might at any moment be called into question for strangling trade and unnecessarily accentuating the narrowness of the relations which it was still possible for the British nation as a whole to maintain with the outside world.

The magnitude of the work of the censor's offices—for there were several—can be imagined when it is said that all mails leaving the country were read and scrutinised for the possible use of codes and secret inks. In the early days the ruses resorted to by secret agents were simple enough. Information might be concealed under the postage stamp. Codes were simple and easily solved. Hot water, in those days, was an adequate developer, at the most a hot iron or lemon-juice applied to a suspect document usually revealed the "contraband" message.

But as detection was so easy, it was not long before the German chemists developed a resourcefulness that began to be truly embarrassing. Secret compounds that at first baffled detection would be sent into England—from neutral countries, of course—for the use of "ill-disposed individuals." The noxious chemicals might be introduced by means of a pair of socks or handkerchiefs steeped in some cunning solution. The articles on arrival would be left to soak—in the case of socks, each sock separately—and then the resulting liquors would be mixed, boiled down, and used as an invisible ink.

The developing of papers bearing characters written in such inks proved to be a delicate and highly scientific

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

BELOW ST. QUENTIN

This photograph takes us slightly outside the more familiar areas, for it shows a scene in Le Grand-Séraucourt, a village on the east (which is here the left) bank of the Somme, 8 km. south-west of St. Quentin. The place is important, for the main road from St. Quentin to St. Simon is here met by another from Péronne, whose approach to Le Grand-Séraucourt is made over a large bridge crossing the Somme. The illustration shows British troops about to go up to the line during January, 1918, at which time the village lay well behind the III and XVIII Corps sectors. Notice the L.G.O.C. bus in the background.

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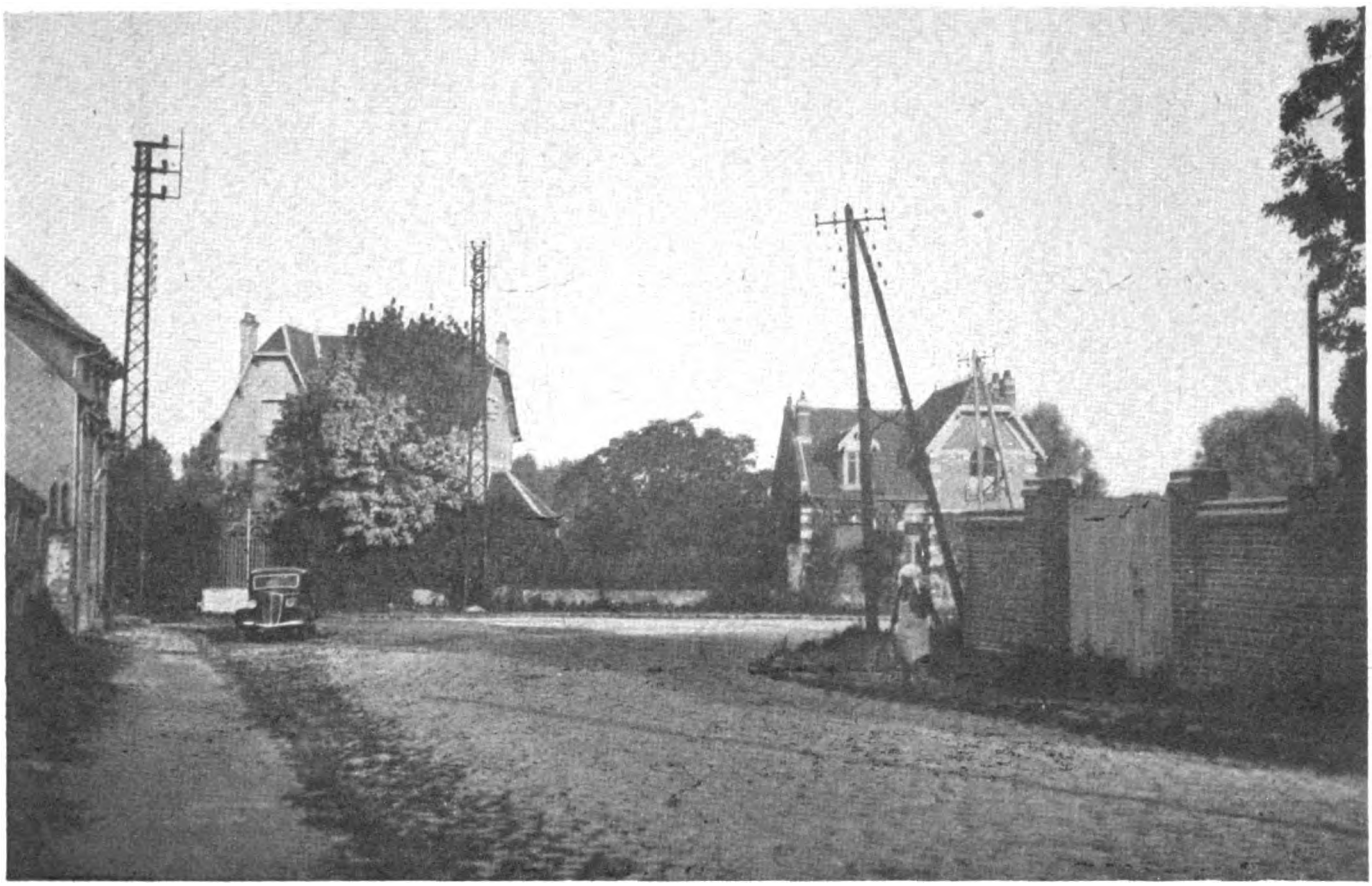

Photo: G. T. Watson.

THE IDENTICAL SPOT

The corner has altered so greatly in twenty years that it is difficult to recognise, but its identity may be established by observing the railings behind the car, which are the same as those behind the car in the War view; and by the large tree, which the villagers declare has grown from one of the saplings in the earlier picture. In spite of its distance (5 km.) from the line, Le Grand-Séraucourt was taken on the first day of the March Retreat, the enemy penetrating deeper in this area than in any other. The withdrawal of the 36th Division (XVIII Corps) to the west bank of the Somme was made without interference, although three platoons of the 108th Brigade were cut off and almost fell into German hands, owing to the principal Séraucourt bridges having been blown up before the 108th had begun to cross.

process. A special chemical branch was created to deal with such matters, and to devise a whole series of tests whereby new chemical reagents might be detected.

Similarly with codes. In this case a remarkable secret branch, familiarly known as 40B, was set up by the Admiralty in 1914, originally for the decoding of German wireless messages. The head of this branch was Sir Alfred Ewing, a Scottish professor, who possessed a really uncanny gift for unravelling the most complicated of ciphers. 40B was, in fact, one of the best-kept secrets of the War; and thanks to its work the British Admiralty was scarcely ever without full information as to the situation of the German fleets.

Unparalleled Achievement

But from the decoding of these purely naval orders the work of 40B expanded until any really troublesome problem arising out of the enemy's uses of codes and ciphers was referred to the astonishingly able analysis of its experts. The work performed by this branch remains one of the most remarkably clever and successful achievements of the entire War; and it can safely be said to have been without equal in any belligerent country.

The censorship of the Press began simply enough; but as time went on its problems grew more difficult. The Press unquestionably offered a loophole for clandestine enemy communications to reach Germany. British papers would normally find their way to neutral countries. Advertisements were a natural means of conveying news of troop movements and the like. The "Personal" column of every paper seemed to invite the insertion of code messages. The daily scrutiny of the Press thus became a truly serious matter; every advertisement was subject to minute analysis. Every letter to the editor had to be tested for a hidden communication.

As the submarine campaign grew in intensity, so all possible channels of information relating to shipping required the closest supervision; for it was largely on the collection of such scraps of information as were allowed to leak out concerning the sailings of ships, that the Germans relied for the distribution of their U boats.

There was a great art, too, in the most profitable handling of the censorships, since they offered a unique opening for the acquisition of information. To begin with, it was obvious that many communications were allowed to leave enemy territory in error—that is to say, the writer, anxious to give news of interest to friends abroad, had succeeded knowingly or unknowingly in eluding his own censorship; or, again, he might impart information which had appeared totally harmless to his own censor, yet possessed some value to the enemy reader.

A Censor Caught Napping

Most of these communications were, of course, addressed to neutral countries,

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Photo: A. P., Paris.

THE RUINS OF RANSART

The wrecked Château de Ransart, and the very modest house which has inherited its title, formed the opening illustrations of the photogravure section entitled "From Ransart to Moyenneville" (page 89 of this volume). Above, we show the remnants of the village proper, as left by the enemy after the very thorough destruction which accompanied his retirement to the Hindenburg Line.

and so never reached the belligerent most interested. And thus intelligence work in neutral countries increased. But in the case of mails sent to prisoners of war the value of the letters often grew to an amazing extent; as, for instance, when friends in Germany continued for over eight months to keep a captured German aviator, interned in England, regularly informed of the latest type of aircraft with which his late unit was equipped. It took all that time before the German Censorship on the outgoing letters was able to realise that the simplest of codes had been in use and had not prevented the British censors from maintaining a regular check on the armament of the German squadron!

The Germans, on the other hand, were long successful in maintaining, by means of disloyal agents, what was ostensibly an illicit post between occupied Belgium and Holland. Confiding Belgians under German occupation, trusting to the genuine nature of this clandestine post, would entrust all manner of communications for Holland to its mercies.

The replies would come by the same channel. The German Censorship for several months made hay while the sun shone, and it was not until one of the secret carriers "double-crossed" his German paymasters that the fraud was discovered; and then the Germans lost a precious source of information.

It was normally by the application of the various safeguards comprised under the heading of censorships that many harmful spies and less dangerous agents were discovered. But these barriers would have availed little if it had not been for the rigid supervision exercised over the entrance of strangers at all ports of access to the United Kingdom. These ports were in close touch with one another, with Scotland Yard, and with all the various counter-espionage organisations; for it was only by means of a close and effective co-operation of all its parts that the huge machine could work.

The ramifications of counter-espionage spread far and wide overseas. There was scarcely a neutral country in which a British bureau was not established for the purpose of acquiring information concerning enemy activities. In Holland, Switzerland, Denmark, and Scandinavia, enquiries were currently instituted on behalf of the authorities at home.

Depths of Villainy

Nowhere did the Battle of Brains assume more venomous and immoral forms than at Rotterdam, Geneva, and Berne. At these centres it used to be said that every man, and woman too, had his or her price to perform any piece of villainy that might be asked! But what security there was that the mission would ever be accomplished none but a very few could estimate!

Anyhow, in no place did the Allied counter-espionage services have a more difficult or doubtful task than in these cities where their representatives had to live cheek by jowl with German agents who were bent on similar tasks; and it is possible that during the War there was devised in these neutral cities even dirtier work than the foulest plot ever conceived by a Parisian apache or a Chicago gunman.

In the British Empire itself counter-espionage spread its tentacles far and wide. There were offices housed in the slums of Alexandria and Bombay, where Intelligence agents were at work unravelling enemy schemes. Other agents travelled in Persia and Afghanistan to unearth the machinations of German propaganda designed to rouse the Moslem world against the British. In Australia and at the Cape the watchful "I" had branches, which would report the appearance of any enemy agent, or the discovery of any enemy plot. The counter-espionage Services—naval, military, and trade—

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worked closely together, and in fact many of their duties became amalgamated.

But beside these more devious duties of counter-espionage the defensive Intelligence Services were busily engaged in dealing with economic problems. There is little need to describe these in detail; but to afford some idea of their variety and magnitude, it will be sufficient to quote an extract from the valedictory order issued by the Chief of the Counter-Espionage Department at the close of the War.

Valedictory Order

"We owe it to your efforts that no case of destruction and incendiarism by enemy agents succeeded. This is all the more remakable on account of the great number of enemy agents. You have gathered information of immeasurable value for the naval, military, and trade Intelligence departments. The Blockade Minister believes that your work has contributed in a great measure to the effective maintenance of the blockade.

"In respect of the pressure on enemy trade, your information was of the highest value in the search for enemy goods on neutral ships. It will interest you to learn that in practically every case of contraband which came before the Prize Court the material evidence was furnished by you. The importance of this statement will be still more apparent when I add that the value of the cargoes without the ships is £30,000,000. You have also prevented the delivery of goods worth more than £70,000,000, and have completely destroyed the enemy's overseas relations as far as they could be destroyed at all."

There is but one more duty needing mention, that fell to the lot of counter-espionage during the War—although in this case it was never perceptible in Britain: namely, the fight against enemy subversive propaganda. The "Battle of Propaganda," indeed, assumed large proportions behind the Western Front in Belgium, and still more in France.

The Allied propaganda, which was mainly dropped from aeroplanes or balloons over and in rear of the German troops, had two ends in view. The first was to undermine the loyalty of the German soldier to his cause; the second to keep alight the flames of patriotism in the occupied territories. The former attempt—that is, to seduce the enemy soldiery—developed into a systematic form of warfare.

"Patriotic Instruction"

The German Intelligence sought to combat the evil in three ways; firstly, at Ludendorff's own instigation, a special branch of counter-espionage was formed for the purpose of instituting a system of "Patriotic Instruction" throughout the German forces wherever they might be; secondly, an intensive hunt to discover all subversive leaflets, pictures, and post-cards, was instituted behind the front; and thirdly, the publication of such German-controlled papers as the notorious *Gazette des Ardennes* was triplicated in quantity, and in the vehemence and virulence of its anti-Allied matter.

On the Austro-Italian front the same sort of warfare by printed matter was carried on, with results which were to be recognised in 1917 in the debacle of Caporetto, and in the following year in the collapse of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. In Britain there was, fortunately, never any great need to reply to this sort of warfare, although some held at the time that a measure of "Patriotic Education" might not have been out of place. But the traditional and extreme reluctance of the Army to meddle with political and personal opinions prevented military counter-espionage from ever initiating any pro-War propaganda; that was left to the politician.

Photo: A. J. Insall.

A QUIET NOOK

It may be recollected that Ransart lies on the main road 12 km. south-south-west of Arras, and not far north of Adinfer Wood. Such little War history as it boasts has already been related, and the most that can be said of the modern village—to judge from the present illustration—is that windows are apparently not its most prominent feature. The population in 1931 was 380.

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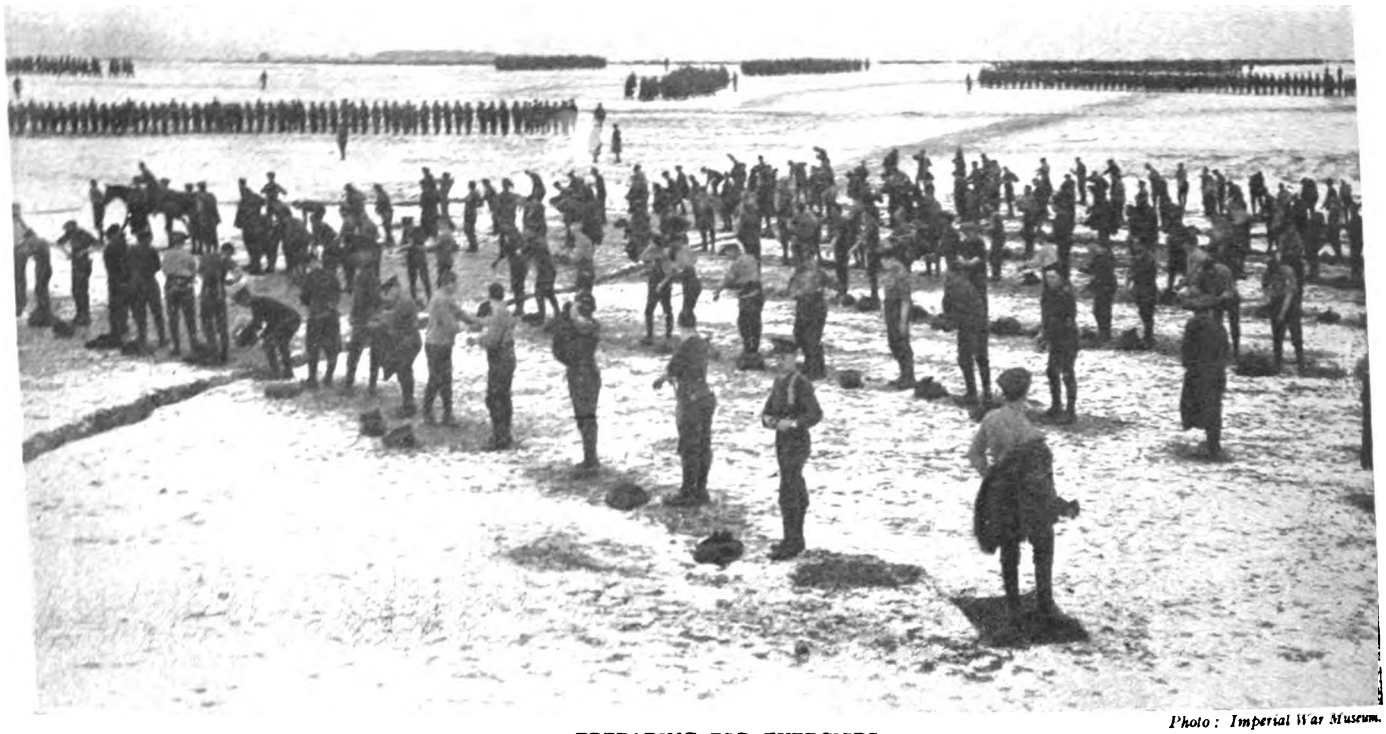

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

PREPARING FOR EXERCISES

Those who passed through the Étaples Bull Ring—and they were members of a vast company indeed!—will recollect with a shudder this sort of scene, the prelude to strenuous "P.T.," and to "strafing" which, even though confined to words, made the instructors who applied it seem far more formidable than the Boche at his worst.

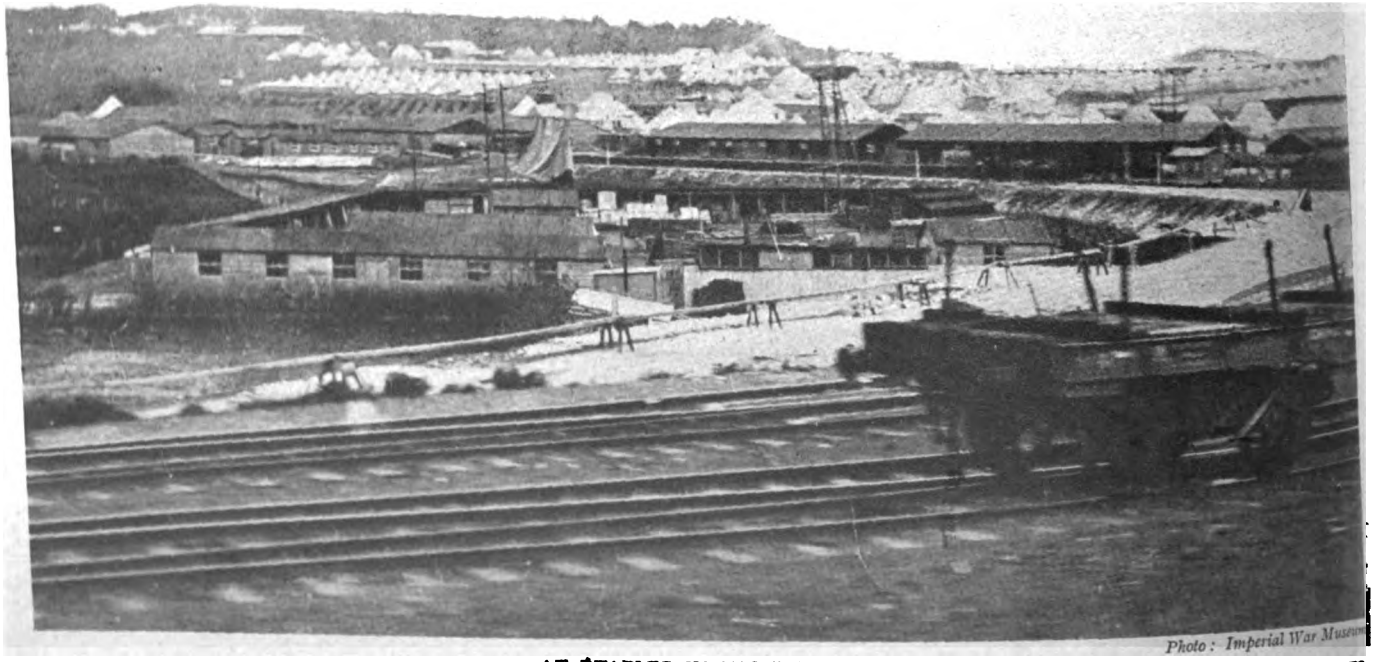

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

AT ÉTAPLES IN NOVEMBER, 1915

Those who, when travelling nowadays from Boulogne to Paris, chance to look out of the window as the train passes through Étaples, see a town uninteresting enough. It has even become quite difficult to believe that Army huts and bell-tents once covered the surrounding fields like a swarm of locusts.

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CHAPTER XXXIII

MEMORIES VIII.—THE BULL RING AT ÉTAPLES

Most ex-Servicemen who spent any length of time on the Western Front made the acquaintance, sooner or later, of that area of hospitals, encampments, and railway lines known as Étaples. Opinions differed to a marked degree as to the desirability or otherwise of making a lengthy sojourn there, and the writer of the present chapter is obviously not one of those who would have selected Étaples as a rest for the sensitive or the weary. Perhaps there was another side to the picture. It may have been that those who directed affairs in the Bull Ring thought that some of their guests were of the toughest and acted accordingly. There seems little doubt, however, that Étaples was not a popular place. Indeed, the Bull Ring has become a legend. Whether the tales concerning that institution are apocryphal or not, the fact remains that some of those who were obliged to languish there for a space are apt to look back upon the experience with feelings that are mixed.

ÉTAPLES was a remarkable place. The popular anglicised version of its name was " Eat-apples." It was called other things as well, but as Eat-apples it is still known to ex-Servicemen. If that suggests a remote, quaint village, and you hear of Redcaps and Canaries in connection with it, do not be misled. The names have no ornithological significance, though the owners of them were certainly part of the wild life of the neighbourhood. Anyone who was there during the War will be happy to explain at some length the habits and customs of these creatures.

Famous for Many Things

Étaples was famous (perhaps " notorious " is an apter word) for many things. Few men, I imagine, can have happy memories concerning it. Say " Eat-apples " to an old soldier and he will think of either a hospital, a cemetery, or the Bull Ring. I escaped the two first. There was no dodging the third.

No one knows who christened that arid arena a " bull ring," but it was a suitable name—up to a point. The matadors and picadors were there, as large as life and twice as fierce ; but the bulls were as lambs led to the slaughter.

Its sinister reputation reached me even in distant Salonica. Rumours about it multiplied when in the autumn of 1916 the Commander-in-Chief requested the pleasure of our company in France ; and it was for Étaples, in spite of our prayers, that we found ourselves *en route*.

Étaples, we had heard, was hell. Compared with it, the Glasshouse was cushy. Everything was done at the double. The place was lousy with officers. Ferocious Redcaps lurked in every corner. The camp was a prison. You were crimed if you batted an eyelid on parade. Field Punishment No. 1 awaited you for a button undone. For a dirty rifle, we heard, you were shot at dawn.

The Instructors, so the rumour went, were terrors, monsters, creatures only to be described by words unprintable. Now that I think of it, few of the names given them were mere figures of speech. Those with initial letters occurring in the early part of the alphabet were conceivably true descriptions. If I am doing the monsters an injustice, I do not greatly care. They have slandered better men even than myself.

Only the Australians—so we were told—knew how to deal with the Instructors. The Australians, in the version of the story which I heard, once took an Instructor out on the sand dunes and " larned " him. No doubt they treated him to a dose of his own medicine.

Probably an apocryphal tale. I did not believe it, and here I may say that there was a lot about the Australians I could never believe, even when I saw it in print. War Correspondents had ideas about " news value," and no doubt the subtleties of propaganda were involved. Anyhow, the Australians whom I encountered in the Bull Ring and other unpleasant places did not greatly differ in courage and endurance from mere home-grown products such as my own battalion.

They may have excelled us in certain directions in and out of the line, but until I know the full facts I am reluctant to allow them the credit of having surpassed us in their dealings with our task-masters at Étaples.

A Forbidding Aspect

Whatever the truth may be about the " Eat-apples trouble," the place had a bad name among the troops. I approached it with misgivings. It had a forbidding aspect. The hospital and cemetery (even at that date extensive) were distressing features of the landscape. That one or other of these refuges would sooner or later claim me was a thought not easy to dismiss. Besides, the place was cold after Salonica.

There was a bleak, unfriendly atmosphere about it. Hemmed in by the dull ugliness of tents and huts, one could find no spot free from the sight and sound and smell of the Army. Perhaps my memory is playing me false, and I am maligning worthy men and women, when I recall the Y.M.C.A. hut as cheerless and its officials as deficient in cordiality. It may be that they too were victims of the heavy depression which centred over Étaples.

There was another hut, run, I think, by some society ladies, which was livelier. At any rate, we made it lively one night. For some reason which I forget we suddenly burst into a certain well-known but doubtful ditty. It was received with disapproval. Redcaps were called in, and our names were taken. Next day we left for the Somme.

It was not easy to get a pass out of the camp. I once took that sandy road to Paris Plage, where there were English lady visitors, about whom we formed an erroneous impression. Every place was out of bounds for us—a fact which struck us as odd, the lectures we had received from the M.O. having convinced us that the neighbourhood abounded in glittering temptations which we should have difficulty in avoiding.

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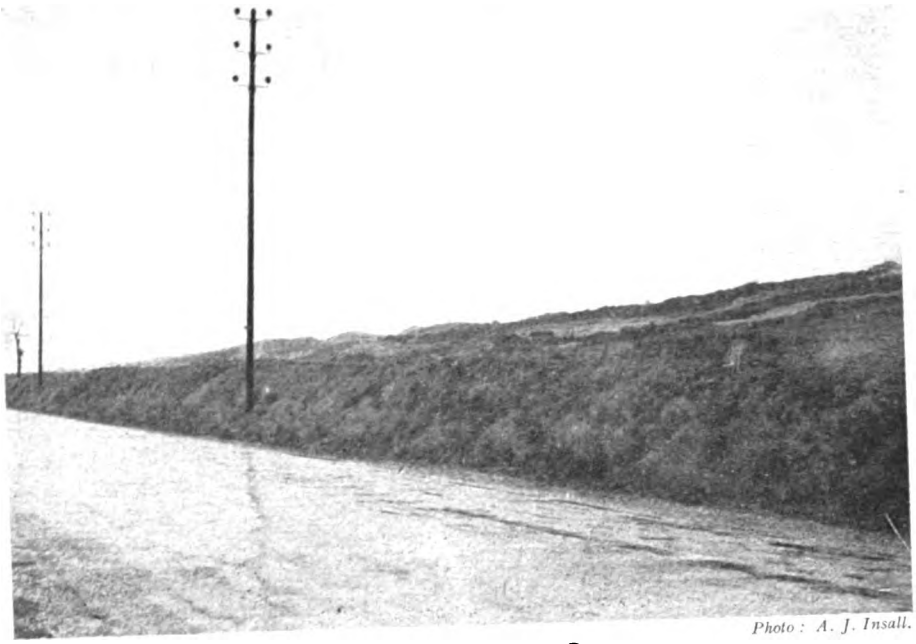

Photo: A. J. Insall.

FROM THE MAIN ROAD

A glimpse of some of the country which once constituted the hated Bull Ring, viewed from the main road which skirts it. Many of the men—and of the officers also—who were marched out to the gigantic parades here were in various stages of convalescence, a circumstance which increased tenfold their dislike of the place.

Those lectures were overdone, I think. So were the medical inspections. I hated them.

Sermons, too, seemed plentiful at Étaples, some of them shading off into lectures of the kind with which we were nauseatingly familiar, all of them paraphrases of Lord Kitchener's famous order to the troops about women and wine which made the French think he was sending over the Church Lads' Brigade.

Anti-climax

Whether the following extract is from an actual sermon or from a parody, I cannot remember. If the latter, it was not very far-fetched.

"Men," said the young padre, "I have the same temptations as you. Don't think that temptations do not come to parsons. We are only human like you. But when I am tempted I take myself to the Throne of Grace, and I am glad to say that I have been enabled to keep the promise I made to my mother before I left England, that I would not smoke."

Étaples lingers in my mind as a place of innumerable tents, with dust-laden air, a cheesy-rubbery smell, and sand dunes and the sea beyond. There were sensational stories about the sand dunes, stories of deserters who lived there and made nightly raids for provisions. That kind of existence had no attractions for me. I could not see any advantage in it.

The tents were as pleasant to live in as any other tents. Nights were an exasperating confusion of legs, blankets, rifles, and equipment, with someone whacking the tent with a cane and saying "Cut that talking out!"—and then Reveille. Tent and rifle inspection was at 6.30 a.m. By 8.30 we were off to the Bull Ring.

Because the Instructors wore yellow armlets, they were called Canaries. It was their duty and pleasure to torment into what they called efficiency the newly-arrived drafts. They were ruthless in their methods. The slower the man, the more they goaded him. I had a friend whose fatness interfered with his agility. He used to go pounding along, pursued by jeering Canaries.

"Nar then, fatty, get a move on. Run some of that fat orf. If you're six months gone you'll drop your load before I've done with you. On you go! You can do it if you want to."

I met this friend the other day and asked him if he remembered the Bull Ring. He replied, "Yes. Not nice, was it?" I regard that as a masterpiece of understatement. (My friend is a man of few words. All I have ever been able to extract from him about his adventures in March, 1918, is, "It was a proper b—— pantomime.")

"Not nice!" The battles fought in the Bull Ring were the most exciting of the War. We had murder in our hearts as we bayoneted the sacks. Nothing we encountered thereafter provoked such rage as we felt when, shouted and cursed at, pursued and prodded, we

Photo: A. J. Insall.

A CORNER OF ÉTAPLES MILITARY CEMETERY

This is the only British cemetery attached to Étaples, but it is one of the largest anywhere [illegible]. Burials include 8,767 United Kingdom, 1,122 Canadians, 461 Australians, 261 New Zealanders, 67 South Africans, 28 British West Indians, 18 Newfoundlanders, 5 Indians, 47 Portuguese, 2 Belgians, 1 Chinese, 1 U.S.A., and 655 Germans—a tragic and awe-inspiring total of no fewer than 11,435 dead.

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charged with full pack and fixed bayonets, through barbed wire and into water, leaping trenches, climbing walls, downhill and uphill, running, stumbling, scrambling up again, while the Canaries chirped :

The Song of a Canary

" Get a move on, blast you ! Put some guts in it. Forget you're white men. Stick it in ! Don't tickle him. What's the good of shoving it there ? You've got to take his life, not his voice. On you go ! You've killed that one. Come on. Mind that ——— on the ground. Don't be greedy. Withdraw ! Don't twist your bayonet in him—you may get it stuck. Now then, on you go ! Like to have a rest, wouldn't you ? Come on ! "

No, the Bull Ring was not nice. I can truthfully say that I had moments there as unpleasant as anywhere on the Western Front. I was never so angry elsewhere. The sectional rushes, the belly-flopping, the " on-the-'ands-downing," the marching, the manual drill, the saluting at every few steps when you were off duty, the air-raid alarms—what a bad war it was at Étaples ! We comforted ourselves by saying " It's all done to make us glad to go to the Front."

I gather that at Havre there was also a Bull Ring, and friends of mine who were there proudly claim that their Instructors were worse than ours. The claim is, of course, absurd.

After mature reflection I am unable to agree with those (if there are any) who hold that the methods of intensive training in vogue at Étaples were a salutary introduction to the rigours of the front line. I believe that Étaples and places like it were a mistake. They were paradises for sadists. It must have been a sorry day for the Instructors—commissioned and non-commissioned—when they had to return to civil life, where petty tyrants are unpopular and are apt to reap the reward of their unpopularity.

Photo : Imperial War Museum.

THE MOTOR-AMBULANCE PARK

Before the War Étaples was just a Picard village, the resort of pleasure-seekers and artists. To-day it is an unimportant townlet of less than 7,000 inhabitants. But between 1915 and 1919 it became the home of a British population larger than that of any but a few French towns. The Red Cross ambulances which served the great stationary hospitals were legion.

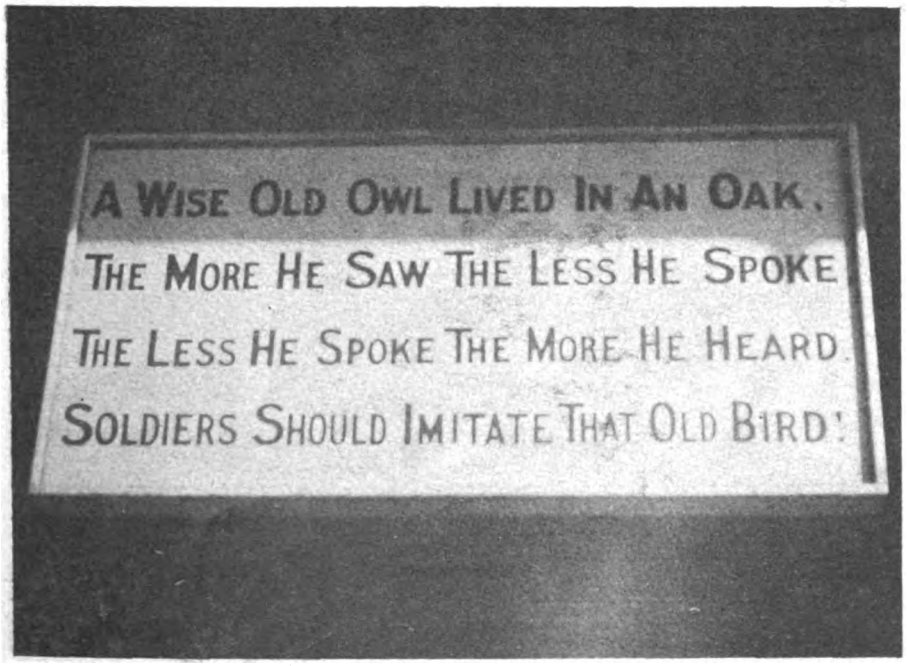
A WISE OLD OWL LIVED IN AN OAK.
THE MORE HE SAW THE LESS HE SPOKE
THE LESS HE SPOKE THE MORE HE HEARD
SOLDIERS SHOULD IMITATE THAT OLD BIRD!

Photo : Imperial War Museum.

SAGE COUNSEL

Probably few individual signboards, if any, throughout the whole British Army area, were seen by more troops than this one which hung in Étaples station. Its appropriateness was the greater in that almost all the embryonic soldiers of the New Armies came to this training centre to be " finished " before they were sent on. The photograph was taken in March, 1917.

A Perverted Sense of Humour

Perhaps that is taking them too seriously. Perhaps their only defect was a perverted sense of humour and a mistaken sense of duty. Perhaps they were faithfully interpreting instructions received from a genius, until now misjudged, at the War Office. Perhaps we were all too thin-skinned. I wonder.

I think the reason why I hated Étaples so much is this. When we left England to go to Salonica we had the wind put up us because we were going to the first-line battalion. " They'll shove you through it out there," we were warned. Now, although everything was strict when we were put through our paces, and we were made to feel that officers and N.C.O.'s despaired of making us fit to be associated with such a glorious regiment, there was nothing savage in the severity of the discipline. Believe it or not, there was practically no foul language used on parade. We soon got to be proud to be soldiers.

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At Étaples we were treated in a manner which made us ashamed to be soldiers. It made us bitter. But, considering ourselves old campaigners, we resented still more the treatment accorded to drafts fresh from England, who had never known, comparatively speaking, what it was to have a voice raised in anger against them, and whose physical condition (such boys they seemed !) was certainly not equal to the sudden demands made upon it. Their spirit was good, but it got damaged in the process, and I am not sure the damage was ever repaired.

Discipline was strict at Étaples. That does not mean discipline was good : it merely means that what the Army calls " crime " was extensively manufactured and severely punished. There was always somebody tied to a gun-wheel.

On our last day at the camp we were given a special treat—a sermon from someone who must have been high up in the chaplain line, judging from the other lesser padres in fluttering attendance upon him. He addressed us in these terms :

" Some of you are going to your deaths, but I want you to die like heroes, with a smile on your lips and the love of God in your hearts."

—And the Band Played *Colonel Bogey*

And for *that* we had been kept waiting, all poshed up, an hour on parade ! We were pleased that as we marched past him the band played *Colonel Bogey*. . . .

A friend of mine with whom I was discussing Étaples said to me, " You're getting all worked up about it." When I read what I have written, I do seem to have " gone off the deep," as we used to say. Perhaps I should have contented myself with observing that the Instructors were unduly alert.

For, after all, from what I have learned since of methods employed in foreign armies, and (if the films are to be believed) in civil life in countries other than England, I can almost persuade myself that our brief sojourn at Étaples was a quiet holiday for us. We did not know when we were well off. We were only too glad to get well away.

Photo : Imperial War Museum

AIR RAID DAMAGE

On Sunday, May 19th, 1918, the date of the last effective air raid on London, German airmen flew far behind the British lines in northern France and subjected the hospitals at Étaples to heavy bombing. The unprotected wooden buildings were splintered like matchwood, and the casualties inflicted totalled 300. Some of the damage is shown above. The only previous air attacks on the town had been two Zeppelin raids, each conducted by a single airship, in 1916.

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AROUND CORBIE
Then and Now

Photo: A. P., Paris

THE END OF QUAINT OLD CORBIE

We have already, on pages 456 and 457 of the first volume of *Twenty Years After*, illustrated the north-western aspect of Corbie's imposing abbey-church; but the present pair of photographs shows so admirably the almost miraculous manner in which the great pile survived the otherwise universal destruction, that we feel it will be of deep interest to all who knew the Somme. On page 457 it was stated that in 1918 the church suffered heavy damage; and this statement is true enough. But that even the events of March–April of that year did not bring either of the massive towers to earth, is here proved, for the above photograph was taken on May 25th, 1918.

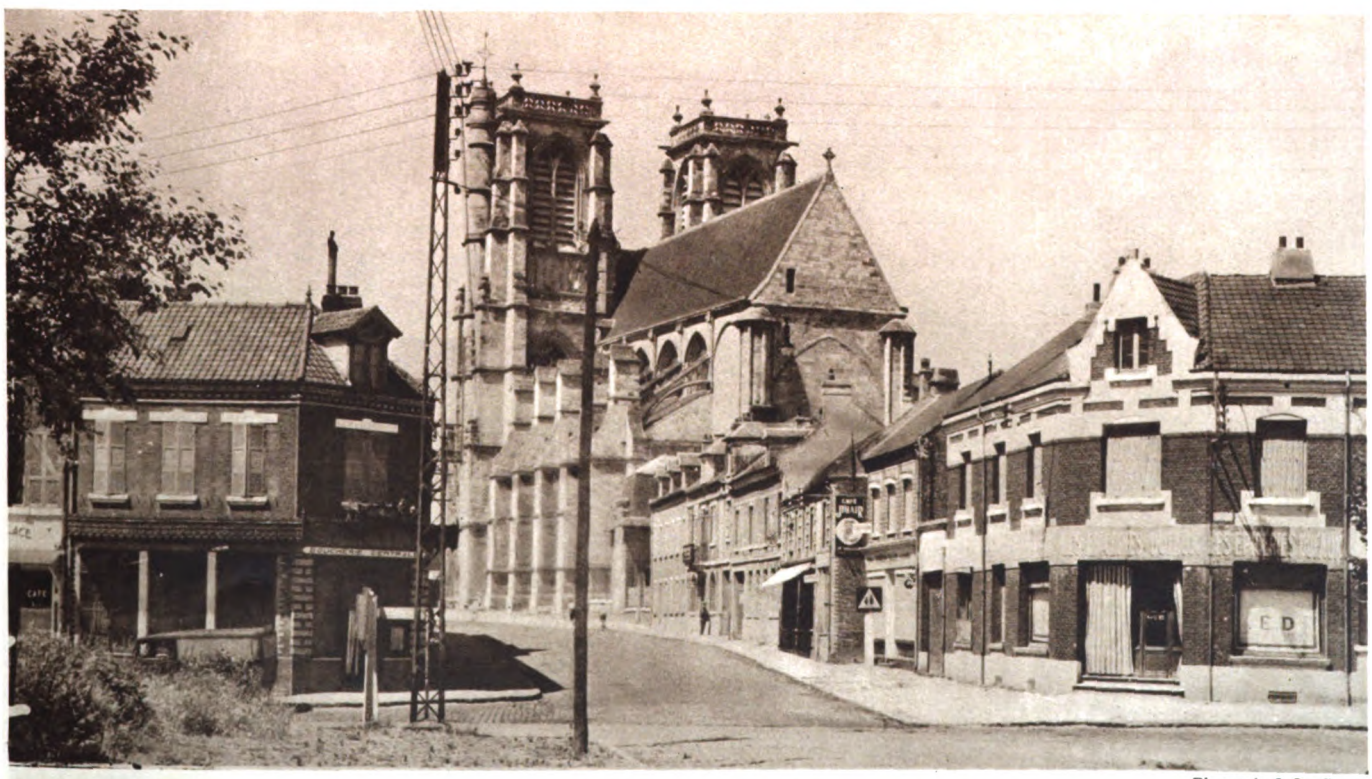

Photo: A. J. Insall

IN THE STREETS OF THE NEW CORBIE

Corbie's position is on the north bank of the Somme, in the fork formed by the confluence of the Ancre, 16 km. due west of Amiens. The little town—its present population is about 4,800—just escaped capture during the enemy offensive of 1918, the Germans at their nearest (April 5th) coming within 2 km. of it. Two other photographs which also appeared in Volume One (pages 460 and 461) give a good idea of the immediate neighbourhood at that time and now.

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Photo: A. P., Paris

A SOMME PANORAMA

This unusually good view of the river and its marshes shows in the foreground the village of Vaux-sur-Somme, on the north bank 3 km. upstream from Corbie. There are in France something like 46 communes called Vaux, not to mention numerous smaller places below communal status. Few, however, if any, felt the hand of war clapped on them so heavily as this place of sleepy rustic charm, which was reduced to the condition here seen during the bombardments of early July, 1916—long before the enemy had come within a dozen miles of it. Its state by the end of 1918 may be imagined.

Photo: A. J. Insall

VAUX IN ITS SHELTERED NOOK

By a paradox which is difficult to explain without the aid of a map, but which is none the less true, Vaux-sur-Somme not only escaped capture in 1918, but, although situated east of Corbie, was actually a little further from the enemy at the peak of his advance than was its western neighbour. The modern village is a delightful spot, but without any particular "souvenir value" to old soldiers lacking personal recollections of it. It is small, but not of the smallest, having a population slightly above 200.

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Photo : A. P. Paris

THE RIVER OF MANY MEMORIES

A scene on the canalized Somme, the " Ol' Man River " of the Western Front, during July, 1916, when all the south bank and long stretches of the north were in French custody. Notice the armoured craft on the far side of the water. This view is typical enough of tne canal, which sometimes follows the river-bed and sometimes, a patently man-made affair, cuts across-country in quite another direction. But it is not very typical of the Somme as a natural waterway; and those readers—if there be any—who never saw the river for themselves, should picture it, rather, as portrayed opposite.

Photo: A. J. Insall

REFLECTIONS

Members of the few British divisions which knew the Somme country before June, 1916, refer to it as something more like Paradise than any other region of the Western Front. The climate had none of the dampness of Flanders or the smoke-pollution of the industrial region. The soil was so fertile that flowers overhung the French trenches. When it came to digging new lines, the ground proved just firm enough and just soft enough. The unspoilt villages were gems of the picturesque. A paradise indeed, compared with after-years!

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Photo: A. P., Paris

IN LE HAMELET

Le Hamelet, or just Hamelet, " Little Hamel," lies on the left bank of the river immediately opposite—*i.e.* east of—Corbie, on the main road which follows the river's curves from Amiens to Péronne. Once again we have in this village a place which just escaped capture in 1918, although Le Hamel, to the south-east, fell on April 5th, the last day of the Second Battle of the Somme. The above photograph shows a French pontoon-bridge over the canal during 1916.

Photo: A. J. Insall

A SAD VILLAGE

Present-day Le Hamelet impresses one as being financially one of the poorest communes in all tragic Santerre, " the grave and glory of Gough's Fifth Army," as an eminent writer has called the region. A great proportion of the village consists of wooden sheds, or of such tumble-down scenes as that on the left; and there are not even the familiar concrete telegraph-posts to give an impression of modernity. Australian troops were closely associated with this sector for as long as it was under British jurisdiction.

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CHAPTER XXXIV

IN SIBERIA AND SOUTH RUSSIA

The sorrowful events that over a long period followed the Revolution in Russia spread havoc and chaos over the length and breadth of that mighty country. The Great War marked the close of an epoch in so far as Russia was concerned. The old régime was destroyed. How the new Russia will fare is even now, twenty years after, a question hard to answer. Be that as it may, the Revolution came about as a direct result of the Great War and long before the last shot was fired on the Western Front the old Imperial Army of the Czars had melted away, unity of purpose had gone, and, as was to happen in Spain in the years that followed, rival bodies strove for the mastery. For many reasons it is important to comprehend all that transpired during Russia's years of agony. The effect of those happenings upon the Europe of to-day has not been negligible.

AFTER hostilities against the Germans had been suspended by the Bolsheviks in December, 1917, it appeared vital to the success of the Allies that the Eastern Front should be reconstituted, so that the immense resources of Russia should be withheld from the Central Powers. Consequently, urgent representations were made at Versailles that all bodies of White Russian (that is, anti-Bolshevik) troops, which were determined to continue the struggle, should be strongly supported.

U.S.A. and Japan Waste Time

Unhappily, before any action was taken towards operations in or based upon Siberia, four valuable months were wasted by America and Japan, who, suspicious of one another, demurred alternately against whatever proposals were advanced by Great Britain and France. Ultimately, the growth of the peril on the Western Front, and the remarkable performances of the Czechoslovak Army, decided President Wilson to contribute a quota, which was to be specifically ear-marked for assisting the Czechoslovaks and for helping the Russians in their efforts at self-government and self-defence.

The Allied detachments landed at Vladivostok in August, 1918, and entrained for the interior, where the successes of the Czechoslovaks had enabled the White Russians to build an army and to form a government. There, delegated to a variety of tasks, we may leave them for the present, while we sketch lightly in the general course of the events and operations in which they were to take part.

The White Russian Government, intended to represent the whole of Russia, proved a failure. Its members talked ceaselessly instead of acting, and, eventually, became infected with Bolshevik virus. A second government, representing Siberia only, and definitely anti-Bolshevik, was set up alongside the other in Omsk. The two quarrelled, and both became ineffective. The leaders of the growing White Russian Army, knowing that they would soon be engaged in a life-and-death struggle, decided that some more efficient form of direction should be instituted.

On November 17th, they executed a military *coup d'état*, deposed one government, absorbed the other, and placed Admiral Koltchak in complete control.

The newly-appointed dictator had been Rear-Admiral of the Black Sea Squadron during the War. When the Revolution broke out, he was arrested, but subsequently released. He then actually accepted a commission in the British Army, with a view to serving in Mesopotamia. On the way to that country, however, he was summoned to Siberia, and there joined the Government at Omsk as Minister of War.

He was in no sense an intriguer, but was a sincere and honest patriot, endowed with plenty of intelligence and a dominant personality. When proclaimed supreme ruler, he stated his chief aims to be "the revival of the fighting power of the army, the triumph over Bolshevism and the restoration of law and order so that the Russian people might without hindrance select their own form of government."

The Position in November, 1918

As far as concerned the support which he might expect to receive from the Allies, Koltchak's accession to power took place at an unfortunate time; for the motives which bound the Allies to the White Russians had ceased to exist. The Czechs had solved their own problem; and, the Armistice having been signed, the Central Powers could no longer draw supplies from Russia. It was certain, too, that neither Britain nor any of her Allies was, at the end of an exhausting war, going to spread forces over the vast, chaotic expanse of Russia in order to combat and crush a particular political creed.

Nevertheless, as Lord Balfour, then Foreign Secretary, said on November 29th: "Recent events have created obligations which last beyond the occasions which gave them birth." In Siberia, and in other parts of the former Russian Empire, "new anti-Bolshevik administrations have grown up under the shelter of the Allied forces. We are responsible for their existence and must endeavour to support them." [1]

Following this statement, our representative at Vladivostok was informed that we should continue the Siberian Expedition, and should try to persuade the Czechs to remain in Western Siberia.

Early in 1919, Winston Churchill became Secretary for War. He found himself in complete accord with the C.I.G.S.—Sir Henry Wilson—that commitments should be cut down to a minimum, and that all the border states should be armed, equipped, and trained by the Allies and combined on a common front against Red Russia.

The proposals of the War Office were, however, turned down in favour of calling a conference at the island of Prinkipo in the Sea of Marmora, at which the Bolshevik Government and all the anti-Bolshevik groups would be represented. This plan fell through because none of the Russian parties showed any enthusiasm for it, and because the Soviet Government refused to suspend hostilities while negotiations were in progress. Then followed some months of dilly-dallying. At last, in June, 1919, the Big Five decided to back Koltchak, who controlled all the anti-Bolshevik armies,

[1] Quoted by Winston Churchill in *The Great War*, p. 1394.

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Photo: Imperial War Museum.

LANDING AT VLADIVOSTOK

British sailors from H.M.S. *Suffolk* are seen landing at the Y.M.C.A. Dock in Vladivostok harbour, eastern Siberia. It is often imagined that because this enormous country (its area is greater than that of all Europe put together) is bleak and desolate, it is of no value to those who own it. In point of fact it is one of the richest areas of the earth in a wide variety of minerals, and also possesses huge deposits of coal and vast tracts of first-class timber.

provided that he would fulfil certain conditions.

In the preamble to their note, they made it clear that their intention was to "help the Russian people to liberty, self government, and peace." They felt that, as their attempts to fulfil this aim through the Soviet Government had failed, they must look elsewhere. They therefore turned to Koltchak, their conditions being that he must, on reaching Moscow, summon a constituent assembly elected by a free, secret, and democratic franchise; abolish class-privilege and renounce any attempt to restore the former land system; allow civil and religious liberty; agree to the independence of Poland and Finland; come to an agreement, through the League of Nations, with the border-states; and, finally, acknowledge the National Debt.

The Allies Pledge Support

Koltchak at once accepted the conditions; and the Big Five then informed him definitely that the Allies would afford him their support. There are two points to note concerning this decision: the one, that it would have been of much greater value in January than in June; the other, that in spite of the protestations of the Allied governments that there was "only one justification for interfering in Russia—that Russia wants it,"[1] it is clear that they were attempting to impose upon her a form of government which no important party in that country, either White or Red, desired.

Constituent assemblies, however well suited to nations of other mentality, are alien to the nature of the Russian, and were inapplicable to the problem to be faced. Russia was ripe either for one form of dictatorship—Lenin's—or for another—Koltchak's. To attempt to organise rule by collecting representatives into a Chamber was merely to give rein to chaos, owing to the Muscovite's love of discussion, and to his innate incapacity to pass effectively from it to action. The fate of Kerensky had made this point clear for all who wished to see.

If the Allied Governments were out to defeat Bolshevism, as was perfectly natural in view of the ferocity of its manifestations, they should have afforded Koltchak a free hand for its destruction. If, on the other hand, they agreed with Lloyd George in his dictum that "it is an outrage on every British principle of freedom that we should use foreign armies to force upon Russia a government that is repugnant to its people,"[1] then they should have allowed the Russians to fight the matter out among themselves. Since, however, they were—as is the way of democratic governments—looking all the time over their shoulders at the voter, they plunged into a middle course which possessed the drawbacks, without the advantages, of both extremes.

In the meantime, while the Allies had been reaching their decision, several important events had occurred. First

[1] Mr. Lloyd George. Quoted by Winston Churchill, *op. cit.*, p. 1402.

[1] *Ibid.*

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of all, the gallant Czechoslovak Army, instead of fulfilling the bright promise of its early days, had fallen from grace. There was much to be said for its delinquencies. After the Armistice, and the formation of the new State of Czechoslovakia, its members were of course keenly anxious to return home.

Neither Reds nor Whites Pleased Them

Apart, however, from that natural feeling, they were unhappy in their environment. Not only did they loathe the Bolsheviks, but they failed to "click" with the White Russian leaders, who were autocratic in their outlook, arrogant in their behaviour, and inefficient in their administration. So they lost interest in the cause.

Always inclined to Socialism, they now copied the methods of the Bolsheviks, and elected soviet councils of soldiers. Consequently, they lost their discipline, became militarily useless and even dangerous, and had to be withdrawn from the front. It was agreed to employ them in future in small detachments for guarding the railways, and, as soon as arrangements could be made for their transport, to ship them to Europe.

By this time, Koltchak's army had reached a strength of 100,000, and was therefore able to take over the line from the Czechs. It did more. During January it advanced 150 miles; and in March it resumed the offensive, with a view to gaining the line of the Volga on the left and of joining hands with Ironside towards Kotlas on the right. Actually, though it failed in both these tasks, it had, by the end of April, moved forward another 180 miles. Scattered, however, as it was over a front of 700 miles, it was militarily in an impossible position.

The Allies, unfortunately, decided to afford Koltchak support at the moment when he had just passed his high-water mark. The tide in Siberia began to turn at once and then ebbed with such rapidity that there was no time to make the support effective. The army literally melted away. One counter-attack did indeed recover 100 miles of territory (these figures must sound astronomical to old soldiers who counted progress by inches on the Somme), but the effort was a mere flash in the pan, and the retreat, when it continued, became a rout. In August, Versailles decided to give Koltchak no further help.

On November 17th, 1919, a year after he had been appointed dictator there, Koltchak abandoned Omsk. Towards the end of December, he was only 300 miles west of Lake Baikal. With him was the Imperial treasure—gold bricks valued at £65,000,000 and valuables and securities worth perhaps £25,000,000. The fighting-line having by that time

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

MEMBERS OF THE MISSION

A photograph of Major-General A. W. F. Knox, C.B., and staff-officers of the British Military Mission to Siberia, in front of headquarters at Vladivostok. General Knox, who occupies the centre of the photograph, was not only head of the Mission, but commander of such British forces as were sent to this remote theatre of operations. Vladivostok, opposite to Japan and close to the Chinese (now Manchukuo) and Korean frontiers, is the most important port of Siberia.

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practically ceased to exist, he was being escorted by a battalion of Czechs.

Koltchak and the Czechs

A French general, name Janin, had been appointed to take charge of the Czechs and to evacuate them. Hearing that a Bolshevik force was approaching from the north, he ordered the battalion to retire to Irkutsk, and to leave Koltchak and his treasure to their fate. The Russian leader, however, had been promised protection by Czech headquarters. He therefore handed himself over to the Czech battalion, and, with it, reached Irkutsk.

Janin might yet have saved Koltchak if he could have persuaded the Admiral to come away without the gold, and without wasting ten precious days in discussing its fate with the Czechs and the Russians. During this period the enemy had been advancing and now seriously threatened the safety of the Czechs. Under a promise of unmolested retreat for the latter, Janin handed over Koltchak and his treasure to the Bolsheviks, who promptly shot him.

The whole story, including the fate of the gold, is still wrapped to a certain extent in obscurity, for the events related took place in an atmosphere clouded with panic and intrigue. It is clear, however, that the betrayal and death of the Russian commander reflect credit upon none of the parties concerned.

Having briefly sketched the fate of the White Russian forces in Siberia, we may turn back and examine the part played in their tragic story by British units. Of these there were three—the British Mission, under General Knox, the 1/9th Hants, under Lieut.-Colonel Johnson, and the 25th Middlesex, under Lieut.-Colonel Ward, M.P.

The Middlesex battalion was the first unit to arrive, not only of the British contingent, but of the whole Allied force. It reached Vladivostok from Hong Kong on August 3rd, 1918, and was received with great ceremony by all the local officials, a Czech battalion, with band, and a guard of honour from H.M.S. *Suffolk*.

As usual, there was much speech-making, both at the port and, later, at the larger towns along the railway leading to the interior. Here, however, the Russians met their match, for John Ward, the "Navvies' M.P.," was equal to the best of them in that line. Where he differed from the bulk of them was that he could act with decision as well as speak with fluency.

Bolos Grow Efficient

The situation in the Maritime Provinces was by no means satisfactory. Along the Ussuri River, to the north, the Bolshevik bands had been reinforced by German and Austrian prisoners-of-war, and, under their control, were working with purpose and efficiency. The great junction of Nikolsk, only 60 miles from Vladivostok, was threatened, and, with it, communication with Siberia. The local war council suggested to Ward that he should take his battalion to reinforce the depressed and ill-equipped Czech and Cossack soldiery holding the line, against greatly superior forces, beyond the junction.

Hereupon a curious situation arose. The battalion consisted of "B-oners." There was not a man in it supposed to be fit for general service. It had been intended for garrison work, and equipped only for that purpose. Ward therefore cabled for permission to employ his men on active service. The reply authorised the immediate despatch of half a battalion to the front. It reads like a fairy-tale that the War Office, in the midst of the greatest of all wars, should have been handling half-battalions at a distance of 15,000 miles.

However, up went the half-battalion, and with it the commanding officer. Ward then found himself in charge of a mixed force of 1,000 men. Seeing that an enemy post had been pushed dangerously far forward, he decided to effect its capture. Unfortunately, the British political representative at Vladivostok got wind of his intention, and wired ordering him to remain entirely on the defensive.

Again a seeming fairy-tale, that a political official should interfere with a tactical move! Ward's proposed action, though it entailed an attack, was defensive in purpose; but he had to obey, with the result that, in the course of the succeeding operations in that area, he lost several opportunities which he longed to take of defeating hostile detachments and laid himself open to the charge of blameworthy inactivity.

The Only Unsuspected Nation

The presence of his men, however, with their cheerful songs, and the fluttering in the breeze of a tattered Union Jack, had an inspiriting effect on the other troops. "I felt flattered," says Colonel Ward, "by the almost childlike confidence which Pole, Czech, and Russian had in the name and honour of England. We were undoubtedly the only nation represented on this front, and in Siberia generally, against whom not one word of suspicion was directed . . . it would be impossible to say which was most suspected in the Russian mind, France, America, or Japan."[1] One reason for this trust, no doubt, was that we were the only nation which was giving its help unconditionally.

As the force, now strengthened by a French detachment, was being heavily outgunned, an S.O.S. was sent to the Navy. In amazingly quick time H.M.S. *Suffolk* fitted out and despatched to the front two armoured trains, which, with their crews of naval ratings under Captain Bath, rendered most effective service both on the Ussuri and, later, in the heart of Siberia.

The Japanese, who had been entrusted by the Allies with the control of the operations, now came into line. Deploying on a front of 12 miles, and advancing on both sides of the railway, they defeated the enemy so severely that, for some months to come, he ceased to be a serious danger east of Lake Baikal.

The intention had been to keep the "Diehards" out of the battle, so that the victory should redound wholly to the credit of the Japanese. Ward managed, nevertheless, to take quite a large part in it. Advancing along the line itself, which the Japanese had avoided as being the most dangerous approach, he and his men kept well in the lead throughout the fight, for they were on firm ground while their allies were struggling in the bogs on either side.

The Japanese looked upon the Maritime Province as their special preserve, and regarded British and American efforts there with grave suspicion. To the Allies they were discourteous; to the Russians they were absolutely brutal. Their sympathies were far more with the Germans than with us; and, at that time, they fully expected the Central Powers to prove the victors.

The Unpopular Japanese

Colonel Ward went to Siberia strongly biased in their favour. The bias quickly turned against them. He never saw them make a single effort to reorganise the country; and he believed that they were actually concerned in maintaining disorder, as the surest way of fostering their own designs. They did not mind much whether or not the Germans took Paris, but they greatly disliked seeing American engineers working on what they already considered to be a Japanese railway.

After a short spell of guarding the Ussuri railway, the Diehards received

[1] Ward, *With the Diehards in Siberia*, p. 19.

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Photo: Imperial War Museum.

THE HAMPSHIRES DEPART

Apart from the Military Mission, the British units in Siberia numbered two—the 1/9th Hampshires, under Lieutenant-Colonel Johnson, and the 25th Middlesex, under Lieutenant-Colonel Ward, M.P. The above photograph shows the crowd which gathered at Vladivostok to watch the Hampshires entrain for Omsk in December, 1918. The city is seen in the background.

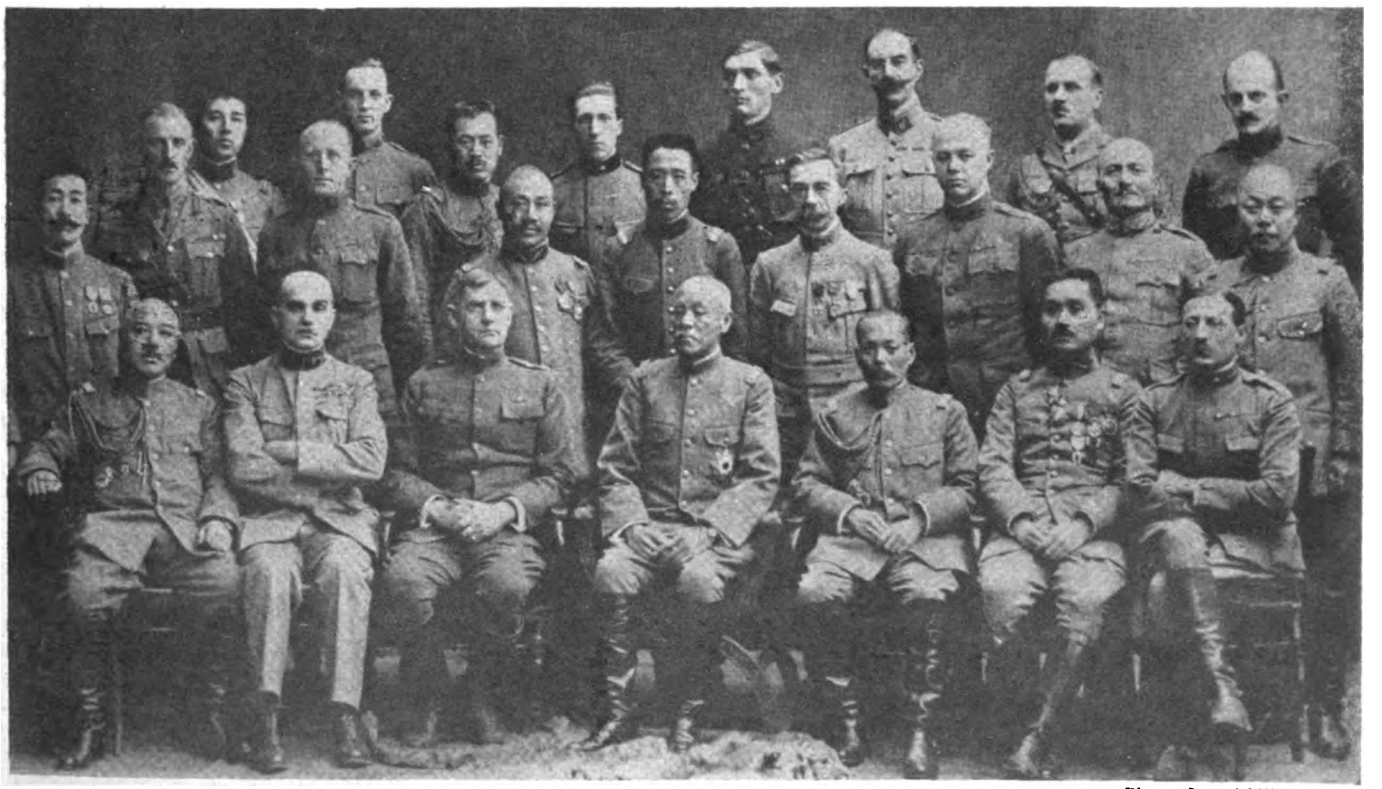

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

COSMOPOLITAN COMPANY

A group of commanding officers and chiefs of staff of the Allied Missions to Siberia, photographed in Vladivostok. The tiny British contingent was numerically almost lost amid the welter of other nations' troops, but its prestige was out of all proportion. In view of the divergent aims of the various high powers, it is scarcely surprising that Vladivostok was the centre of intrigues innumerable.

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orders to proceed to Omsk. This was indeed an adventure: a 3,000-mile journey over a railway which might be cut by raiding bands at any point and at any time. For the first few hundred miles the line ran through a vast sea of corn, derelict owing to the lack of labour and to the complete breakdown of administration and communications. It was a saddening spectacle, in view of the food-shortage in almost every other country.

At Harbin there was a great reception: bouquets, guards of honour, Gargantuan feasts, and, of course, speeches. There Ward expected to be able to procure proper travelling accommodation for his officers, who had been until then provided only with cattle-trucks. He was told that he would find good carriages at Manchulli.

Arrived at that town, he found a Japanese division in possession. It soon became clear that the Japanese intended his officers to continue the journey in cattle-trucks, the object of our Allies being to lower our prestige; for none but a second-rate Power, they held, would allow its officers to travel in such a way. They pretended that their general—Fugi—required the only two carriages available. Ward, however, took possession of them as a matter of prestige, and declined to give them up. He got away with them, but nearly at the cost of an ugly international incident.

A Tiny Group in a Vast Desert

At Chita, the battalion was glad to see the last of the Japanese. A tiny body of 800 men, it was plunging, alone of the Allies, into the heart of Siberia for another 2,000 miles. At Lake Baikal there was a gorgeous sunrise; at Irkutsk another banquet and more speeches. Then at Zema, the train was stopped by Bolsheviks. Out tumbled the men, and chased away the raiders. But the town itself was deeply dyed with red. Ward, therefore, to secure the safety of the line, ordered the surrender by the inhabitants of all arms within 12 hours.

When the time-limit expired, very few had been received. A house-to-house search was then carried out, under cover of machine guns placed so as to sweep the main streets, and a large quantity was collected. Some were used to re-arm the local militia, and the remainder were taken on to Omsk. One of the results of the misrule of Kerensky had been that every one of some 15,000,000 Russian soldiers had taken a rifle and ammunition home with him.

On October 18th, 1918, the battalion, less one company which had been dropped a little way back at Krasnoyarsk, arrived at Omsk, where, of course, it met with a warm reception; for the sight of British troops, even of so small

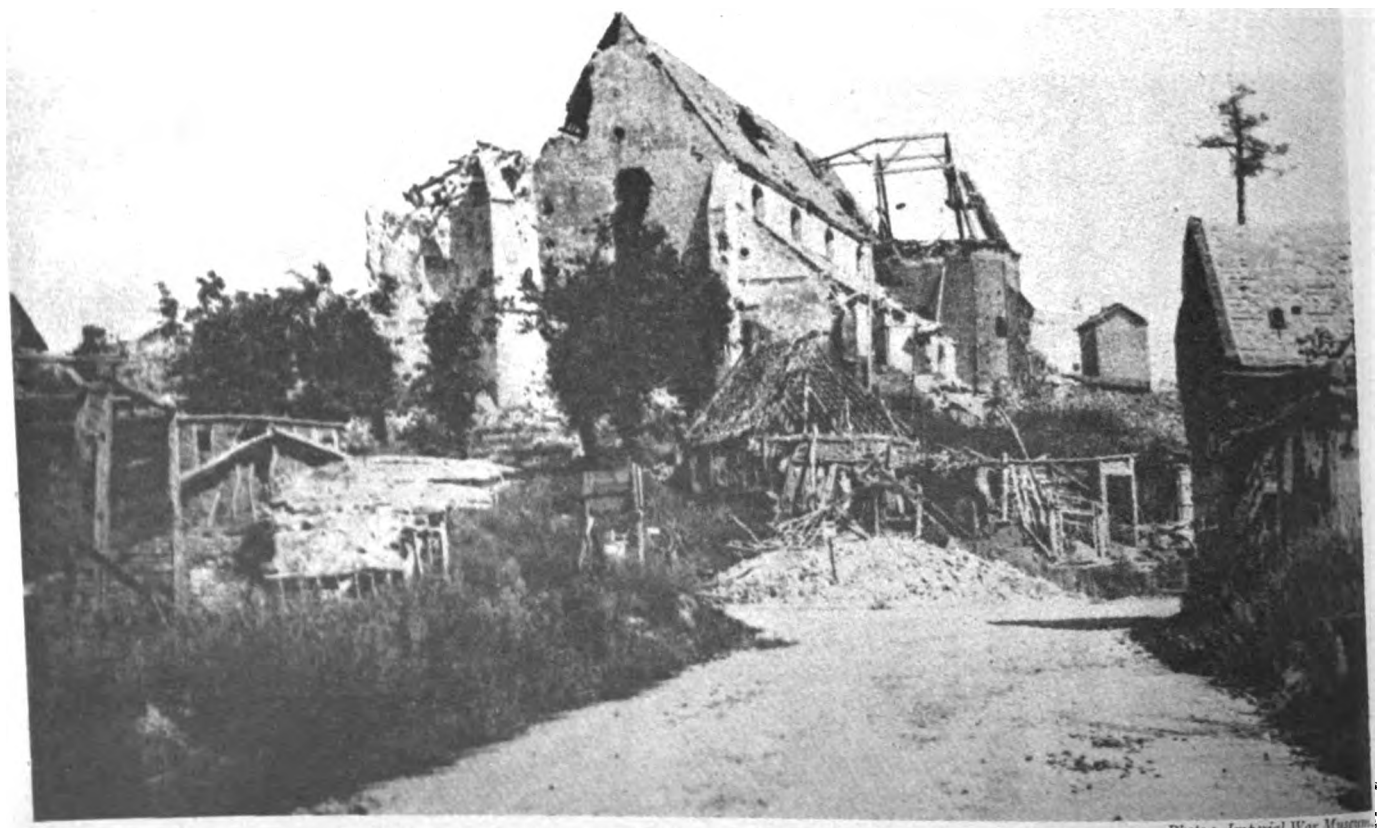

Photo: Imperial War Museum

A DEFIANT BUILDING

What the village street of Moislains—on the Tortille, 6 km. above Péronne—looked like Then, and what it looks like Now, the reader will discover by turning back to pages 1274 and 1275 of Volume Two. The appearance of the village church in war and peace he may ascertain here and opposite. Notwithstanding the hammering which Moislains received, the large building seems to have managed—at any rate up to the summer of 1917—to tower impressively aloft after nearly all the smaller fry had been annihilated.

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a body, gave to the town a sense of stability and security which had long been absent. Sir Charles Eliot, the British High Commissioner, had just arrived, and was trying hard to persuade the All-Russian (Socialist) and the Siberian (Reactionary) Governments to coalesce. He succeeded eventually in patching up peace between them, but clearly only for the moment.

Early in November, Ward took 100 men and the band to attend a ceremony at Ekaterinburg celebrating the inauguration of Czech national life, and the presentation of colours to four Czech battalions. Koltchak, then Minister of War, accompanied him; and after the ceremony the party proceeded to inspect the battle-front. Early next day, they were on the European side of the Ural Mountains, in huge forests deep in snow. After lunching at Corps Headquarters, it was thought desirable to give both friend and foe a taste of British music.

When the Band Played

The band was therefore marched to the outpost line, and a well-protected stand found for it in a railway cutting. There it played while the senior officers examined the various positions. The Bolo stood the ordeal well until it came to the turn of *Tipperary*, and then he opened fire with the whole of his guns, so that during the rest of the programme the shells shrieked overhead into the forest. Luckily, they were quite harmless. The band afterwards departed, having quite enjoyed the novel experience.

Other fronts were then visited. Everywhere there was a great shortage of equipment. Boots had been long worn out, and the soldiers' feet were now simply bound up in sacking. Many of the men were without rifles, and could hope to make good that deficiency only when casualties occurred. During the tour news of the Armistice arrived, and was duly celebrated with a bottle of "bubbly."

On the 16th November, urgent messages recalled the party to Omsk; and, on the following day, the *coup d'état* took place. Koltchak, as already mentioned, then assumed the responsibilities of Supreme Ruler of all Russia. Had he not done so Siberia would probably have been swept by a wave of anarchy. Ward's part was limited to insisting that the deposed leaders should not be "bumped off" and in providing them with escorts to the Chinese frontier.

It was just after the *coup d'état* that the Czechs threw their hands in and retired from the front. Koltchak, very anxious lest their lack of discipline should destroy the integrity of his new army, ordered the arrest of the revolutionary leaders.

Photo: G. T. Watson.

VERY IMPOSING

The reason why Moislains church dominates the village is here made plain: the building stands on a rise beside the roadway. A close comparison of the photographs shows that, although the design of the new edifice bears many traces of modernity, the general plan closely follows that of the former structure. Observe the rows of saplings planted on either side of the terraced steps; these trees ought one day greatly to enhance the general appearance. From the 1917 view it would seem that they, too, are a replica of the pre-war layout.

General Gaida, who had commanded the Czechs throughout the operations which had rendered their name famous, carried out the order, and handed over the prisoners to a Russian general. The latter, under the influence of other revolutionaries, at once released them. It was a world of topsy-turvydom. Gaida was forced by his troops to resign, whereupon Koltchak appointed him to the command of one of the Russian armies, only to have to deprive him a few weeks later of his Russian rank and medals for gross intrigue against the High Command.

Two months later, in Vladivostok, the Czech leader attempted a *coup d'état* of his own, was defeated, and escaped with difficulty, to pursue further intrigues in his own country. Such were the characters cast up by the Revolution.

Extremists Unite

Koltchak's declared intention of convening a National Assembly on the

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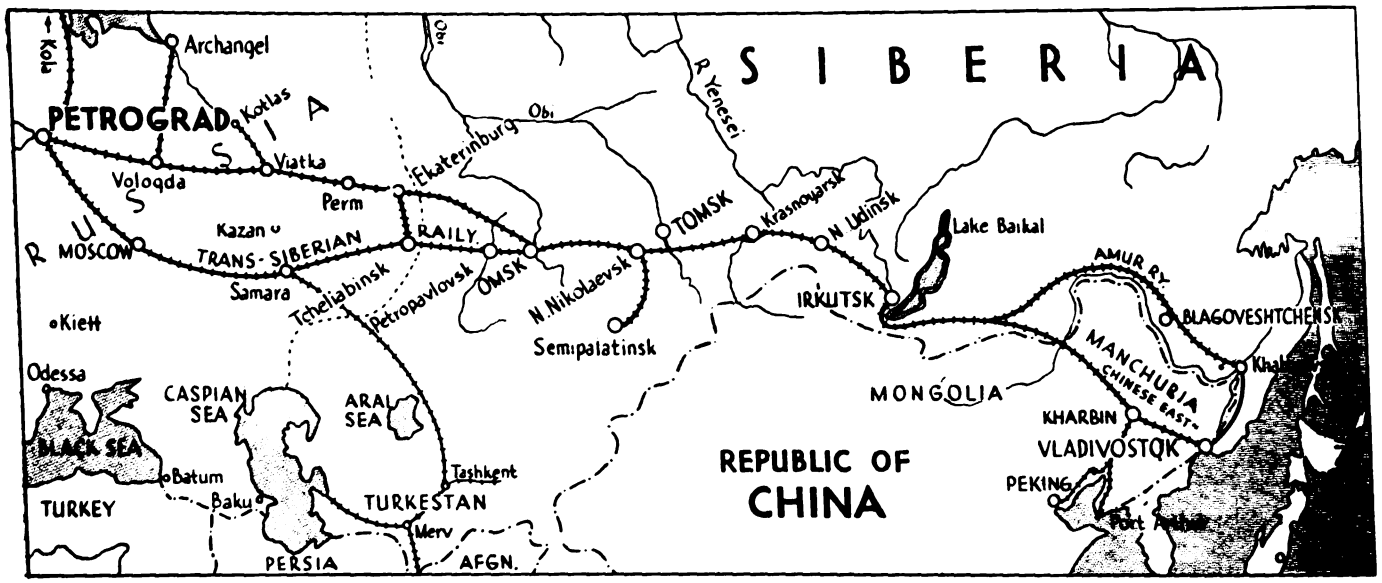

Specially drawn.

SIBERIA IN 1918-19

This map shows only the south-western area of the enormous country, together with the adjacent parts of Russia (whose nominal boundary is shown by a line of small dots) and China. Some idea of the immensity of the terrain is to be gathered from the fact that it took the 1/9th Hants 23 days to get by rail from Vladivostok to Omsk!

advent of settled conditions alienated the extremists, both White and Red, among his supporters. Together these ill-assorted companions conspired his overthrow. The plot came to a head in Omsk on December 23rd, 1918. Hearing a burst of firing, Ward, accompanied by a strong guard, went to Russian Headquarters to ascertain the arrangements for suppressing disorder.

His men strode in, lined either side of the vestibule, and fixed bayonets. Doubters saw them, and remained on the fence. The prevailing hubbub died down. The word "Anglisky" became "the password which held the town for law and order."[1] Ward then took his party to the Governor's residence and interviewed Koltchak, who was ill in bed, afterwards returning to barracks.

It was contrary to his instructions to interfere in political matters; but he guessed that his march would have a steadying influence, and that, were he to remain inactive, the mutineers might receive strong accessions to their forces, and then perhaps overwhelm his isolated battalion.

During December, the Japanese were giving Koltchak considerable trouble. Prior to the *coup d'état*, they had all but persuaded the Siberian Government to allow them to take over the Ural front. But the Admiral, on becoming dictator, had made it clear that he could not consent to their doing so. They therefore began to intrigue among the Royalist officers, promising to beat the Bolsheviks in two months, and then to establish a monarchy. Once again the extremists began to plot.

This made General Knox, whose Intelligence Service was in close touch with affairs, anxious about the safety of Koltchak, who was just about to tour the front again. Accordingly, he offered him an escort of 50 men of the 1/9th Hants, which had arrived at Omsk a few weeks before. The French then got wind of this, and insisted, as a matter of prestige, on supplying half the escort. They were unable, however, to find more than nine men for the duty; and so, whether sufficient for his security or not, the Supreme Ruler had to be content with a guard of one officer and nine men from each of the two nations.

Trouble with the Railwaymen

On every front in Russia, each week contained its excitement, military or political. Sometimes six days would pass monotonously, only to constitute the prelude to a violent explosion on the seventh. The next stir on the Siberian front was caused by a threatened strike of the railway operatives, the rumours of which were heard at a critical period of the offensive towards Perm. Military measures to repress the strike were taken; but, in British eyes, that did not suffice. The root-causes of the trouble had to be probed, and, where complaints were justified, they were to be remedied.

With this object in view, General Knox invited Colonel Ward to undertake a tour of the chief railway-centres, and, if possible, to persuade the intending strikers to continue work. A fluent speaker, a representative of Labour in the British Parliament, and known, even in Russia, to sympathise deeply with the underdog in his sufferings, Ward was an ideal choice.

He at once agreed, provided that the fulfilment of two conditions could be guaranteed: one, the settlement of arrears of wages and their regular payment in future; two, the introduction of laws for the protection of workmen.

Koltchak accepted; and Ward started on his tour. His speeches were well received, and achieved their aim. His description of his journeys throws further light on the chaotic conditions prevailing in Russia.

At Krasnoyarsk, for example, an Italian battalion formed from ex-prisoners of war was terrifying the inhabitants by continual assaults and robberies. The Russian authorities were attempting to deal with Lettish bandits, but disarmed them only to find that they were being rearmed by the French. The French were also arming German and Austrian ex-prisoners of war to fight against the Bolsheviks, only to find the former organising and leading the latter in a German-Bolshevik Legion. In the midst of all this confusion, the solitary company of Diehards which formed part of the garrison had no light task in keeping its end up.

Near Perm, which the White Russians had captured in their recent big offensive, Ward picked up Sergeant Coleman, of

[1] Ward, *op. cit.*, p. 154.

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the Durham L.I., who with a small party of Russians had made his way from Archangel to try to effect connection with Koltchak's right.

Orders for Home

Early in May, 1919, came orders to leave for home. A great parade was held at Omsk in honour of the departing battalion. Its commander was admitted to the fraternity of Cossacks, was presented with an Ataman's badge and a Cossack sword, and was then tossed upon swords (fortunately not upon their points) to the singing of a tribal song. In September the battalion embarked for England, after more than a year of service packed with amazing experiences. It had nobly upheld the honour of the British Army in circumstances of quite exceptional difficulty.

The 1/9th Hants was the only other British unit in Siberia. It was probably the most-travelled battalion in the British Army. Originally a Territorial cyclist battalion, it had pedalled with vigour along our eastern and southern coasts in the early months of the War in order to protect them against a German invasion. In November, 1915, it was converted into infantry, and, in February, 1916, it was despatched to India, where, like many another Territorial unit, it performed garrison duties and saw no active service.

Then it was ordered to Siberia, and, in October, 1918, arrived at Vladivostok, where it stayed until December, during which time it was fitted out with very necessary winter clothing. That process completed, it started for Omsk, company by company, taking 23 days on the journey, and spending Christmas and New Year's Day on the very cold and comfortless trains.

It reached Omsk on January 5th. Its arrival, according to Colonel Ward, "led to an improved condition of affairs all round us. This officer (the commander—Lieut.-Colonel Johnson) gripped the situation (apparently some international affair too delicate to disclose) at once," [1] and set it right.

The battalion remained five months in Omsk, employed on guard and escort duties. Then it proceeded to Ekaterinburg, where, with the assistance of officers and N.C.O.'s of the British Military Mission, it began to form and train an Anglo-Russian Brigade. Strengthened by a British battalion, and officered by us, it was hoped that the brigade would eventually act as a stiffening for other troops.

1 Ward, *op. cit.*, p. 156.

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

FAR FROM FAMILIAR SCENES

A detachment of the Hampshires, well protected against the climate, parading under its commanding officer, Major H. Carter. The detachment's task was to instruct Russian officers in British methods of physical training, with a view to the knowledge being ultimately imparted to the Russian rank-and-file. The photograph was taken at a point in Siberia named Russian Island—the scenery of which, despite the heading of this caption, does not here look widely different from that of Hampshire after a snowstorm.

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Photo: Imperial War Museum.

JAPANESE GUNNERS

A photograph which has unpleasant topical suggestions. It shows Japanese heavy artillery of the 12th Division drawn up ready to be loaded on to flat trucks at the railway station of Khabarovsk, November 16th, 1918. This town, to-day the capital of the Far Eastern area of the U.S.S.R., is a fur-trading centre near the junction of the rivers Amur and Usuri. It will be found on the map (page 568) about equidistant from Vladivostok and Blagoveshtchensk, on the northern branch of the Trans-Siberian Railway.

The Anglo-Russian Brigade

The experiment gave every promise of success. The Russian soldiers, accustomed to the ways of Russian officers, found themselves in a strange, new, and happy world where they were well fed, well clothed, and regularly paid, and—what was even more surprising—where a personal interest was taken in the welfare of the individual private. They appreciated this treatment greatly, and responded to it by displaying a keenness in their training very different from their ordinary attitude.

By the middle of July, the Bolshevik offensive was in full swing. Ufa and Perm had been retaken, and the enemy was approaching Ekaterinburg. The British Government, having pushed forward troops into the heart of the war-area, had decided to withdraw them without fighting.

It came to this conclusion for two good reasons: the first, that news had just been received from North Russia of the mutiny in the Slavo-British Legion, organised on similar lines and showing equal promise, and there was no wish to expose other British officers to murder; the second, that whereas at Archangel the British units were part of an army of which the commander, the staff, and the nucleus of the combatants were British, the Hampshires were a solitary British unit, nobody's child in particular, and likely to be overwhelmed by the approaching avalanche without much knowledge of the why and wherefore of things, and without much hope of performing any useful function.

The Government may have been correct in withdrawing the battalion; but, if so, it was wrong ever to have sent it so far forward. In the event, the gallant Hampshires, and with them the Mission, after training the Russians and expecting to support them in battle, had, almost in face of the enemy, to beat a hasty and undignified retreat most lowering to our prestige and most galling to officers and men, who felt that a cowardly part had been forced upon them, and that they had let down the Russians badly.

Allied Hypocrisy

Our whole attitude in these matters is aptly described by Winston Churchill: "The fitful and fluid operations of the Russian armies found a counterpart in the policy or want of policy of the Allies. Were they at war with Soviet Russia? Certainly not; but they shot Soviet Russians at sight. They stood as invaders on Russian soil. They armed the enemies of the Soviet Government. They blockaded its ports and sunk its battleships. They earnestly desired and schemed its downfall. But war—shocking! Interference—shame! It was, they repeated, a matter of indifference to them how Russians settled their internal affairs. They were impartial—Bang! And then, at the same time—parley and try to trade."[1]

In August, the Hampshires fell back

[1] Churchill, *op. cit.*, p. 1447.

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Photo: Imperial War Museum.

CROSSING THE ICE

A chilly scene in Siberia's wan and whitened wastes, with the Tommy of tradition scarcely recognisable in his furry trappings. The rigours of the Siberian winter would have taxed the optimism of any troops accustomed to a temperate clime; but how they seemed to the Hampshires, who had come straight to Vladivostok from India, is something best left to the imagination!

with Koltchak to Omsk. Shortly afterwards they entrained for Vladivostok, whence, on November 1st, they sailed for Vancouver and home, thus to complete the round of the world.

The British Mission, which arrived in Vladivostok in September, 1918, was unfortunate in its experience. It roused the criticism of Colonel Ward, who says that the training of the Anglo-Russian Brigade, formed eight months after the arrival of the Mission, offered the first chance of employment to the numerous officers and N.C.O.'s concerned.

"It was truly a stroke of genius," he continues, "for our War Office to flood us with officers and men as instructors for the new Russian army, scarcely one of whom could speak a word of Russian!

"I feel sure the Russians and ourselves will get on well together, we are so much alike. Omsk and Whitehall are true to type; they each first exhaust the possibilities of error, and when no wrong course is left, the right road becomes quite easy."[1]

[1] Ward, *op. cit.*, p. 222.

This was a little hard on the War Office; for on the whole it played its part in the campaign well; and it must have been highly tried by the vagaries of Allied policy. Actually, however, except for some gunners, who trained the Russian artillery in the use of the equipment (mostly ancient) with which we had provided them, the Mission had been idling. "In fact we were," says one of them, "nearly all useless, and most were heartily glad to go when the time came."[1]

Tribute to General Knox

The Mission was unfortunate in losing a brilliant officer in Colonel Steel, who died of pneumonia in Omsk. He had been responsible for the training of the Russian gunners, and was much respected by them. Of General Knox, the head of the Mission, Colonel Ward says: "How fortunate it was that at this critical hour in Russian history England was represented by Major-General Knox! . . . a man combining the courage of the soldier with the higher qualities of a statesman. . . .

"More than once, when the timidity of the 'Politicals' had almost destroyed Russian faith in our honesty of purpose, the robust honesty of his personality turned the scale in our favour. . . . Every Russian trusts him."[1]

[1] Hodges, *Britmis*, p. 55.

General Knox had a sound scheme for helping the Russian Army, with the aid of the British Mission, to stand by itself. Unfortunately the French heard of the idea and, being jealous of Knox's prestige and popularity, and fearing the scheme would place too much power in British hands, they managed to put a stopper on it. Knox was ordered to do nothing further in the matter until the French general—Janin—who had been appointed by the Allied Council to the command of all the forces in Siberia, should arrive. Thus precious months were wasted; and, when Janin did eventually arrive, the Omsk Government, naturally enough, flatly declined to allow him to take command.

[1] Ward, *op. cit.*, p. 227.

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The endless mortifications and disappointments to which he was subjected by the various nations championing his cause might well have made Koltchak simulate Mazarin's famous outburst and cry with equal force: "From our Allies may God defend us! From our enemies we can defend ourselves."

The two armoured trains of H.M.S. *Suffolk*, now under Captain Wolfe Murray, were the only British units to take part in the later fighting, when they put in some very useful work in covering the retreat. But some mention must also be made of the invaluable and gallant services of the British Railway Mission, which saved thousands of lives by keeping the lines open under conditions of the greatest difficulty and danger.

South Russia

We have dealt with the campaigns of Murmansk, Archangel, and Siberia; and, following the circle with the clock, we accordingly now come to the operations in South Russia. These activities began earlier, were of greater magnitude, and were more sustained than those on other fronts, and therefore might justly have claimed pride of place in description. They have taken a lower place because, though Great Britain gave considerable material support to Denikin, and assisted him with a very large British Mission, she did not send him a single British unit; and it is British units and British soldiers with which this history is mainly concerned.

Kornilov, who was Commander-in-Chief in the early days of the Revolution, rose against the first revolutionary government because he feared that Kerensky's methods would bring the Bolsheviks to power and would ruin his country. He was defeated, and, with Denikin and other generals, was thrown into prison.

The counter-revolutionaries managed to escape; and, thinking that the Don Cossacks, with their traditional social order and their relatively high prosperity, would be unlikely to suffer disintegration through Bolshevism, they made their way to the Don country in disguise.

Alexeiev, who had been Commander-in-Chief under the old régime, and was now forming a Southern White Russian Government, was already at the capital —Novocherkassk—collecting all the loyalists on whom he could lay hands in order to form a Volunteer Army of White Russians. To counteract the propaganda of his opponents—"power to the proletariat, land to the peasants, factories to the workers, immediate peace"—he had but little to offer; and he was very short of funds.

Moreover, the Don country did not prove so satisfactory a base as he had hoped; for there were fierce feuds

Photo: A. P., Paris.

SPRINGTIME, 1916

This photograph, of French origin, was taken on May 7th, 1916, at Vrély, 2 km. due south of Rosières-en-Santerre, at the bifurcation of the roads to Montdidier and Roye. The village was already some distance behind the Allied line, in the sector of the French 58th Division; and the Germans set foot in it for the first time on March 28th, 1918, driving out troops of our 24th Division (XIX Corps) about 11 a.m. The above picture shows the remains of a mill.

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between the Cossack landholders and their tenants, and the Cossack troops had returned home impregnated with Bolshevism. Out of a population of two millions, he could persuade only 147 men to enrol; and the disappointment consequent on this lack of enthusiasm caused his friend—the Ataman Kaledin—to shoot himself. On December 2nd, 1917, however, the day on which hostilities on the Russo-German front were suspended, Kornilov, who had been appointed commander-in-chief in Alexeiev's new government, raised the standard of the counter-revolution on the Don.

The opening was inauspicious. Kornilov was defeated in his first engagements, Rostov and Novocherkassk were lost, and the Volunteer Army forced back in full retreat—"a dark ribbon winding over the interminable snow-fields." The spectacle was not one to attract recruits. Moreover, annihilation was the enemy's proclaimed intention, the torture, before murder, of prisoners and wounded, his deliberate policy. Faith was indeed needed in the early days of the struggle to keep a man in those beaten, threatened, and ill-fed ranks.

Kornilov and the Kuban Cossacks

Kornilov retired into the territory of the Kuban Cossacks north of the Caucasus. There he received a warmer welcome than had greeted him on the Don. The Kuban Army joined him, and his numbers jumped from 4,000 to 6,000. But his was a nomad host without a home, carrying all its supplies and all its possessions, starving or feeding according to the alternations of defeat and victory. On April 9th, 1918, he attacked Ekaterinodar, the Kuban capital. But after four days of bitter fighting, he himself—always in the forefront of the battle—was killed, and his army forced to retire.

Three weeks later, the Cossacks of the Don rose against the Bolsheviks, whom they had but recently welcomed. Denikin, who had succeeded Kornilov, marched at once to their assistance, and, by May 3rd, had re-conquered the country lying between the Kuban and Don rivers. It was Easter Sunday. Services were celebrated that night in all the villages on the liberated area.

When the Don Cossacks rose, they retook their capital—Novocherkassk—and lost it again. Their cause then seemed in grave danger. At that moment, however, a valiant band of 1,000 men, under Colonel Drozkovsky, dropped from the blue to their aid. This force, two-thirds of which consisted of officers, had been serving on the Roumanian front, and had marched

Photo: G. T. Watson.

SUMMER, 1937

Our photographer could find no trace of the mill at Vrély, nor did his enquiries stimulate any recollection of the site among the local inhabitants. The above illustration therefore shows the main street, with the church on the right and the Mairie on the extreme left. There is a British extension to the Communal Cemetery, containing the graves of 39 soldiers of the 2nd Canadian Division who fell when that formation recaptured the village on August 9th, 1918, and also of 3 Tank Corps men and 1 Lancer killed on the same occasion.

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Photo: G. T. Watson.

A CAMOUFLAGED POST

The four photographs on this and the next page show a remarkable fortified observation-post built by the Germans inside a partly ruined mill. The above illustration shows the way in, and part of the four-foot-thick concrete lining with which the whole interior was strengthened.

750 miles in 61 days to join Denikin—an amazing performance in hostile country.

News of the death of Kornilov, and rumours that the Don country had turned Bolshevik and that the Volunteer Army had been dispersed, failed to stop the force. Moving on Rostov, it seized the town, to lose it again the next day. Then, hearing of the capture of Novocherkassk, it marched there, and, falling upon the rear of the Bolsheviks assailing the Don Cossacks, defeated them.

On the same day the Germans entered Rostov. Having forced the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk on Moscow and signed a separate treaty with the Ukraine, they were now holding the latter, the Crimea, and the Donetz coal-bearing area. Rostov, at the eastern end of the Sea of Azov, was a convenient point on which to rest their right flank. Their main object in occupying territory was to cover the collection of supplies, of which both they and the Austrians were in sore need.

German Intervention

When the Germans saw that the Cossacks were tiring of Bolshevism, they came forward with an offer of their help in the formation of an independent Cossack State. To this the new Ataman, Katsov, agreed, accepting the promise of assistance against the Bolsheviks, and, curiously enough, talking of the common struggle of Cossacks and Germans against the Entente.

The Don Cossack Army now grew rapidly. In May it numbered 17,000, in July 40,000, with 56 guns. But it was of uncertain value—a compound of opposites: "hatred of the Bolsheviks and fraternisation; deeds of valour and greed; reckless gallantry and desertion; discipline and a passion for meetings. This heterogeneous compound resulted in those extraordinary fluctuations—from lightning successes to total collapse—which befell the Don Cossack front."[1]

The Germans also tried to come to terms with Alexeiev, who, although he moved with the Volunteer Army H.Q., concerned himself, in his capacity of head of the Southern White Russian Government, with political rather than purely military matters. He, however, remained true to the watchwords of his cause: "No separate peace with Germany, no compromise with Bolshevism, a united and indivisible Russia." His "constancy to the Allied cause is

1 Denikin, *The White Army*, p. 152.

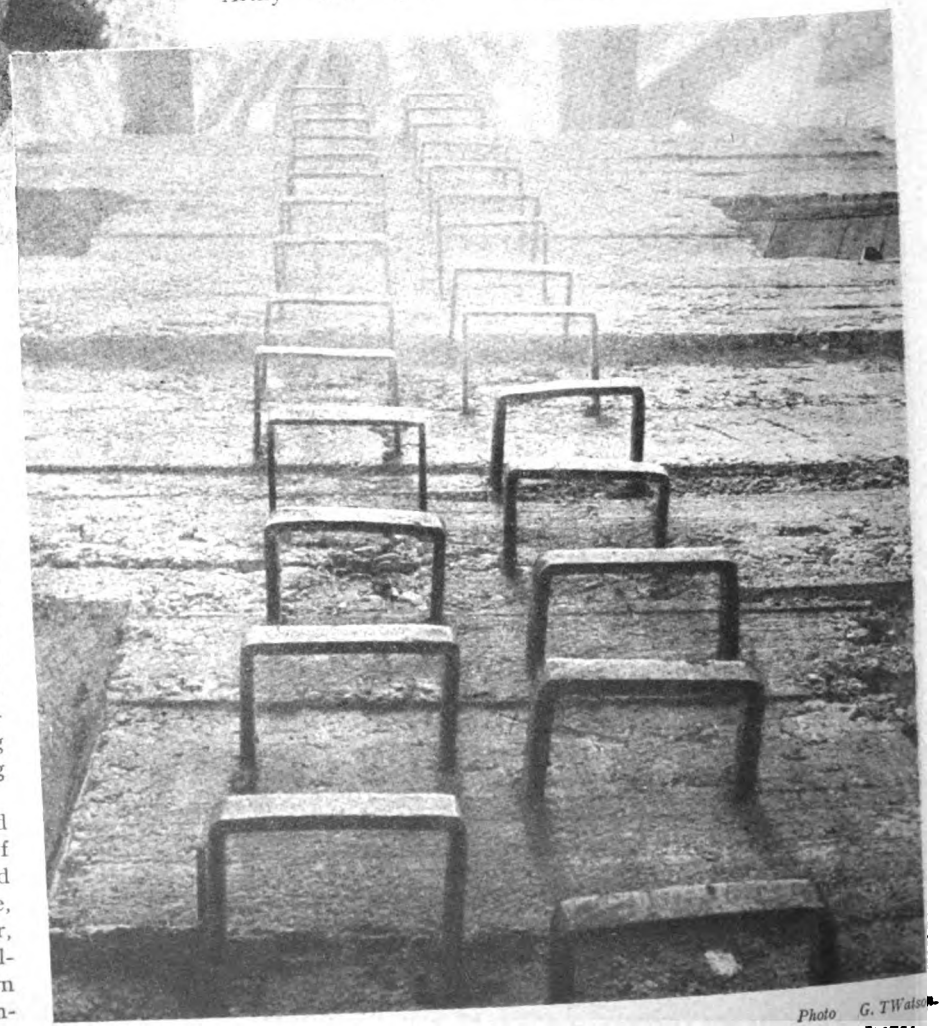

Photo G. T Watson.

THE INTERIOR STAIRCASE

A clever photograph, taken with the camera looking up the interior of the reinforced mill from its dark nether regions to the excellent observation chamber provided by the almost slateless roof. Despite the external dimensions of the mill, the strengthening of it left room for only three or four men to stand comfortably inside.

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the more to be admired in that Germany's prestige was, for the moment, very high in Russia owing to her successful spring offensive in France and her recent defeat of Rumania." [1]

As with the Allies, so with the Germans: there was considerable divergence of opinion as to how the Bolshevik Government should be treated. Hoffman—the German Commander-in-Chief on the Eastern Front—wished to overthrow them. The German Government and Ludendorff preferred to use them as pawns.

The latter policy prevailed, and consequently Hoffman was ordered to crush the Alexeiev rebellion. Actually, however, the forces at his disposal were too weak to undertake serious action, and had to limit their intervention to obstructing the supply of the Volunteer Army as opportunity offered.

[1] Kennedy, "The Anti-Bolshevik Movement in South Russia," *R.U.S.I. Journal*, Nov. 1922.

An Intricate State of Affairs

As so often happened in this campaign, a paradoxical situation had arisen: the Germans, allied with the Bolos, were helping the Cossacks, who were in revolt against the latter, and were hindering the Volunteer Army, which was allied with the Cossacks. Fighting jointly against the Bolos were the Cossacks and the Volunteer Army—the one pro-German and aiming at a Cossack Republic, the other pro-Ally and aiming at a monarchy over an undivided Russia.

Photo: A. P., Paris.

AS IT USED TO LOOK

Here is an external view of the mill—which stands, by the way, near the village of Puzeaux, 3 km. south-east of Chaulnes—taken on September 16th, 1917, after it had come into French hands on the German retirement to the Hindenburg Line. Outwardly the structure seems on the verge of collapse.

Photo: G. T. Watson.

AS IT STILL LOOKS

Although the annihilating tide of battle twice swept over Puzeaux after the date of the upper photograph, the present-day picture, taken from almost the same position (compare the various breaches), reveals scarcely a difference, except in the matter of the flimsy roof. Observe, in the War view, the boughs concealing the doorway.

Alexeiev and Denikin, indeed, proclaimed their intention of working for a compromise—an undivided Russia under a form of government to be selected by the people. Nevertheless, the alliance bore within it all the seeds of friction if not of dissolution.

Denikin now undertook his second Kuban campaign. He had only 9,000 men and 21 guns, and was aiming at freeing a district held by 60,000 of his enemies. The people of the country, however, were friendly to him, and joined him in considerable numbers in the course of the operations. It was at this time that he began to enlist prisoners-of-war in large numbers—a procedure which the enemy soon copied.

He opened the campaign on June 23rd. By capturing and securing two important railway-junctions, he broke up the hostile groups, and was then able to deal with them separately. On August 14th he captured 50 guns, three

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armoured trains, and large quantities of rolling-stock—a most valuable addition to his armament. On the 26th he reached the Black Sea at Novorossisk. This was also an important event, in view of the possibility of future co-operation with the Allies.

Early in September, he captured Ekaterinodar. Unfortunately, the Kuban Government, though disposed to assist him, was determined, much to his disgust, to keep everything Kuban, including its soldiers, under its own control. The same thing was happening with the numerous other States which were springing up all round Russia, and was the cause of great friction and loss of power in the White Russian armies. They—the States—were suffering from the Wilsonian fever of self-determination, and were aiming at autonomy, however small their realms.

On the other hand, insistence on an indivisible Russia was bound to arouse the hostility of non-Russians who had suffered previously under the Russian yoke. Such a problem is not susceptible of solution among peoples who have not acquired the habit of compromise.

Denikin Succeeds Alexeiev

On September 25th, Alexeiev died. He was a skilful commander, a sound statesman, and a true patriot—and his death was a severe blow to the cause of which he had been the founder. Denikin now took over the political as well as the military direction of the movement. This was too heavy a burden for one man to carry, and it was therefore probable that he would fail in one or other part of his task. In the event, he was to concentrate his energies on military affairs—to the grave detriment of administrative re-organisation in the territories he conquered.

By this time, the Volunteer Army had grown to 40,000 men, with 86 guns and 256 machine guns, and had become a formidable fighting force. Denikin was therefore able to undertake operations on a wider scale than any which he had previously attempted. His plan was now to clear the whole country north of the Caucasus, between the Caspian Sea and the Sea of Azov.

In this he was completely successful, but only after heavy fighting. For 28 days he battled round Stavropol, capturing the town on November 20th. Most of the gallant band who had first flown the banner of the Volunteer Army had by now either been killed or had perished from want or hardship. But they had not died in vain, for they had set a shining example, and had won for their arms a prestige that would count for much in future battles.

There was a good deal of speculation as to the effect of the Armistice on the civil war in Russia. The Reds expected that the Allies would take over control of the bulk of their country from the Central Powers. "There is a grave danger," said Trotsky. "All history for us is now condensed in the one question of Allied intervention." [1]

1 Quoted by Denikin, *op. cit.*, p. 215.

Photo: G. T. Watson.

A FRAGMENT OF PUZEAUX VILLAGE

Puzeaux was relinquished for the second time to the enemy by the 24th Division, XIX Corps, during the afternoon of March 25th, 1918, when a line was established immediately to the west of it. The British troops of the Retreat, the Germans who pressed them back, and the Frenchmen who finally pressed back the Germans, must have marvelled in turn at the observation-post in the mill, which to-day is regarded by the villagers as a notable monument. The village itself is small and scattered.

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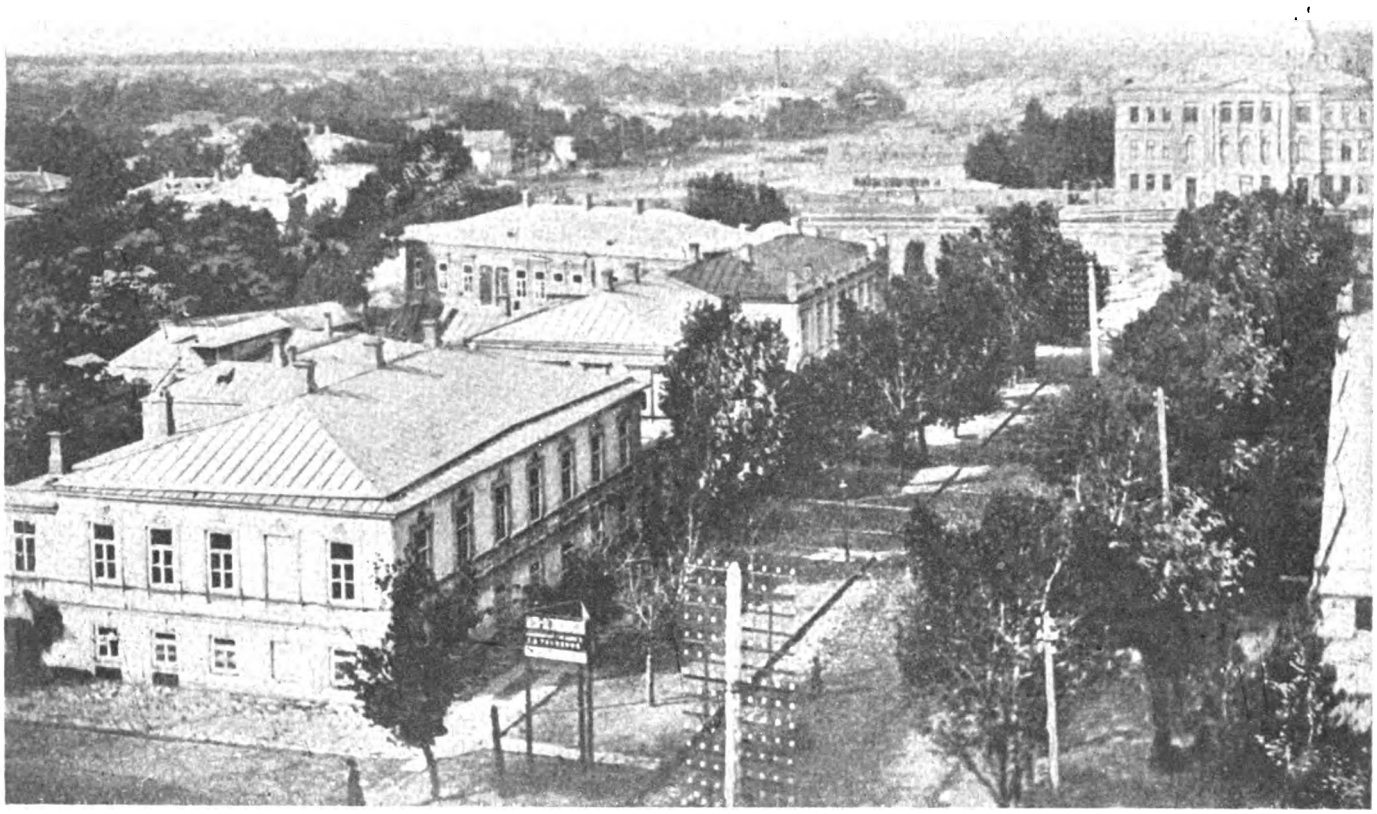

Photo: E.N.A.

NOVOCHERKASSK IN 1914

Novocherkassk—often written in two words—was, until the final formation of the U.S.S.R., capital of the Don Cossacks Territory, and is now that of the North Caucasian Area. It lies a few miles north of the River Don, some 50 miles from its mouth in the Sea of Azov. After figuring fairly conspicuously in the South Russian fighting of 1918 onward, it is now a flourishing Soviet trade centre, noted in particular for its distilleries.

This anxiety was expressed in Tchitcherin's Note to Versailles of February 19th, 1919, in which the Soviet Government offered, on the promise of peace, to recognise all Russia's financial liabilities to creditors belonging to the Entente countries.

That was an attractive bait, especially for France; and it might have been accepted had it not been for the simultaneous appeals made by Moscow to the proletariats of those countries to upset their bourgeois governments. Intervention by Moscow in the domestic affairs of other nations went far to justify intervention by the Allies in the affairs of Russia.

Allies in the Black Sea

The Armistice having thrown open the Dardanelles, an Allied fleet entered the Black Sea, and, on November 22nd, 1918, anchored in the bay of Novorossisk, where it was greeted with enthusiasm. In December, British military representatives arrived in the Kuban.

It was a period of jubilation and of high promise. Stavropol had fallen, the Cossacks were repulsing all assaults in the Don and Donetz basins, and recruits were flocking to White standards. The representatives made a favourable report, whereupon the British Government promised to supply equipment for 250,000 men, and to attach to Denikin a strong advisory Military Mission.

Within two months the stores began to arrive. It was none too soon, for the Russian supplies of shell, rifle-cartridges and bandages were practically exhausted. Re-arming and training, under the control of the hundreds of officers and N.C.O.'s belonging to the British Mission, commenced at once. Transport after transport poured forth its contents, to be sucked up like water in a thirsty soil. The quantity and quality of the weapons, the presence of Allied officers, and the sense of being seriously backed by the victorious Powers, had a magical effect upon the morale of the troops and upon the decisions of waverers.

In the general surge of enthusiasm, the Don Cossacks were even persuaded to abandon the separatist claims so dear to their hearts, and to acknowledge Denikin as the commander of all the anti-Bolshevik forces in South Russia.

Towards the end of January, 1919, the fortune of war changed. The Bolsheviks staged a new offensive to recover the Donetz basin. They threw back the Don Cossacks behind that river with a loss of two-thirds of their strength, of quantities of their new equipment, and, worse still, of their morale.

Denikin had been planning a movement along the Volga with the object of stretching a hand to Koltchak, whose forces were at that period progressing well. Now he had to turn his thoughts westwards, and to concentrate on saving the Cossacks. His troops became engaged in a fierce struggle in the disputed area, and emerged from it as victors. At the end of six weeks—that is, by the end of April—they had completely re-established the original Cossack front.

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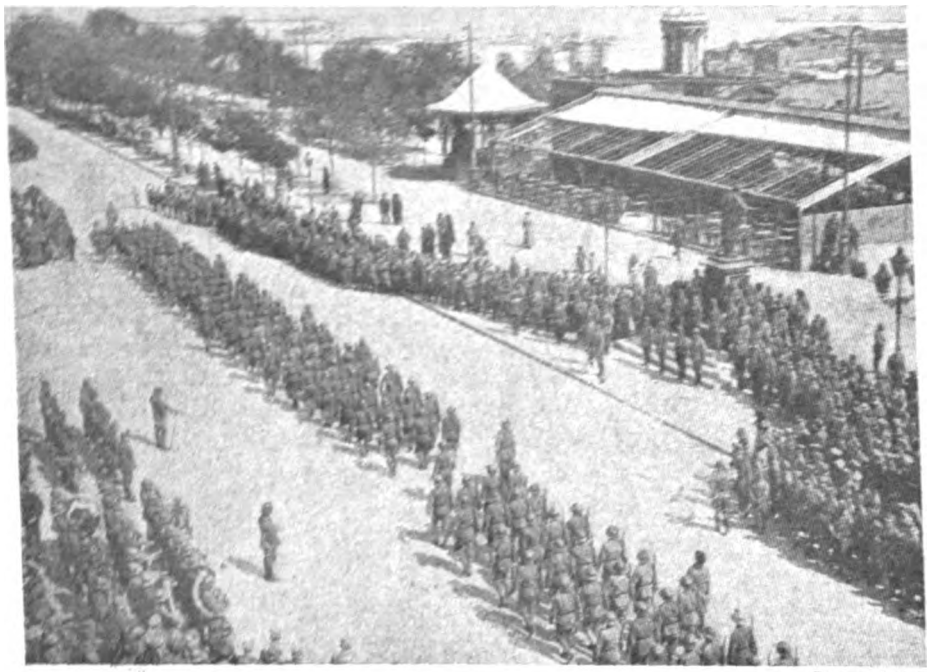

Photo: E.N.A.

AUSTRIANS IN ODESSA

Odessa, seaport of the Ukraine and one of the most important cities in Russia, lies on the Black Sea, only 50 miles from the Roumanian frontier. The town is situated on a plateau 150 feet above the harbour, and, besides being a great commercial centre, contains libraries, museums, scientific institutions, a zoo, a university, and a fine opera house. There is also a powerful radio station. The present photograph shows Austrian troops of Field-Marshal von Böhm-Ermolli evacuating the city late in 1918.

Wrangel in Command

Shortly afterwards, another great enemy offensive, mainly along the Volga, was also repulsed, 15,000 prisoners and 55 guns being captured. Wrangel was now given the command of the victorious forces in this eastern district, which were grouped together as the Caucasian Army.

Photo: E.N.A.

BOLSHEVIKS IN ODESSA

Odessa has had a stormy history during the last 100 years. In 1854, during the Crimean War, it was bombarded by the British. In 1905 it suffered a naval mutiny and riots. During the first three years of the Great War it was many times bombarded by the Turks. In March, 1918, the Germans captured it. From November, 1918, until April, 1919, the Allies held it. In August, 1919, the White Russians under Denikin took it. In 1920 it again fell to the Reds, who sacked it with mediæval gusto. Above we see Bolshevik soldiers riding through the streets on an old horse-tram.

In the middle of May, the Bolsheviks delivered yet another assault, aiming again at the Donetz basin. Here, for the first time, they met the tank in action. It was too much for them. Their morale collapsed and they fled, leaving thousands of prisoners and large quantities of equipment in the hands of the Whites. Denikin decided to draw profit from the occasion by making a general offensive along his whole front.

Prior to the events just related, the situation had been deteriorating in Odessa and in the Crimea. These places lay in the zone in which, by request of Versailles, the French were to render assistance, British help being concentrated east of the Don and south of the Caucasus. A premature withdrawal of the German forces in the Ukraine had delivered that vast, rich land to the throes of anarchy. There was but little to choose between the Bolsheviks who wished to conquer it, and its defenders under Petlura, whose hand was against everyone.

Murder and destruction ran riot everywhere. In December, Petlura occupied Odessa. He was driven out a few days later by a body of White Russians, who managed to retain possession of this important seaport, and came thereafter under the orders of Denikin, adding at the moment more to the anxieties of that much-harassed chief than to his strength.

From Odessa we may glean one of the few sparks of humour that illuminated this most sombre and gruesome of campaigns. The story is told by Charles Barry in the pages of *The Gunner*:[1]

"At this time there was only one 'bourgeois' place of rendezvous in the entire city—Fanconi's Café, which was usually packed to the doors. I was seated there one night with a certain Captain Kuroki, of the Japanese Army, when suddenly a party of sailors from the Black Sea Fleet armed to the teeth rushed in. In the sudden silence which followed the irruption, their leader announced that they had come to arrest an officer, whom he named. That officer was evidently there present, for a voice from one of the tables called out:

"'Come on, you swine, take him if you can!'

"In half a second the place was a pandemonium. Revolver shots mingled with the smashing of glass and crockery, the shouts of men and the shrill cries of

[1] Sept., 1937.

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the women, as a blind rush towards the doors swept all before it.

A Disorderly Scene

" Kuroki and I sat at our corner table and watched. If the Japanese officer felt apprehensive that a stray bullet would come our way he did not show the slightest sign of it. I felt far from comfortable.

" Soon, however, we were alone amid a scene of utter desolation and ruin while the battle was continued desultorily along the street. Tables lay overturned on a floor which was irrigated by rivers of tea, coffee and syrups, and littered with broken glass, paper napkins and squashed meringues. Then a waiter crawled cautiously out from behind the service counter and looked dolefully round the café. His eye fell upon us, the only survivors, so to speak, and he came over to us.

" ' Isn't it awful, gentlemen ? ' he said.

" We agreed solemnly that it was—just awful.

" ' Well, there you are, gentlemen,' he moaned. ' It's like that every night. Just think of it—people from fifteen tables have gone away without paying. That will be two roubles, sir. Thank you, sir.' "

About this time, the newly-formed government in the Crimea appealed to Denikin for help. The Bolsheviks, in spite of the presence of French troops, had forced the local militia to withdraw to the Kertch peninsula, where the latter were fortunately able to hold out. Denikin was furious with the French. To him their actions seemed calculated to operate less to his advantage than to the advantage of his opponents. He protested strongly, but without effect.

A curious incident happened in this connection. Denikin, in one of his letters to Koltchak, finished with the sentence : " At present we are receiving ample assistance with supplies from the British, and ample opposition on the part of the French." This letter, carried in a cutter across the Caspian, was intercepted, and, later, appeared in a Moscow newspaper. It was shown to M. Clemenceau, who was furious at its contents, and, thereafter, showed no great affection for, or inclination to support, the White Russians.

The French had their own troubles to face in the East. The army and the fleet which they had brought into the Black Sea were not in the least anxious, after four years of exhausting warfare in the West, to plunge into a campaign in the heart of Russia, in support of a cause in which they were not interested ; and they indicated their opinion very clearly by several mutinies.

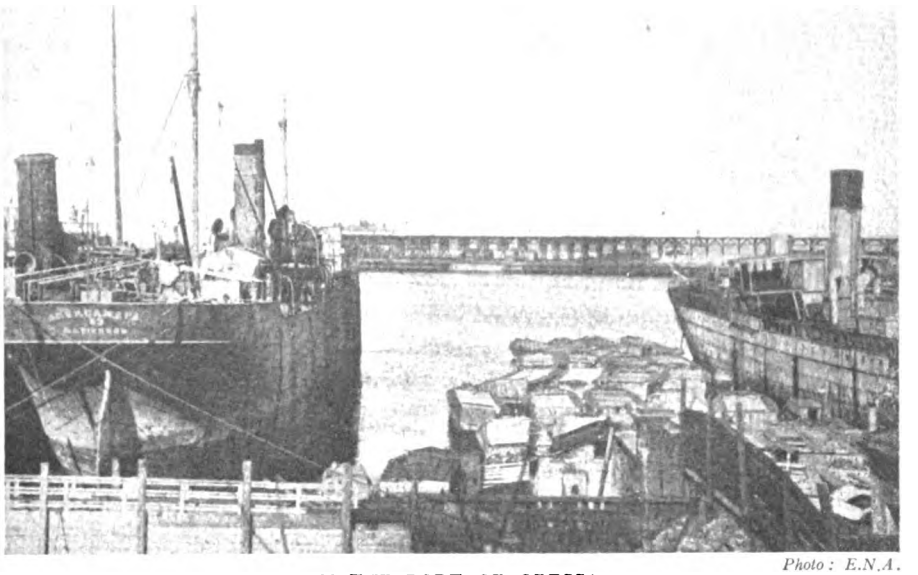

Photo : E.N.A.

IN THE PORT OF ODESSA

Odessa possesses no fewer than five separate harbours, all but one of which have two breakwaters ; and in addition the Soviet has instituted an extensive system of land reclamation to provide greater dock accommodation. Grain is the chief export, but others include vegetable oils, wool, flax, hemp, cattle, and timber. To stimulate trade the port was declared an " open " one at the outset of the Red régime ; and to-day its thriving population, which during the Revolution shrank terribly owing to famine and disease, totals 425,000.

The Caucasian Republics

In the south of the Caucasus, the new states of Daghestan, Georgia, and

Photo : E.N.A.

ALLIED ARTILLERY IN KIEV, 1919

Kiev, or Kieff, capital of the Ukraine, stands on the Dnieper, 280 miles due north of Odessa. It is chiefly important as a railway and air-route junction, and also historically as being one of the oldest towns in Russia. Its ancient buildings have in many cases survived the Revolution. Most of the old customs, such as the great annual pilgrimage to the 12th-century monastery, have now been dropped, but the huge annual fair is still held, as it has been ever since 1717. Between 1917 and 1920 the city changed hands many times between Germans, Poles, Whites, and Reds.

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Azerbaijan, which were at this time supported by some five brigades of British troops holding the Baku—Batum railway, declined to fall into line with Denikin, and even caused him to keep troops along their northern borders to prevent any irruptions on their part. While praising all three British representatives who succeeded each other at his headquarters—Generals Poole, Briggs, and Holman—as " men of great nobility of character and soldierly rectitude," he complains of the British Missions in Asia Minor as aiding and abetting the local republics, and of hindering rather than helping what should, he held, have been the common cause.

There was probably some justice in his complaint. For it was noteworthy how closely many of the Missions, playing as they did an important—sometimes a ruling—part in the affairs of the States to which they were accredited, identified themselves with the interests of those States, on occasion even to the exhibition of marked partiality.

This was, perhaps, not very surprising; for the local governments worshipped for the most part on their doorsteps, went to them for advice, and always took that advice when it did not interfere with their convenience or greatly with the lining of their pockets.

The troubles of the White Russians were, however, at the moment mainly of a minor order, and the general situation was on the whole excellent. The prospects of the North Russian and Siberian armies were still favourable. Esthonians and White Russians had occupied portions of the Petrograd and Pskov provinces, to the west and south-west of Petrograd, and hopes were still entertained that the Finns would strike from their very favourable position against that town itself.

In the South, the Volunteer Army had not only defeated, but routed, the enemy; and the Caucasus Army, though repulsed in its first assault on Tsaritsin, had captured it at the second attempt, thereby securing the Volga as a guard for the right flank. Moreover, the Russian fleets in the Black Sea and the Caspian had been handed over by the Allies to Denikin, and would help to protect his flanks and rear.

Naturally, therefore, a wave of optimism swept over the conquered area; and the general buoyancy of spirit was reflected in the scope and tone of the orders issued on July 3rd for the forthcoming operations.

Designs on Moscow

Moscow—the holy city, the seat of power, the heart of Muscovy—was to be the objective. On the far right, an army of 5,000 men was directed on Astrakhan. On its left, Wrangel, with the Caucasian Army, was at first to reach Saratov—far up the Volga—there to stretch a hand to Koltchak (who, it will be remembered, was himself stretching a hand to Ironside), and afterwards to swing north-west toward Moscow.

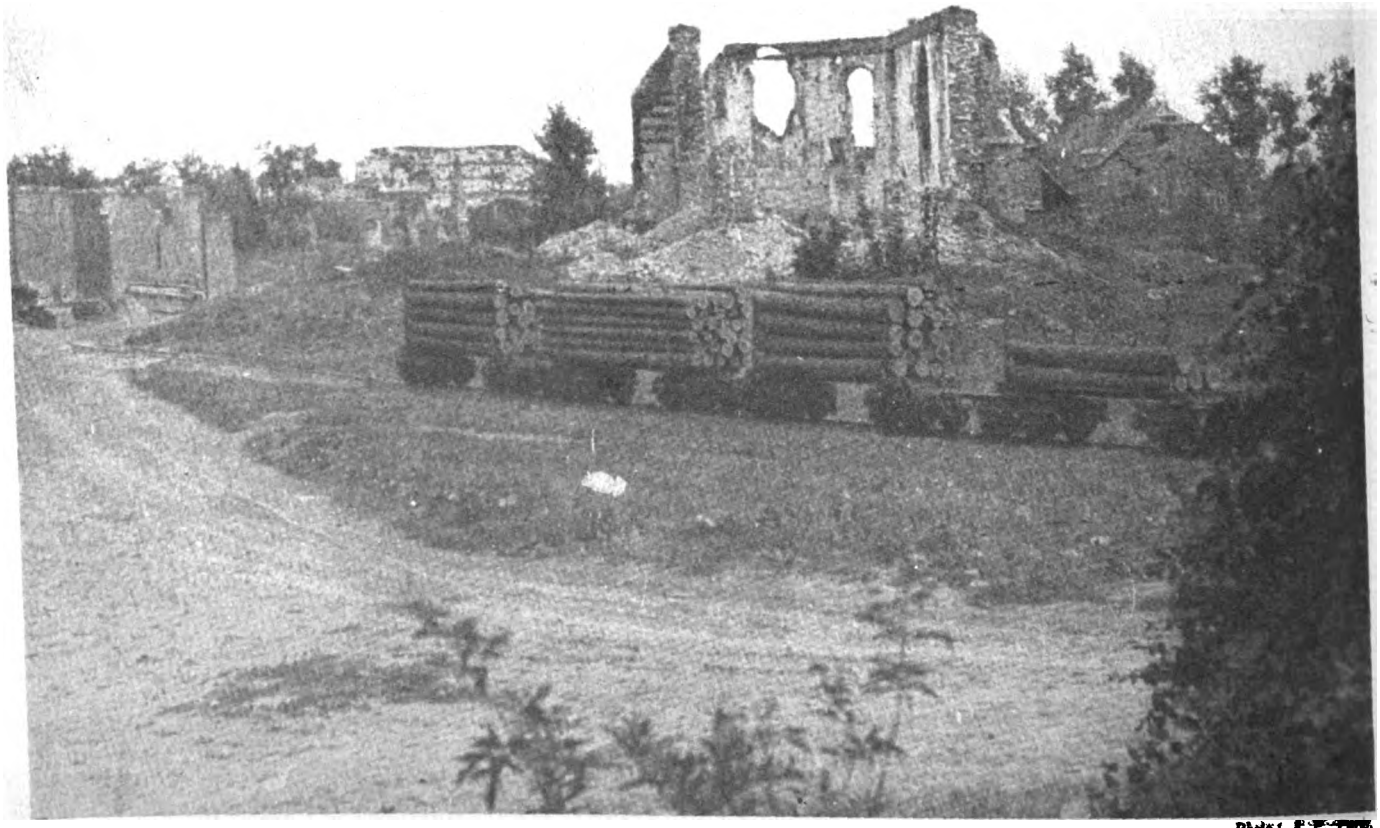

Photo: A. P., Paris.

TIMBER AT LE QUESNOY

Le Quesnoy—not to be confused with the other Le Quesnoy, south-east of Valenciennes, which the New Zealanders took on November 4th, 1918—lies just to northward of the Amiens—Roye road, about 8 km. north-west of the latter town. It was outside the southern extremity of the Somme battle-area of 1916, but its position almost in the front line involved it in frequent bombardments extending over a long period. This photograph, in which the ruined church is the central feature, dates from September 8th, 1916, at which period Le Quesnoy was still in the French sector.

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Photo: G. T. Watson.

AN EQUINE STUDY

The Germans having abandoned Le Quesnoy in their 1917 withdrawal, it re-entered the zone of conflict on March 26th, 1918, when it was the scene of a very gallant episode. The 61st Brigade, 20th Division (XVIII Corps), acting as divisional rearguard, had retired through the ruins, leaving about 100 men of the 7th Duke of Cornwall's L.I., under the brigade major, Captain Combe, to cover the subsequent deployment. At 2 p.m. orders were sent to this detachment to withdraw, but the enemy was now too close for it to do so. For four-and-a-half hours thereafter, with the Germans already in the eastern part of the village, the little handful clung to its positions, assisted by low-flying aircraft. Finally, when all but surrounded, the survivors managed to break through and rejoin their brigade.

The Don Cossacks, already beyond their own borders, were to move through Veronesh along the main line connecting their country with the capital. The bulk of the Volunteer Army—the backbone of the whole enterprise—was to utilise another main railway, and to strike through Kursk, Orel, and Tula. On the western flank, the line of the Dnieper was to be secured: at Kiev, by the detachment westward of a corps from the main army, and at Kherson and Ekaterinoslav by a corps which would emerge from the Crimea.

Thus a group of three armies, protected on either flank by great rivers whose principal points of passage had been secured, would advance on a front of 450 miles, and converge on the capital.

The plan was sanguine, if not Utopian, and was conceived rather on the lines of a monster raid than of a solidly-staged operation. The outworks were to be carried with a rush. The walls of the citadel would fall. The victors would be acclaimed by a people longing to be liberated from the brutal thrall of Bolshevism. It all sounded quite feasible to temperamental Slavs flushed with success.

Where Denikin mainly erred was in thinking that organisation, restitution, and the remedy of grievances, could follow from the seat of power as the corollary of victory; whereas they were, in fact, the stones with which he should have built the foundations of his campaign.

July proved a month of abundant success. The Volunteer Army took Pultawa, after a struggle over the fields on which, two centuries earlier, the victorious career of Charles XII had been wrecked and the flower of the Swedish army had fallen. To the west, one of its corps established itself firmly on the Dnieper; and to the east, Wrangel, having taken Kamyshin, lay within 60 miles of Saratov.

1,000 Miles of Front

The front—that is, the attacking front plus the protective flanks—now covered a distance of 1,000 miles, to hold which Denikin had perhaps 150,000 troops. The British Mission, regarding the line as dangerously thin, strongly advised him to halt, consolidate his new position, and bring the conquered lands under a carefully-planned system of civil administration.

Denikin, however, had his difficulties. An unhealthy atmosphere of intrigue pervaded his headquarters. A brake on the forward movement would hearten the schemers. Wrangel—his ablest subordinate—continually objected to his orders and suggested alternatives. The excitable Cossacks viewed a halt as equivalent to a defeat.

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Photo: E.N.A.

TROTSKY AS HE WAS IN 1918

Lev (Leon) Trotsky's original name was Leiba Davuidov Bronstein. He comes of Jewish parentage, and was born in the southern Ukraine. In 1900, at the age of 20, he was exiled to Siberia for revolutionary activities—a penalty which had its compensations, since he married a wife in prison on the way. In 1902 he escaped, and came to London, where he worked with Lenin on a revolutionary newspaper. In 1905 he returned to Russia, and, after the abortive rising of that year, was again exiled, and again escaped. After working energetically during the first three years of the War at the distribution of pacifist propaganda to both sides, he became co-author, with Lenin, of the successful revolution of November, 1917. Then, having been chief Soviet delegate at the Peace Conferences, he created almost alone the Red Army which defeated one after another Denikin, Wrangel, Koltchak, and the other White and Allied leaders. The stabilisation of the Red Russian State was Trotsky's handiwork.

Moreover, what the enemy needed was time. Allowed a respite, his broken lines would reform. Finally, there was the question of man-power. Southern Russia was exhausted by repeated conscriptions. Unless new areas for recruitment were opened by an advance, the prospects of ultimate victory would fade; for the White armies, unnourished by reinforcements, must expire.

There was much, therefore, to be said on both sides. Indeed, the fact that, according to all appearances, it was equally essential both to advance and to halt, would seem to indicate that the Whites did not possess any real prospect of eventual victory. The British Mission was, however, unquestionably correct in urging that, without consolidation of the incredibly mobile front and of the country behind it, defeat was inevitable.

Throughout August and September, the Bolsheviks continually assailed the Caucasian Army and the right of the Don Cossacks. The battle swayed backward and forward, but the assailants had rather the better of the exchanges, and forced Wrangel back on Tsaritsin. Heavy casualties, however, put a brake on their impetus, so that by the beginning of October the situation had become stable in that quarter.

Elsewhere, the line was continually in motion. A big hostile group struck at the point of junction of the Volunteer Army with the Don Cossacks, and penetrated 70 miles behind the White Russian line. It was then assailed in flank and driven with heavy loss back to its starting-place.

Mamontov's Bold Raid

Next, a Cossack Cavalry Corps under Mamontov executed a remarkable raid round the enemy's rear. "All along the route General Mamontov destroyed the enemy's stores and huge supplies, wrecked railways, disbanded tens of thousands of mobilised conscripts, and recruited a whole brigade of peasant-volunteers. He interrupted the line of communication and food supply of the Reds and created a terrible panic in their midst. General Mamontov very nearly made a prisoner of Trotsky, then at Tambov, who fled precipitately to Moscow.

"Nevertheless the Red front did not waver. The corps, burdened by an enormous quantity of property which the Cossacks carried away with them, soon lost its efficiency. So that, instead of pushing on to Lisky and then, according to plan, striking at the rear of the Eighth and Ninth Soviet Armies, the corps, avoiding a combat, turned back.

"Long files of waggons laden with booty trekked to the Don stanitsas, thousands of fighting men trailing behind. Soon only 2,000 men were all that remained in the ranks. Mamontov himself went to Rostov . . . where he was claimed as a national hero." [1]

Mamontov was behind the hostile lines for a whole month. Yet the raid, though a brilliant affair, was almost ineffective in regard to the general operations. In fact, it did a great deal of actual harm, for the rapacious conduct of the troops engaged in it alienated thousands of people from the White Russian cause. In it the Cossack displayed all his qualities, both good and bad. He is a good and dashing horseman and a fine swordsman, and he and his steed possess great powers of endurance. But he lacks discipline, is an inveterate robber, and loses his morale the moment the balance turns against him.

It is interesting to compare this raid and other cavalry actions in this campaign, with the equally brilliant but truly effective feats of our cavalry in the closing stages of the Mesopotamian and Palestinian campaigns described in an earlier volume of TWENTY YEARS AFTER. Though, in Palestine, many spectacular and successful charges were made, it was, on the whole, by the utilisation of our mobile fire-power that we won our successes in both theatres.

When the horse had placed a machine gun upon the enemy's line of retreat, the battle was already half won. The Cossack scorned dismounted action, and thereby must have lost countless opportunities in the course of the fighting.

Denikin Takes Kiev

On August 30th, Kiev, the capital of the Ukraine and one of the largest cities in Russia, was captured by Denikin. At the same time, a White corps disembarked at Odessa, and,

[1] Denikin, *op. cit.*, p. 283.

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pushing up the lower Dnieper, seized Kherson. Petlura was at that time in partial control of the Ukraine. His hand was against both Red and White, but was decidedly pink in colour.

The Allied Missions suggested, perhaps rightly, that Denikin should conclude an alliance with him. But the Russian commander objected. Petlura was trusted by no one, as the writer, who was in Russia at the time, well remembers. Possibly that is not to be wondered at, for he was aiming at an independent and Socialist Ukraine, and was therefore in conflict with such Ukrainians as were either reactionary or Communist, and with Poles and Red and White Russians who wanted the Ukraine for themselves.

Anyhow, if left in control on the flank of Denikin's advance, he was as likely as not to join the Bolsheviks and attack the Whites from a most dangerous direction. A month had therefore to be spent in driving him out of the Ukraine.

On October 14th, 1919, the Kornilov Brigade captured Orel, a town of 80,000 inhabitants, regarded as one of the " bastions of Moscow," from which in a direct line it is less than 200 miles distant—a mere trifle in Russia. Its release from Bolshevik tyranny was celebrated with great pomp in the cathedral, the chief priest anointing and blessing the colours of the Kornilov Regiments. A few days later, when the town was vacated, he was put to death by the Bolsheviks for having done so.

At this time, Denikin's forward line—its high-water mark—ran from Tsaritsin, by Veronesh, Orel, Tchernigov, and Kiev to Odessa. Behind it lay 18 provinces containing 50,000,000 inhabitants.

Lack of Civil Policy

Unfortunately, sufficient thought had not been given to these inhabitants. No definite agrarian policy had been formulated. The peasants did not

Specially drawn.

SOUTH RUSSIA AT THE TIME OF THE REVOLUTION, 1917-20

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know whether or not they would be allowed to retain their lands, and, in the absence of a clear statement in the matter, feared the worst. Nothing had been done toward the economic reconstruction of the country.

Conditions in the conquered territory did not differ greatly from the appalling conditions elsewhere. The lower and lower-middle classes feared that an attempt would be made to restore the ancient Tsarist régime, which they were fully determined not to accept.

Koltchak and Denikin had, indeed, issued proclamations promising that the people should choose their own form of government; but the proclamations had reached only a limited circle, and such effect as they had produced was counteracted by the arrogant behaviour of the Russian officers, who treated the peasants with a contempt and contumely reminiscent of former days, strongly prejudicial to any belief that an improvement would result from a White victory.

Moreover, though looting was at its worst among the Cossacks, it was, except in a few of the finer units, general throughout the army; and was the cause of great suffering.

The insistence of the Don, Terek, and Kuban Governments on retaining their independence added to the difficulties. Each of them had its own customs barriers, with complicated regulations for export and import. Food and fuel were exported to Turkey and Georgia when neighbouring provinces were suffering greatly from famine and lack of coal.

A single railway, in traversing White territory from south to north, crossed the frontiers of these sovereign states no less than eleven times, creating utter chaos in trade and travel. So intransigent did the Kuban Government become that Denikin was eventually forced to arrest and deport many of its members.

And there were other troubles. "Profiteering became appalling. . . . Embezzlement and bribery were the order of the day. Whole organisations were tainted by this canker. The attitude of 'eat and drink, for to-morrow we die,' adopted in the rear, crippled our strategic efficiency and undermined authority." [1]

[1] Denikin, *op. cit.*, p. 300.

Thousands of Malcontents

The consequence of all these failures in, and obstacles to, sound organisation was that the advance left thousands of malcontents behind it. Some of these united into bands and became a serious menace to the lines of communication. Petlura profited from them to work his way back into the Ukraine, where he fostered hostility to Denikin. And the Soviet Government—a world-champion at propaganda—was naturally doing its best at this critical time to weaken all joints in its opponents' armour.

While, on the one hand, there was no serious attempt at civil administration, on the other the military administration was a scandal. The staff officers were for the most part both corrupt and inefficient. The regimental officers were often lacking in a sense of duty, and took but little interest in the welfare of their men, or care of the splendid equipment with which we had presented them.

The assistance afforded them by the Allies offered fine prospects for the future; but, while quite ready to accept it, they failed to realise the need for self-help. The fact was that they did not, with certain splendid exceptions,

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

ALL CHANGE!

Despite the absence of notice-boards, waiting-rooms, and other customary amenities, it is probable that a number of readers will recognise this railway station, which is that of Albert as it looked on August 22nd, 1918—and for that matter during the preceding three years. The Tommy in the shell-hole appears to be waiting for the 8.15; but it is to be feared that the only likely down-arrival is the 5·9—express.

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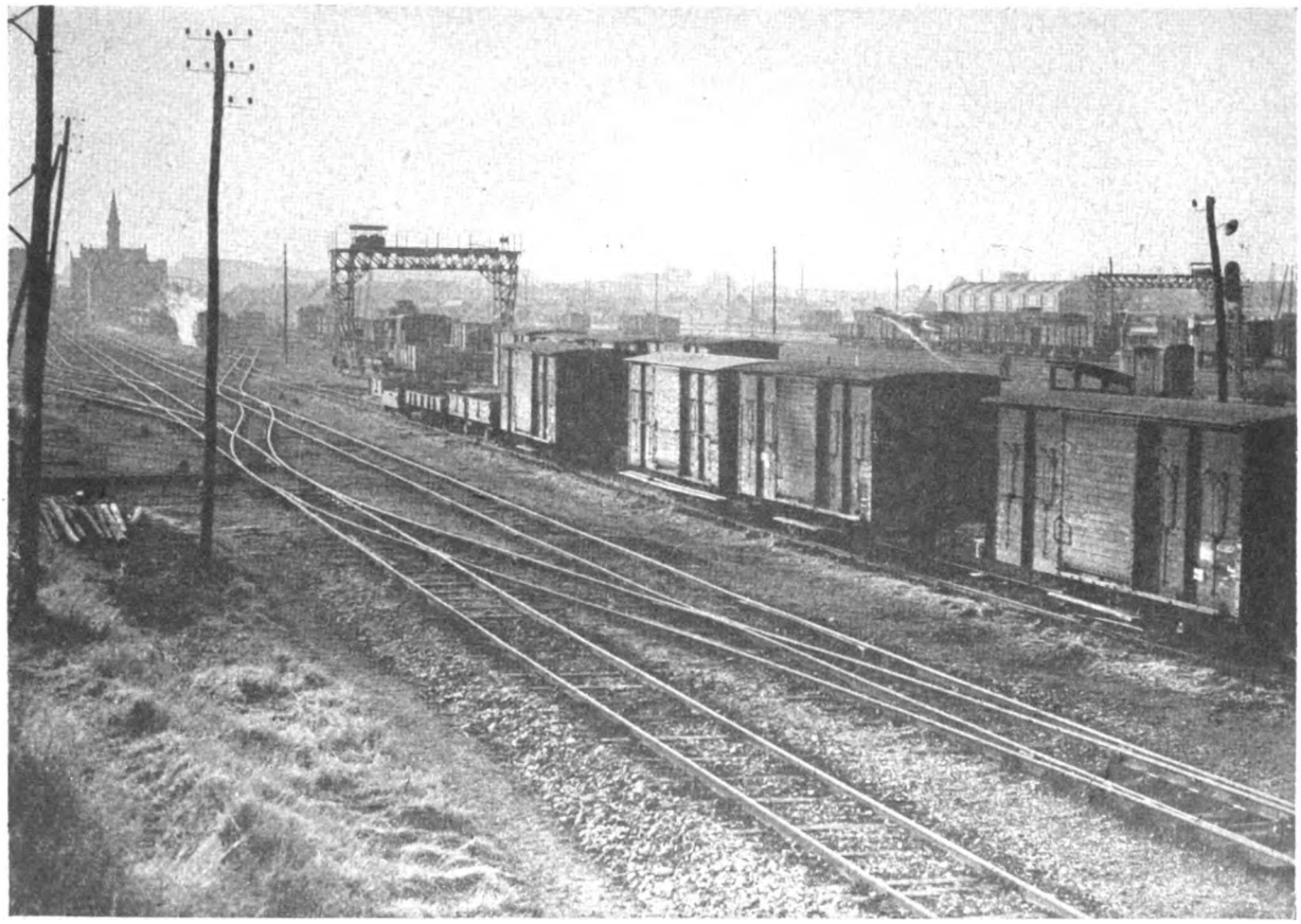

Photo: Keystone.

SIDINGS AT ALBERT

There is only one main line at Albert, and one of those mysterious "light" lines for which we have no counterpart in England, and which seem to be in perpetual indecision as to whether they are really meant to carry trains or trams. The main line runs from Amiens to Arras, with a branch at Achiet-le-Grand leading east toward Bapaume, etc. The light line meanders among the Somme villages from Doullens, north-west of Albert, to Péronne and Rosières (according to branch) on the east and south sides respectively.

deserve success, and were therefore unlikely to win it.

During Denikin's advance, a strange figure, later to become legendary, sprang into prominence. Makhno was a bold bandit who developed a fine talent for guerilla warfare. He was "an anarchist in principle, although according to his biographer and admirer, 'penal servitude was the sole school at which Makhno imbibed all the historical and political knowledge he ever possessed.'"[1]

He had twice entered Bolshevik service and twice turned traitor to it. He was, in fact, against every kind of authority. He and his band had been routed by Denikin earlier in the year, and now at a critical moment he appeared again on the scene.

At the end of September, with a large force of brigands estimated at anything between 10,000 and 40,000 strong, according to the degree of his success at the moment, he broke through the line between the Dnieper and Odessa and, marching 400 miles in 11 days, swept right across Denikin's communications, setting the whole country from the river to the Sea of Azov aflame as he went. He cut railways, blew up ammunition dumps, and even captured and held the town of Ekaterinoslav.

Makhno the Irrepressible

An army corps and one-and-a-half cavalry divisions had to be diverted from other duties to deal with him. By the end of November, he had been swept back into the Ukraine; but he had greatly weakened the front, and continued to be a menace to White communications until the war came to a close.

Toward the end of October, Trotsky, frightened by the proximity of the Kornilov Brigade to Moscow, concentrated large forces, drawn mainly from other fronts, against Denikin's long, weak line. In order to draw his opponents' reserves east and west, he first struck heavy blows at the flanks. He then delivered his main attack at the centre, choosing for objectives the left of the Don Cossacks and the right of the Volunteer Army.

The attacks on the flanks were repulsed; but Budenni's cavalry group broke the line on the left of the Cossacks, and, after nine days' fighting, captured Veronesh. The right flank of the Volunteer Army was then enveloped, and was forced to fall back. For 30 days it fought stoutly, giving ground very slowly. In the meantime, Denikin had brought up all the reserves which could be spared from the internal front; but they proved too weak to restore the situation.

All the infirmities of his position now became evident. The volatile Cossacks beat a rapid retreat to their own

[1] Denikin, *op. cit.*, p. 294.

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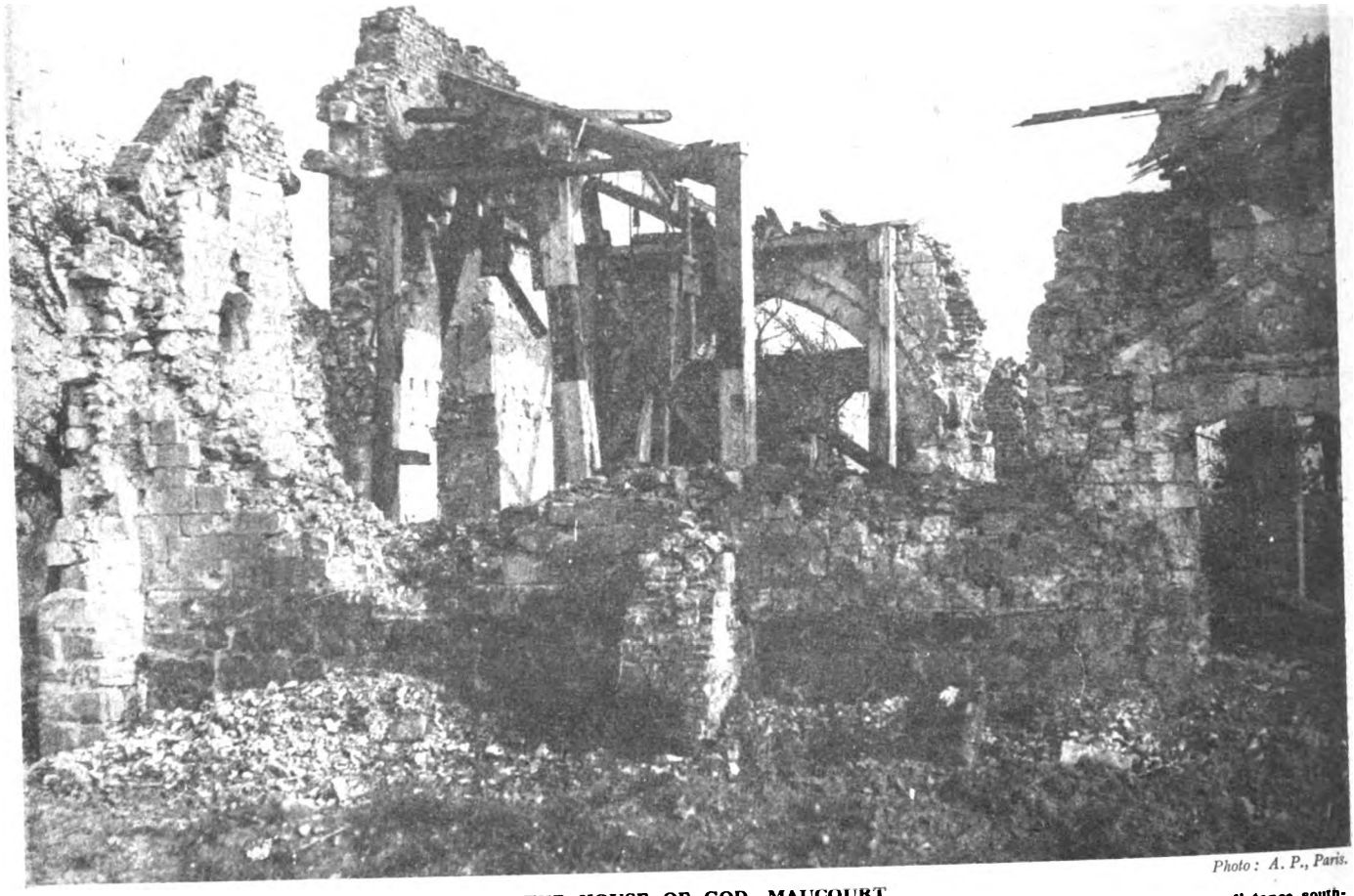

Photo: A. P., Paris.

THE HOUSE OF GOD, MAUCOURT

Maucourt adjoins the western flank of Chilly, which means that it lies in a nest of by-roads 5 km. south-east of Rosières, and the same distance south-west of Chaulnes. In 1916 the village was in the French front line, and on March 27th its neighbourhood was the scene of an attempted German break-through. During the Somme battle it marked the extreme southern flank of the attack. Chilly, previously in enemy hands, was taken on September 4th, but the advance did not progress further.

country. Makhno and other bandits swarmed on to the lines of communication. . The Poles, who had maintained a front against the Bolsheviks, chose this moment to make an armistice with them, with the result that 40,000 men were set free to act against Denikin's front at Kiev.

With the failure of the reserves, the situation of the White Russians became critical. Kiev and Kharkov were abandoned, their garrisons falling back, some of the units towards Odessa, the remainder to cover the Crimea. By January 9th, both the Don Cossacks and the Volunteer Army were behind the Don. Then a thaw set in, which rendered the passage of the river difficult, and gave the much harassed White Armies a breather.

Bolsheviks Take Odessa

At the end of the month, the front covering Odessa crumpled up, and, on February 7th, the Bolsheviks entered the town on the heels of the White troops. The shipping available was inadequate for requirements, and, consequently, terrible scenes were enacted during the evacuation. One large detachment managed to break through to the north and reach Poland, where it was disarmed.

The White Armies were saved from complete rout more because of the enemy's difficulties than because of their own resistance. The Reds, in their rapid pursuit, had lost touch with such supply organisations as they possessed. They could live only by plunder—the plunder of wretched inhabitants over whose luckless heads the tide of war had already surged and ebbed. They were decimated by typhus. The railways had been thoroughly destroyed by the Whites in their retreat. Moreover, the insatiable Makhno, having harried and robbed the lines of communication of the Whites, was now worrying those of the Reds in the same way.

About this time, Denikin received a visit from a British M.P.—Sir H. Mackinder. He had been in Poland, and brought with him an assurance that Pilsudski would open the offensive against Moscow in the ensuing spring. Cold comfort, that, to the leader of an army almost *in extremis* in January!

With a view to removing the obstacles to a concentrated anti-Bolshevik front, Mackinder persuaded Denikin to sign a statement recognising, with certain provisos, the independence of Poland and of the border-states then battling with the Bolsheviks. This amounted to a qualified renunciation of the principle of the indivisibility of Russia. But it came too late, for the die had already been cast.

The Bolsheviks renewed their offensive on January 18th, 1920. The White Army, with its left on the Sea of Azov and its centre and right extended along the river Manych, repulsed the attack, and then, countering with six Cossack cavalry divisions, drove Budenni's cavalry group over the Don with considerable loss.

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Kuban Cossacks Fail

Heartened by this success, Denikin decided to take the offensive himself. He moved forward on February 15th. On the left, the Volunteer Army, still staunch in spite of all its reverses, regained Rostov and made many captures. Next to it the Don Cossacks won some minor successes. Away to the right, however, the Kuban Cossacks failed completely, and allowed the enemy to penetrate to the rear of their victorious comrades.

The attack then died away, and Denikin fell back to the Kuban river. The cause of further disaster lay not in any preponderance of enemy strength, but rather in the progressive disintegration of the White Army. The heart of the Volunteers was broken at last, and, mingling in one great mob with the Cossacks, they made for the sea at Novorossisk. There Admiral Seymour carried out the evacuation.

He transported the troops, numbering about 35,000, to the Crimea, into which fertile peninsula, together with several hundred thousand civilian fugitives, they were "crowded in every circumstance of misery and want." [1]

On April 1st, Denikin resigned, having, he felt, lost the confidence of the troops. He was a true patriot and a stout and skilful soldier, but was unequal, in an atmosphere perpetually charged with intrigue and opposition, to the immense burden of his dual responsibility. He was succeeded by Baron Wrangel, an able soldier and the best of his commanders.

Wrangel proceeded to reorganise the Army, and achieved a surprising amount of success in the task. He soon found, however, that the Crimea could not support the mass of humanity crowded within its narrow compass. He therefore decided to attempt the conquest of the rich corn-lands between the Dnieper and the Sea of Azov. By that time the British Government had ceased to furnish supplies; but the French, in the hope that the offensive would assist their allies the Poles, gave the new Russian leader both moral and material support.

The Poles Fail Wrangel

The early movements, skilfully conducted, proved successful. Wrangel cleared the whole of the area which he coveted. Then, however, in the hope—under French inspiration—of being able to form a common front with the Poles, he indulged in somewhat more ambitious ventures than his strength justified. He carried on successfully, indeed, until the end of the summer. But then, on October 9th, he heard that the Poles had concluded an armistice with the Bolsheviks.

It was certain that the whole of the Red forces would now be thrown against him. Should he fight in his advanced position, or should he withdraw to the shelter of the Crimea? He decided to give battle on the spot, and was defeated. Overwhelmed by forces four times its strength, his army retreated to the sea.

British ships again rushed to the rescue. But the last defences quickly broke down; "the Crimea was overrun, and a hideous flight of refugees to Constantinople ensued. There were not enough ships for half of the panic-stricken multitudes. The savage enemy bore down exultingly on the last despairing defenders.

"Smallpox and typhus epidemics made new alliances with sword and famine. Shiploads of destitute and infected persons—sometimes all dead or moribund—arrived continuously in the already over-crowded, impoverished and straitened Turkish capital. A veil has been drawn over the horrors of this final phase. The British troops and sailors, and some British and American philanthropic agencies in Constantinople, gave almost all they possessed in local aid; but the 'Allied and Associated Powers' averted their gaze and stopped their ears. They did not wish to know too much. . . . After all, Death is merciful: it was certainly busy." [1]

[1] Churchill, *op. cit.*, p. 1465.

[1] Winston Churchill, *The Great War*, p. 1465.

Photo: G. T. Watson.

CHURCH AND MEMORIAL

Maucourt's modern church stands on the site of the old, but is an entirely new building. The pillar before the entrance is the communal War memorial—pleasantly and (for France) unwontedly simple in design. British troops of the 24th Division retired through the village, moving in echelon and fighting rearguard actions all the way, when the XIX Corps withdrew to the Rouvroy—Froissy line on the morning of March 26th, 1918.

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CHAPTER XXXV

HUMOUR OF THE WAR

War on the Western Front scale was, to say the least of it, a nerve-racking ordeal. To many it was all but insupportable; and the fact that thousands passed through the furnace and emerged therefrom apparently unscathed was due largely to the spirit of camaraderie everywhere to be found, and above all, perhaps, to the keen sense of humour that so often found expression at the most unlikely moments. Much of the war-time humour was of a character somewhat too broad for the printed page, but there was in addition a great deal that may be set down without offence. In the following chapter appears a collection of anecdotes culled from various sources, most of which are typical examples of the simple type of jest so much in evidence during the years of trial.

EVEN Twenty Years After, the humour of the Great War is still recalled with relish. Wherever Old Comrades meet to talk of Old Times, the reminiscing is invariably punctuated with lusty laughs. War humour was unique, and much of it has become classic, because—like all the best humour—it usually had a serious background; was often, in fact, a gesture in the face of hardship, suffering, danger, and death. It helped not only to "win the War," but to stave off disaster in critical times.

Humour Under Fire

It has figured in countless books of memoirs which have appeared in the intervening years. Most of this humour has the virtue of being authentic, for it derives from personal experience. *Punch* witticisms, Captain Bruce Bairnsfather's "Old Bill" jokes, and collections such as the Cockney War Stories published in the London evening journals are too well known to need recapitulating here.

Humour under fire and in action was the most courageous brand of all. Major H. de Montmorency, in *Sword and Stirrup*, writes that at Ecoust his battery had to evacuate large dumps of shells and cartridges under heavy fire. As the shells came over, a sergeant kept repeating: "That's a five-nine. . . . That's an eight-inch . . ." and so on.

"What's this one, sergeant?" queried a deep Scottish voice as a missile of even huger dimensions crumped over.

"Now they're throwing the b—— gun at us!" the sergeant replied.

The Lancashire Fusiliers' *Minden Magazine* has this note: "We had been shelled for half an hour or so, when our howitzers commenced retaliation. The first one that went humming over our trenches we heard a Tommy greet with: 'There goes the b —— receipt!'"

In the days of munition shortage our artillery fired a few rounds, which were acknowledged by as many hundreds from the Boche batteries. A Tommy, having stood it for some time, arose in his wrath and shouted across to the Boche lines: "'Ave a 'eart, Fritz; 'ave a 'eart! We've broke our ruddy gun!"

Mr. Stanley Lupino, the comedian, has recorded that in 1918 his brother Mark's motor-cycle was blown from under him by a shell. Luckily, he was unhurt; and, rising to his feet, he exclaimed: "My God, and no audience to clap me!"

Colonel Montague Cooke, D.S.O., told this story of an artillery strafe in *Clouds That Flee*: "As for the barbed wire in front of us, it had been cleared away by our shells. I have never seen wire so cleaned up. On the first day a sergeant in the Tyneside Scottish, with blood trickling from head and arm, came strolling back through the guns, and we shouted to him: 'Was the wire cut well enough for you?' 'Wire,' says he, 'A've coom frae the fourth line, you b—— gunners, and I couldna find a blessed piece of wire to clean ma pipe with.'"

Recruiting Tests

Recruits were an unending source of humour. A recruiting staff officer—Major C. E. Radclyffe—has related in his reminiscences that he once addressed a meeting at the London Opera House at which a man in the audience stood up and shouted: "I want to join up, but they won't have me as I have bad teeth. What abaht it?"

"Come up to Whitehall to-morrow morning," he replied. "I will take you. I don't want you to eat the Germans, but to fight them."

Major Cecil Alport, R.A.M.C., T.F., tells in *The Lighter Side of War* how he had to reject a man because he had no teeth. Half-an-hour later the applicant returned.

"Clear out," said the Major. "I told you not to return until you have had false teeth fitted."

"Au ri, guvna, I've got 'em," was the reply.

"What on earth have you got in your mouth?" the Major asked.

"Teesh," said the man, displaying complete upper and lower dentures. "I borrowed them from a pal outside and they fit a treat, really they do, sir."

Mr. Bertie Hollender, in *Before I Forget*, tells of someone who marched about three hundred East End Jews to a recruiting station in the West End and explained to the officer in charge that they were wonderful boys, eager to join up.

"Splendid," said the officer. "That is the spirit, and the type of man we are looking for. Bring them in, my good man."

"Impossible," came the answer.

"Why not?"

"Well, sir, it's like this, there are two drunken Irishmen outside who won't let the boys come in."

The *Invicta Gazette* of the London Regiment recorded this remark from a recruit of no great mental capacity: "Sergeant, I'se lost I'se bagonet!" Then, observing his trusty blade securely fixed on his rifle: "Sergeant, I'se found I'se bagonet stickin' on the end of I'se gun!"

A recruiting officer asked curtly of a raw recruit: "Religion?"

"Ain't got none, sir," was the reply.

"Ain't got none! And where, me young cock-bird, do you go on Sundays?"

"I goes with farver, sir."

"And where does 'farver' go on Sundays?"

"Rat-catching, sir."

The sergeant turned to his superior: "The man's R.C., sir."

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Batmen and Servants

Batmen and mess servants were a plentiful source of fun. Mr. James Agate says in *Ego* that he once demanded of his batman an explanation of his too-frequent absences without leave. This dialogue ensued :

BATMAN (pointing) : See that 'ouse on the 'ill, guvner ?

J. A. : Go on.

BATMAN : It belongs to a French orf'cer.

J. A. : Well ?

BATMAN : He's at the front.

J. A. : What's that got to do with it ?

BATMAN : His missus lives there. *I'm 'er maîtresse !*

This same batman sweated profusely at his additional duties of cook and mess waiter, so Mr. Agate told him he could remove his tunic.

" It's aginst the rules, sir," the man replied.

" Rules be blowed," said Mr. Agate, " take it off."

" That's h'impossible, sir. Ain't got no shirt on."

" Why have you got no shirt on ? "

" Beg pardon, sir, but I used it to boil the puddings ! "

Lord Castlerosse quotes in *Valentine's Days* the story of an acquaintance who, after the Somme, stayed the night at Picquigny. It was full of soldiers, and accordingly he was surprised when his servant told him he had found him an excellent room. After he had dressed in the morning, the servant said : " Would you give me a hand, sir ? We ought to replace the corpse."

" The *what* ? "

" The corpse. You see, it was like this. There wasn't a room in the place with the exception of this, and there was an old man laid out on the bed, so I gave the woman what owns the house five francs and popped the old gentleman under the bed, knowing that if you were not cognisant of the fact you'd sleep as sound as if you were alone."

Saluting and discipline generally had their amusing side. In *Soldiering with a Stethoscope* Col. N. J. C. Rutherford, D.S.O., M.B., speaks of an occasion when a G.O.C. stopped a young temporary lieutenant who had failed to salute him on passing in the street, and asked : " What army do you belong to ? "

" The British Army," replied the flabbergasted youth.

" I also belong to the British Army," said the G.O.C. : " wouldn't it be nice if we just recognised each other as we passed ? "

A very small general at the docks who passed a very tall captain, R.A.M.C., said : " Don't you recognise a general officer when you see one, sir ? "

The tall captain surveyed the small general and replied : " Yes, *when* I see one."

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Vague Tommy (writing letter) : " Wot day is it ? "
Chorus : " The fourteenth."
Tommy : " Wot month ? "
Chorus : " October."
Tommy : " Wot year ? "

Reciprocity

In the *Minden Magazine* appears a note about two men who were marched before Captain Salt, its editor—one for possessing a dirty neck, the other for having dirty boots. He sentenced the man with the dirty boots to wash the other's neck for a week, and the dirty-necked one to clean his opposite number's boots for the same period. Then, observing the sergeant-major's superior smile, he added : " And you, sergeant-major, will daily superintend the operations ! "

There was plenty of officer humour of the " wag " kind, especially among subalterns. Col. Rutherford's mess in France was joined by a subaltern in the R.A. Militia. The first night at dinner

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he established himself by saying to the waiter, who had forgotten to give him a spoon with soup: "I say, can I have a sponge or something to eat this soup with?"

Lord Castlerosse records how he went into his club one night to find his friend Lord Athlumney, then A.P.M., laughing.

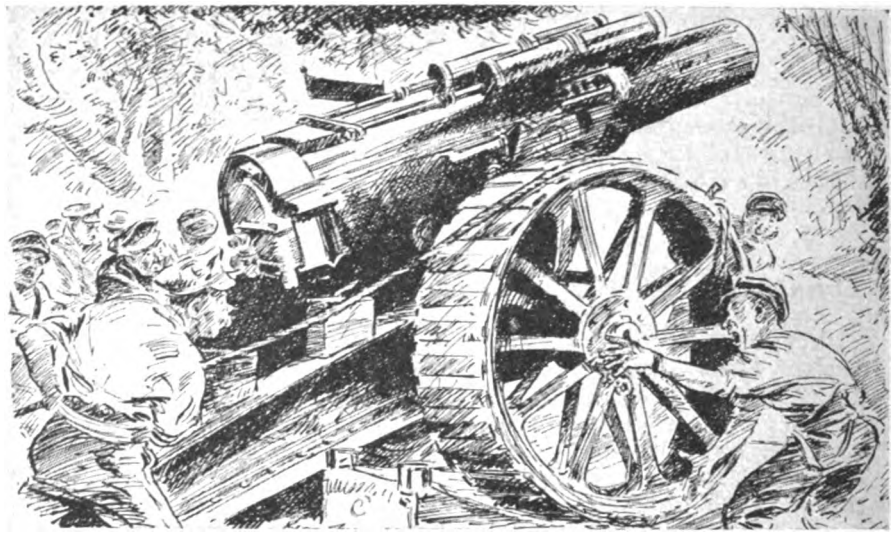
"At about eleven o'clock this evening," the A.P.M. explained, "I saw a young officer very drunk in Leicester Square. It was obvious that he had just returned from the Front, for his uniform was covered with mud. When I arrived on the scene he was being helped into a taxi by a woman, who may or may not have been his wife. I went up to the taxi and asked the officer his name.

"'Name! Name?' he replied. 'My name? Why, I am the end of a perfect day.'"

Mr. Henry Savage tells in *The Receding Shore* a story about Lord Plumer, whom he saw frequently at H.Q. "Twice a day it was customary for the guard to turn out to him, and some of them, tumbling out in a hurry once to a false alarm, were reassured by the sentry, with an eye on the main entrance, that 'the old blighter hadn't come out yet.' 'It's all right,' said the General pleasantly from a window just above, 'the old blighter will be down in a moment.'"

The *Hades Herald*, run by the Inns of Court, records this conservation between a private and an officer on night operations:

"Who are you?"



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Excited Tommy (as the gun gets into position): "'Ere, back 'er down a bit. She's on my fag!"

"I'm a connecting file, and I've lost my ruddy platoon. Who are you?"

"I'm a company officer, and I've lost my ruddy company!"

Rations provoked many a grin. According to the *Minden Magazine*, when the bread ration was one small loaf per sixteen men, one bright lad, on receiving his share, said: "Eh, corporal, w'a's this?"

"That, m'lad, is your bread ration."

"Blimy, A thowt it were 'oly communion!"

In "German South-West"

A story of Major Alport's about the cast-iron Army biscuit recalls an incident in German South-West Africa after an instruction had to be issued forbidding men to fire off their rifles without just cause. The next morning a shot rang out; men rushed in all directions, but nothing happened. Then the military police turned up with a miserable-looking, thoroughly scared youth.

"My defence, sir, is that I was merely trying an experiment," he told the enraged C.O. "While endeavouring to bite a piece out of one of the clinker biscuits you issued this morning I broke one of my teeth. I then tried to break it in two with a stone; failing to make any impression upon it, I lost my temper, seized my rifle and fired a bullet into it at point-blank range."

"Did you break it?" asked the C.O.

"No, sir! The bullet bored a hole through the middle of it."

He presented the punctured biscuit, and was discharged with a caution!

The humours of giving concert-party shows in France are described amusingly by Miss Lena Ashwell in *Myself a Player*. She had to say to her ex-husband in one play: "You were a moral man, and chatty, and quite the philanthropist," and couldn't understand why the line provoked loud laughter! She did not know that, in khaki jargon, "chatty" meant "lousy."

After a performance of *Macbeth* at Rouen, she asked a sergeant what they thought about it in his mess. "Well there, Miss," he answered, "I ain't 'eard no complaints."

Sometimes, when the Y.M.C.A. hut was crowded, the men made frantic efforts to get within hearing. "On one occasion, the place being a tent and many men left outside," she wrote, "a

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Awe-struck Tommy (from the trenches): "Look, Bill—soldiers!"

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Jock (in captured trench): "Come awa' up here, Donal'; it's drier."

very strange thing was seen, apparently hanging on the canvas wall, which, under prolonged scrutiny, turned out to be a large red ear. Some brilliant genius had discovered that by cutting a hole to fit his ear he could hear much better."

During a tour of the Salisbury Plain camps two of the company quivered with rage when they saw the bed which had been reserved for them, and took the sheets to the official responsible. "We had all the convalescents yesterday—not enough tablecloths to go round," he explained. "That isn't dirt; it's nothing but honey and jam."

In the Eastern Mediterranean

Col. Rutherford recalled that an M.O. at Salonica who had spent all his time, both there and in France, as regimental doctor, came to his hospital for a rest. On going to his ward next day, the M.O. found all the beds filled with young men wearing their hair very long and well greased and brushed back. Accustomed to soldiers in the line, he asked the R.A.M.C. sergeant: "What are all these men, sergeant; are they soldiers?"

"Oh yes, sir," was the reply, "they all belong to the Buttercup Concert Party."

"Good God," exploded the M.O., "they look to me like a lot of b—— artists!"

The long-haired lads were giving a show in the hospital theatre.

Often there was a funny side to War marriages. When the Colonel was at Constantinople after the Armistice, and an infantry battalion embarked for Malta, an excited young Greek woman rushed to the E.S.O. and demanded a passage for herself, as her husband was leaving on the ship.

"You are sure you are married to him?" he asked.

"But yes, of a certainty," she replied; "behold my marriage lines."

She handed him a document which stated that "Pte. X had this day been awarded a third-class Certificate of Education!" The important-looking paper in an unknown language had been good enough for her—*and* for Pte. X.

An anti-submarine gun officer at Cyprus who married a Greek maiden got the surprise of his life, according to Major E. W. B. Gill in *War, Wireless and Wangles*: "The gunner managed to get a few days' leave for a honeymoon and on his return found, to his annoyance, the whole of his wife's family, up to and including several generations, ensconsed in a small house he had hired for himself and his bride. Up to the time when I left the island he had not succeeded in ejecting them, being always told it was the custom for the son-in-law to have all his relatives to live with him."

In *My Sporting Life*, Mr. Adair Dighton, F.R.C.S., the aural surgeon, relates how he was acting as M.O. when a Tommy rushed in with "something" wrong with his ear, and asked him to get him off a draft which was leaving that night.

"It's not so much my ear," he explained, "but that I want to get married to the dearest little bit of goods you ever saw, to-morrow."

Mr. Dighton wrote a note to his colonel which had the desired effect. The following morning the Tommy turned up again and said: "Look here, Doc., sorry to bother you again, but be a sport and sign me up as fit to leave on a draft to-morrow night."

Mr. Dighton hardly had time to expostulate before he went on: "Oh! I know what you're thinking, but, good

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Long-suffering Sergeant: "We got another 'arf-hour to go yet. *I* don't know what to do with yer."

Rookie (suggestively): "There's some trees over there, Sergeant."

Sergeant: "Yes, I know. But there ain't any ropes."

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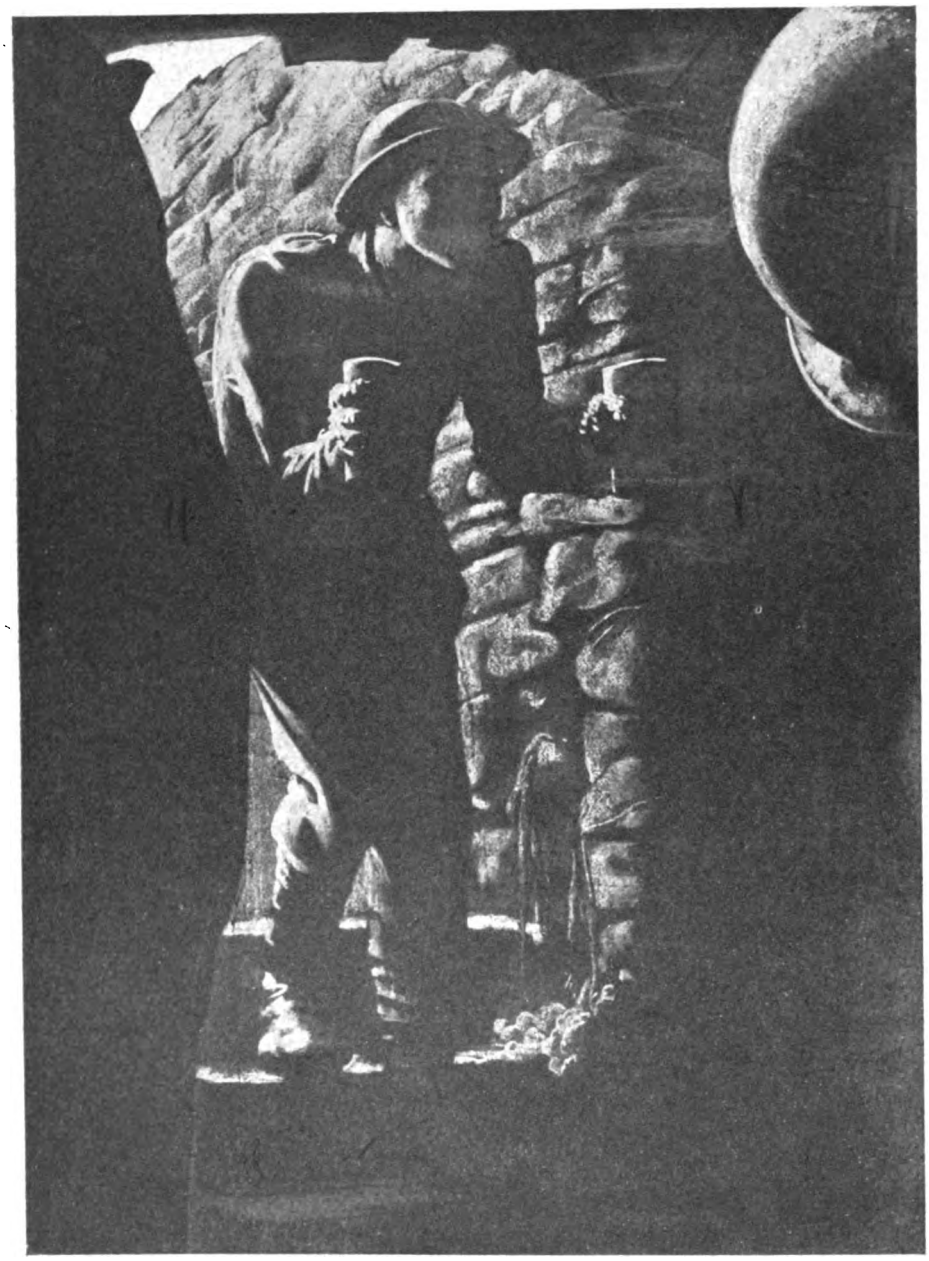

From the original in the Imperial War Museum.

"THE CUP BEARER"

A sketch by Eric Kennington, artist and sculptor. Kennington, a Londoner, "joined up" in the normal manner in 1914, but was invalided home the following year. Shortly afterwards he executed a large painting on glass, called "The Kensingtons at Laventie," which was partly responsible for his again going to France in 1916 as Official Artist. In addition to his War studies and his sculpture-work, which is mainly post-war, and includes a series of brick carvings on the Shakespeare Memorial Theatre at Stratford-on-Avon, he has made many portrait-sketches, especially of Oriental celebrities such as T. E. Lawrence, Sir Ronald Storrs, and a number of Lawrence's Arab friends.

God, she's got a glass eye and a cork leg!"

And that was how a C3 man became A1 in the short space of 24 hours. . . .

Laughter and Liquor

Liquor—on the rare occasions when it was available—occasioned many laughs. Sir John Martin-Harvey, in his *Autobiography*, mentions a W.O., sent up the line with the unit's rum ration, who was tempted, fell by the way, and had to be conveyed back to quarters by stretcher bearers.

Unfortunately they met General Sir A. Hunter-Weston, so hurriedly threw a blanket over the inebriated sergeant-major. The General stood to attention and gravely saluted the party, saying, "The Corps Commander salutes the brave dead." The S.M. thereupon emerged from his blanket and hiccoughed: "What the b—— hell is the —— blighter saying?"

Major Alport notes that some Serbian officers who were present at an informal musical evening in Salonica sprang smartly to the salute when one of our men began to warble *It's a wee deoch and doris*. The Major asked one of them why. "Ah!" he exclaimed. "You know, eet is zee, wat you call it, zee Scotch National Anthem!"

Dominion troops at times caused a great deal of amusement. Col. Rutherford says that at one period a Canadian brigade was attached, and the "policeman" of his lot, anxious for tips on how to keep discipline among these "wild colonial soldiery," asked the Canadian A.P.M. what their system was.

"Wal," was the reply, "it's pretty simple. We just keep discipline with a club."

The Hon. Sir John Kirwan, in *My Life's Adventure*, recalls that some of the Turks on Gallipoli had good boots which the Australians coveted, and that the latter were in the habit of raiding enemy trenches to get a pair. One who was a long time away eventually turned up with the much-prized boots.

"We thought you were not coming back. What delayed you?" he was asked.

"Oh," he answered, "I had to kill six before I got a pair to fit."

An American Joke

Mr. James Barnes relates in *From Then Till Now* that while he was serving with the American Army in France, he and another officer ditched their car one night, and tried to stop others passing along the road by signalling with a flashlight; but the drivers paid no attention. At last they managed to stop one.

"Who are you? What the devil do you want?" called a voice from the front seat.

"I'm an American officer and my car's in the ditch," it was explained. "I have a tow line and, if you give me a pull, I think I can get out."

A British staff officer stepped out, then turned to a superior in the car. "It *is* an American officer, sir," he said; then added apologetically: "Sorry if I appeared rather gruff, but we thought you might be a bunch of Australians. They stopped the brigadier last night and got his watch."

Major de Montmorency writes of a captain in the Queen's Regiment who, on arriving in the trenches from leave, told his men there was excellent news from the East: a well-known Colonial division had occupied Bethlehem. "My!" said one of his Cockneys

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SOUTH of PÉRONNE

Then and Now

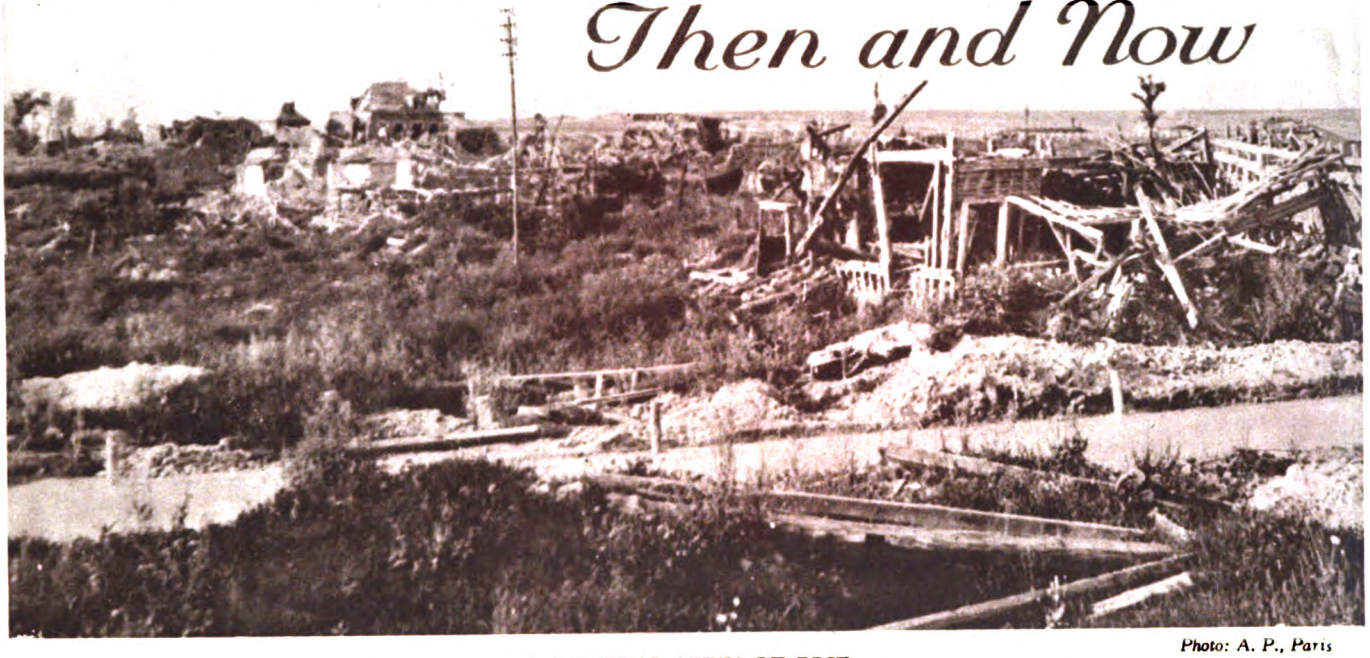

Photo: A. P., Paris

A GENERAL VIEW OF BRIE

Brie-sur-Somme, one of the best-known villages on the river, lies on the right or east bank 6 km. south of Péronne, and owes most of its notoriety to the fact that here stands the bridge which carries the great Amiens-St. Quentin highway over the water. The position of this bridge, and the immense breadth of the Somme hereabouts, were well borne out in two pictures which we reproduced in photogravure on page 305 of Volume One; but the above is our first illustration of Brie itself, and was taken on July 29th, 1917.

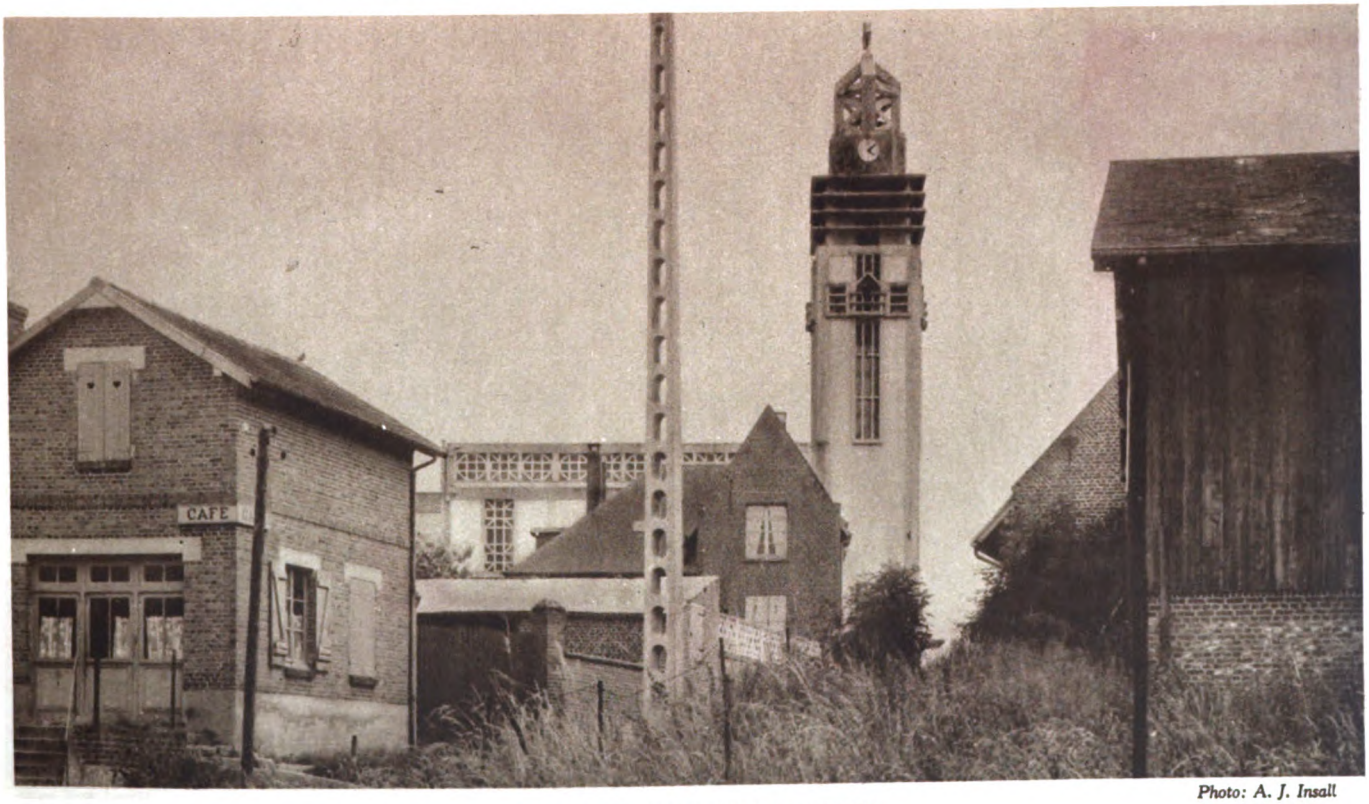

Photo: A. J. Insall

AN ULTRA-MODERN CHURCH

Some account of the splendid R.E. work at Brie in March, 1917, was given beneath the earlier pictures alluded to above. March, 1918, again saw heroic deeds at this point, a brief epitome of which will be found overleaf. The final clearance of the village was effected on September 5th, 1918, by the 32nd Division. To-day Brie possesses one British cemetery, in which lie 365 United Kingdom, 27 Australian, 1 Canadian, 36 German, and 1 unidentified fallen.

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Photo: A. P., Paris

REMAINS OF A WATER-MILL

This photograph was taken at Pont-lès-Brie, on the western side of the river. Orders to the XIX Corps to retire behind the Somme were issued early on March 23rd, 1918, and the 150th Brigade of the 50th Division was detailed to cross at Brie. The first half of the withdrawal was effected, thanks to a mist, with relatively little hindrance; but later the enemy followed up so closely into Brie that the 1/4th East Yorks, holding the bridgehead, had to be supported by the 1/5th Green Howards and a battalion of the newly-arrived 8th Division, in order to give the transport time to cross.

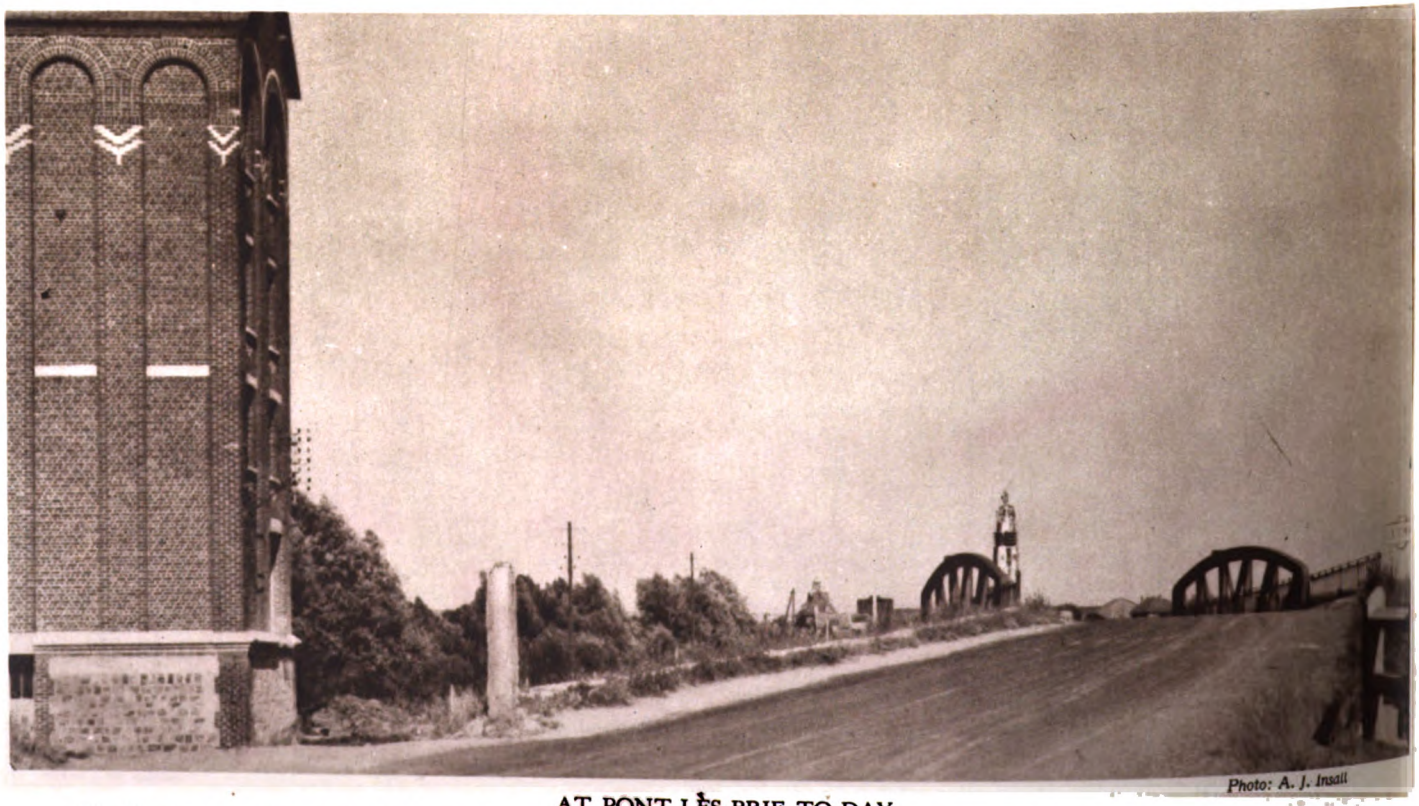

Photo: A. J. Insall

AT PONT-LÈS-BRIE TO-DAY

The blowing-up of the massive bridge carrying the Roman Road into Brie was no light task, and the final preparations were made under shell fire. Immediately after the destruction, it was discovered that the rearguard of the Green Howards had been cut off; but luckily the handful of men managed to cross by the debris. The 50th Division, and the 8th which later came up to relieve it, continued to hold Pont-lès-Brie, and the west bank of the Somme on either side of it, from March 23rd until the 25th.

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Photo: A. P., Paris

GOOD-BYE TO A CHÂTEAU

This is the type of scene which brings almost as much grief to the hearts of historians and lovers of the picturesque as a harrowing picture of War's destruction of humankind. The magnificent feudal castle—a real château, this time—here seen in the process of disintegration, is that of Happlincourt (no relative of Haplincourt with only one "p"), a tiny settlement on the west bank of the Somme just south of Pont-lès-Brie railway station. Both in 1917, when this photograph was taken, and in 1918, Happlincourt's fortunes were closely identified with those of its neighbour.

Photo: A. J. Insall

ALL THAT IS LEFT

The gate-tower alone remains of Happlincourt's great château; yet even this fragment is adjudged sufficiently important to have been scheduled, recently, as a National Monument. The Fifth Army's defence of the crossings along this reach of the Somme in 1918 was truly splendid. A German account says: "For two days the enemy defended to the last the two crossing-places at Brie and St. Christ. Only in the afternoon of March 25th, when severely pressed from the north and south, did he evacuate the field."

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Photo: A. P., Paris

WILDERNESS

The wilderness had been the village of Barleux until the Germans retired to the Hindenburg Line in 1917. The first photogravure section in this volume was entitled " From Soyécourt to Barleux," but the illustrations of the latter showed only the meadow, outside the village, occupied in October, 1918, by Fourth Army H.Q. In relation to Brie the place is 4 km. (as the crow flies) to the north-west, and to get to it one must go along the Roman Road from Pont-lès-Brie to Villers-Carbonnel, there turning north.

Photo: A. J. Insall

AT THE CROSS-ROADS

The exhausted 150th Brigade passed through Barleux, on its way back from Brie to Belloy-en-Santerre, after the relief of the 50th Division by the 8th on March 23rd, 1918; and a sorry sight it must have found the ruins. Two days later, as related on page 20 of this volume, the enemy advanced up the small valley east of the village after forcing the Eterpigny crossing, and mastered Barleux during the afternoon. Its recapture was effected in the last week of August.

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" them blinkin' shepherds won't 'arf 'ave to watch their flocks by night ! "

The jobs men had held in civil life provoked a good deal of badinage. Mr. F. E. Baily, in *Twenty-nine Years' Hard Labour*, says that his convoy in Africa had one of the worst drivers he had ever seen. One day, after a corporal had mended a puncture which this driver was incapable of mending himself, he proceeded to drive on to another tree-stump and ruin another tyre.

" And what was you in civil life ? " demanded the corp.

" I assisted my wife in a baby-linen shop," replied the driver.

" Ah ! " said the corp. with extreme sarcasm, "I can just see you a-measurin' out the lace ! "

The *Invicta Gazette* tells of a lance-corporal in charge of the musketry squad. The N.C.O. asked a man who had been a navvy in civil life : " Is your rifle loaded ? "

" Aye," was the reply, " four in tin box an' one in t' tunnel ! "

A Claims Officer in Egypt

Mr. Tilney Barton, in *The Life of a Country Lawyer*, discloses that when he served with the Claims Bureau in Egypt and Palestine they were visited one morning by a captain who said he had been sent down by the " Q " branch with a view to joining their staff on important and specialised work. The colonel showed him a form of claim and said, " I expect you could tackle this job ? "

" Oh, yes, sir."

" Well, when can you start work ? "

That was all. . . . But as the man was leaving, Mr. Barton suggested : " You might ask him, sir, what work he was doing in private life."

The colonel did so.

" Oh," replied the captain, " I was an accountant, sir."

Afterwards Mr. Barton discovered that his work had been issuing receipts for bottles in a soda-water factory at Cairo !

There were plenty of laughs at drill. Sir John Martin-Harvey mentions an exasperated N.C.O. who was rehearsing a company for a military funeral. The men were not at all impressed by the solemnity of the occasion. At last he bawled : " Well, look 'ere ! The 'orse is there, the 'earse is 'ere, and the corpse inside. So for Gawd's sake look miserable ! "

Dodging fatigues was always a source of fun. Mr. Baily, writing of the early days in East Africa, says that a favourite trick was to fall in a number of men and then say : " Fall out the men who can drive Rolls-Royces."

From the original in the Imperial War Museum.

" THE DIE-HARDS "

Another of Eric Kennington's Western Front sketches. The official description reads : " ' If this is all the tea we gets—roll on, breakfast-time ! ' The Middlesex, the ' Die-Hards,' are back in billets. Comparative comfort and luxury produce wild, high spirits, unceasing jokes, songs, and insults. The tea is ample, but a good soldier must have a grouse."

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When a number of simple souls had fallen out, the corporal would add: "Well, you're for coal fatigue!"

The choosing of quarters and billets was frequently an amusing business. Mr. Barton discovered at Salisbury, where accommodation was very limited, a Wesleyan chapel with five classrooms and a large hall above them, obtained permission to requisition the building, and offered it to the command paymaster, Colonel Ireland.

The C.P. inspected it, found no objections, but declared that nothing would induce him to allow the command cashier and his staff to occupy the rooms and hall unless Mr. Barton could guarantee that the organ in the chapel would not be played during office hours.

Mr. Barton promised to make this a special condition, but actually did nothing. The cashier and his staff moved in, and about a fortnight later Colonel Ireland said: "Oh, Barton, you've never told me whether you settled the question of that confounded organ!"

"Oh, I'm sorry I omitted to report to you, sir," was the reply, "but I've made quite satisfactory arrangements. The organ is only, as a rule, played on a Sunday, but I have arranged that it shall play in the command cashier's staff at 9 a.m. with *Onward, Christian Soldiers*, and play them out at 7.30 p.m. with the *Nunc Dimittis*."

Air-raid Humour at Home

Humour relieved the tension even of air raids at home. In *Vaudeville Days*, Mr. Billy Boardman, the music-hall manager, writes of Brighton: "I remember one of my performers who was staying at a small hotel facing the sea, where his windows were fitted with old-fashioned Venetian blinds, being rounded up one night for having the slats pointing upwards. The constable who called darkly hinted at such a light being seen from the sky.

"The next night my friend was careful to turn the slats downwards, and again he was favoured with a call. . . . To the officer's reference to the downward slats my friend replied: 'Lummy, officer! What are we trying to head off—aeroplanes or submarines?'"

Some of the unconscious humour in letters received at the Separation Allowance Dept. of the Ministry of Pensions has become classic:

"You have changed my little boy into a little girl. Will it make any difference?"

"My Bill has been put in charge of a spitoon. Will I get any more pay?"

"I am glad to tell you that my husband has now been repotted dead."

"I have not received any pay since my husband was confined in a constipation camp in Germany."

"In accordance with instructions on ring paper I have given birth to twins enclosed in envelope."

"If I don't get my husband's money soon, I shall be compelled to go on the streets and lead an imortal life."

It was a great art in war-time—the art of "smiling through."

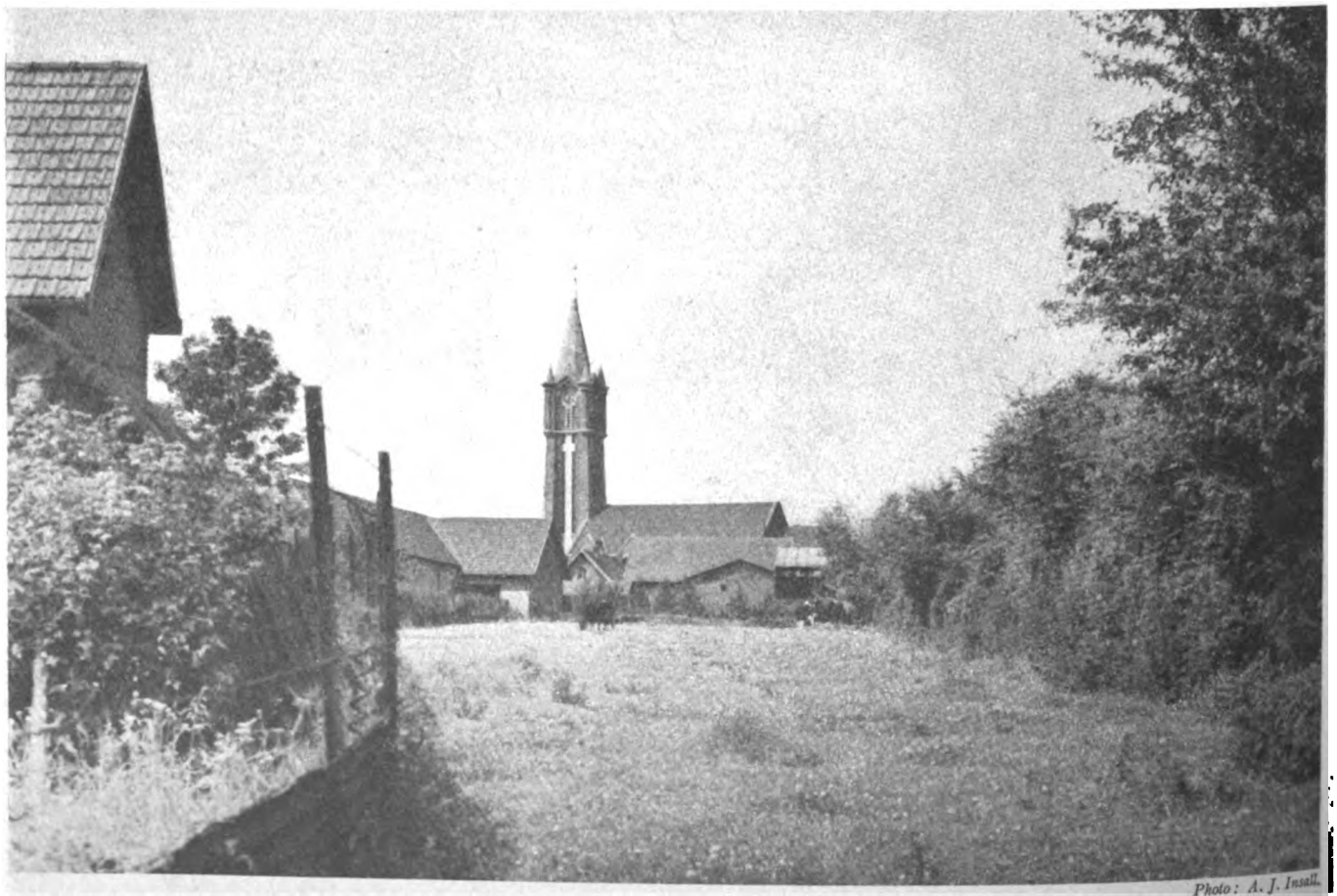

Photo: A. J. Insall.

A RURAL HAVEN

The haven is Sapignies, on the Arras road 4 km. north of Bapaume; and it was anything but an abode of peace and browsing kine in 1918. On March 25th it was subjected to a heavy attack about 7.30 a.m., and at the first onset a company of 12th East Surreys (122nd Brigade) was annihilated. About 10 a.m., after one abortive attack, the Germans gained the southern edge of the village and took 200 prisoners, but were then overwhelmed by the fire of the 14th Argyll and Sutherlands. Not until the afternoon, when he had brought up more men and heavy machine guns, did the enemy master the remainder of the ruins. Sapignies was regained for the Allies on August 25th, 1918, by the 2nd Division.

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CHAPTER XXXVI

WITH THE R.F.C. AGAIN

In this further chapter on the work of the Royal Flying Corps the story of the Junior Service's contribution to the common cause is continued. Nor was this contribution made on any mean scale. To those who were present on the Western Front in the early days of the War when the first few pilots were carrying out their hazardous tasks, and who were spared to witness the work of the flying men of 1918, the change must have seemed incredible had it not been so gradual. It will always appear to border upon the miraculous that a force consisting of a few crazy machines should, within the space of four years, have developed into a fighting organisation as supreme in the air as was the Royal Navy on the sea.

We left the R.F.C. at the stage where it had just acquired its first *bona fide* fighting squadron, a two-seater unit equipped with the Vickers Fighter, an aeroplane capable of a good 60 m.h.p. in level flight at about 10,000 feet—the height which it was normally able to reach on active service. This was in the summer of 1915; and the B.E.2c's and Morane Parasol[1] monoplanes (the B.E.'s being, of course, biplanes), which represented the principal machines used at that time for the collection of information and the observation of artillery fire, had an approximately similar performance.

Difficult to Arm

Only the smaller, single-seater craft, the "scouts" (e.g. Bristol and Martinsyde), possessed a turn of speed approaching three figures; but these were difficult to arm efficiently, and were really effective in combat (the scout's essential rôle) only in the hands of a few select pilots. The enemy had so far confined his choice of aeroplanes to the rather staid L.V.G., Albatros, and Aviatik two-seater biplanes—none of them very fast, but all capable of attaining a fair height, and all equipped with reliable engines of the water-cooled Benz or Mercédès pattern.

In respect of engines, the Germans had gone about things in a more rational way than we had. In the words of Marshal of the Royal Air Force Sir John Salmond[2]: "The great mistake we all made was to build the aeroplane, and then look round for an engine to put into it. The Germans adopted a better method from the start, but themselves suffered from over-standardisation. Their Mercédès and Benz engines, which had proved their merits before the War in motor-cars, were adopted early on, and remained substantially unaltered throughout.

"The German aeroplane constructors designed aeroplanes round these engines, with considerable success, and even the Fokker monoplane that caused us so much trouble in 1915–16 was built to take the German copy of the French rotary engines of the period. We learned our lesson in time, but not before we had paid a high price for our earlier mistake."

It has always been a favourite topic of discussion among the arm-chair critics as to whether the policy adopted by the R.F.C. from the moment of its entering the field in 1914—that is, a policy of being unremittingly aggressive towards the enemy—was the correct one. It is sufficient here to say that this attitude gave us a complete moral ascendancy over the German Air Service—an ascendancy that endured throughout the War, surviving almost unaffected the less rosy periods, such as that of Arras, 1917. It was always the R.F.C. that went in search of mischief, and when, as happened from time to time, it bit off rather more than it could chew, the lull that followed was but a prelude to fresh aggression.

A One-sided Affair

The Battle of Loos, in September, 1915, was, from an aeronautical point of view, a somewhat one-sided affair. All through the battle the sky was teeming with British machines. Under the comforting, though superfluous, protection of a constant patrol of Vickers fighters, specially imported for the purpose from the Third Army area in the south, the B.E.'s of Nos. 2, 10, and 16 Squadrons (plus a handful of antiquated Maurice Farmans belonging to the last-named unit), and the Moranes of No. 3, flew to and fro over the lines performing prodigies of co-operation with the infantry and gunners.

Air duties now included such specialisation as counter-battery patrols, in addition to the less active artillery observation mentioned earlier; and the existence of a corps squadron flying-officer was enmeshed in a closely-woven net of technical complications which demanded an ever-increasing familiarity with the various problems that confronted the foot-soldier and the artilleryman. The air observer was now called upon, not merely to direct the fire of our guns on to their targets, but to find and select these targets, and, as the battle proceeded, to keep pace with, and report the progress of, the assaulting infantry.

The end of the year 1915 found the Royal Flying Corps on the Western Front increased to a strength of 12 squadrons; that is to say, there was at Sir John French's disposal at this date, exactly a gross of aeroplanes, under the direction of Brigadier-General H. M. Trenchard, a seconded officer from the Royal Scots Fusiliers who had been taught to fly by Mr. T. O. M. Sopwith at Brooklands in 1912.

A man of great stature, possessing a resonant voice, Trenchard early became a familiar figure in the R.F.C.; and throughout the British Army his nickname, "Boom," soon stood as a synonym for efficiency and tireless determination.

Very little ever escaped him, and many a quiet laugh was had in the evening at Headquarters R.F.C.—first at St. Omer, and later at St. André-aux-Bois—over the not altogether successful efforts of some junior commander to "pull wool" over the G.O.C. R.F.C.'s supposedly unsuspecting eyes.

"Make a Note of That, Maurice!"

Trenchard made a practice of paying surprise visits to the various squadrons up and down the line, and there was always a flutter in the lesser dovecotes when word reached a squadron-commander that "Boom" was in his

[1] Parasol. The name given to the Morane monoplane fitted with main planes anchored above the fuselage, or body. The arrangement gave exceedingly good downward view to the pilot and observer.

[2] In a foreword to the English translation of *Jours Envolés* ("Days on the Wing"), by the Belgian pilot, Major the Chevalier Willy Coppens de Houthulst, D.S.O., M.C., etc.

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vicinity. There would follow the invariable standing conference, held on the aerodrome some distance from the sheds, at which Trenchard would preside, anchored upon his shooting-stick, with the Hon. Maurice Baring busily taking notes at his side; and the phrase—"Make a note of that, Maurice!"—became a sort of Flying Corps slogan.

The year 1916 was, for the Royal Flying Corps, a really busy year. To begin with, there was the Fokker. This aeroplane, a single-seater monoplane fitted with a rotary engine copied from the French "Gnome," and developing, like its prototype, some 90–100 horse-power, had made its appearance in the preceding summer, and, during the latter months of 1915, had gained a certain number of successes in fights with the more sedate of our reconnaissance machines.

It had not ventured far towards disputing air supremacy with such machines as the Vickers Fighters; and for this reason, perhaps, we had somewhat underestimated its capabilities. But now the German pilot Immelmann, flying the new fighter, in which a fixed gun was arranged to fire forward, through the revolving blades of the propeller, began to levy a heavy toll among our slower two-seaters, especially among such machines as the B.E.2c's, which were not too well equipped for beating off the kind of surprise attacks that he introduced.

True, we asked for all we got. Had we drawn in our horns and spent less time prospecting for trouble deep inside the enemy's lines, it is probable that the Fokker monoplane would never have climbed out of the rut of mediocrity to which in reality it belonged. But when a Fokker pilot came round the shoulder of a large cloud, and found a virtually defenceless B.E. chugging along beneath him, intent only upon the movements visible on the spidery roads far below, what could he do but tip down his nose, stand on his rudder-bar, and drop headlong on to his prey?

A Fokker's Tactics

He knew that all that was necessary was for him to squeeze the gun controls fitted to his joy-stick at the moment when his own machine was just behind and above the other, and to continue to squeeze for about seven seconds. Thereafter a slight easing of the stick would bring his nose up sufficiently to alter the direction or angle of his descent, and to allow him to pass the British machine without ramming it. Next, if the attack had proved abortive, he could continue descending and land on his own aerodrome, or, if it had been successful, hang about until his victim showed by its direction where it was going to strike, and then drop down, land beside it, and stake his claim.

Things reached a serious pass as a result of the Fokker, and we lost a number of valuable lives before we drove the monoplane out of the sky. However, the work of the R.F.C. went on meanwhile. B.E.'s flew out alone on long reconnaissance, and the majority

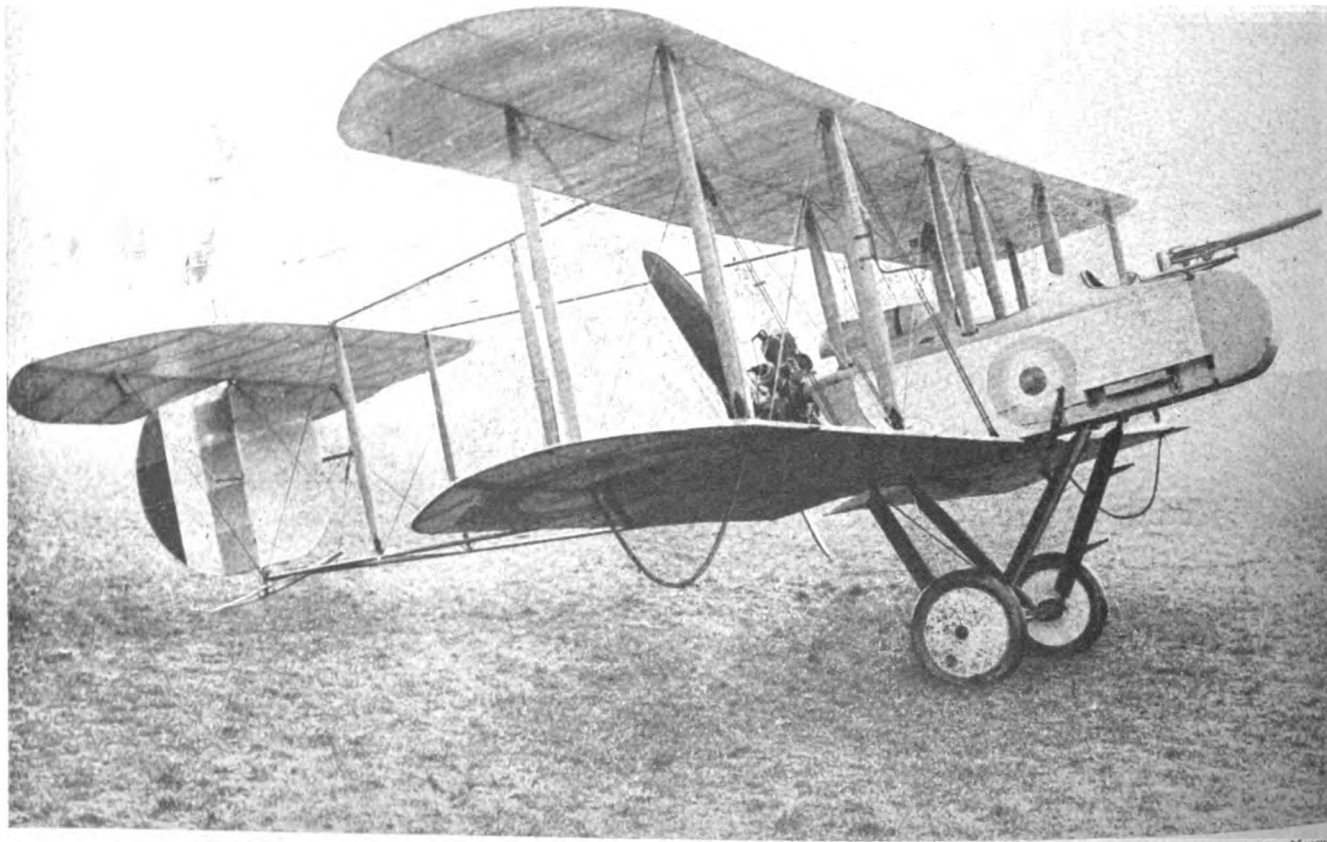

Photo: Imperial War

SCION OF A FAMOUS HOUSE

Few manufacturers of military aircraft are better known than Vickers, for this great armament firm early turned a large part of its attention to the aeronautical question. Above is a Vickers Fighter F.B.9 Biplane, fitted with a 100 horse-power Monosoupape "Gnome" engine.

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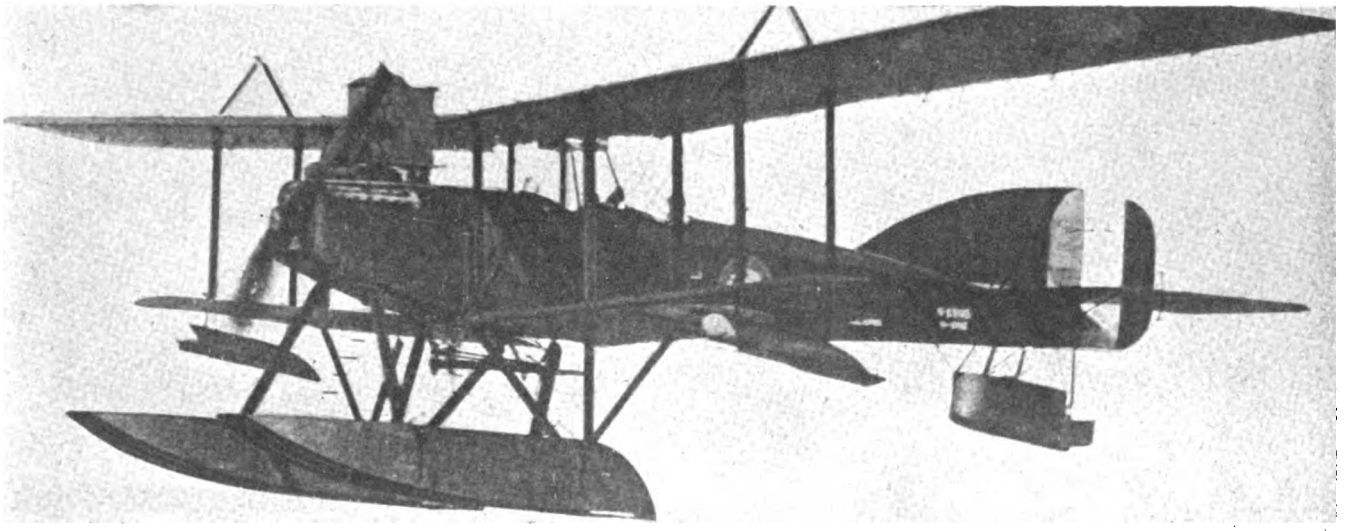

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

DROPPING A TORPEDO

One of the developments in the co-operation of aircraft with naval vessels during the War was the invention of devices whereby torpedoes could be launched from seaplanes. Here is a photograph, taken during a test, of a Short 320 seaplane in the act of releasing a torpedo.

came back. The writer recollects seeing one machine, in the spring of 1916, spend the best part of a quarter-of-an-hour in a duel with a Fokker pilot over Douai.

The B.E. aviator came upon the scene just as one of our patrolling Vickers Fighters had given up all hope of overtaking this Fokker; for a Vickers depended largely upon height and a power-assisted dive for any extra speed it might attain. So the B.E. had either to retire or to take up the cudgels with the Fokker pilot alone. It chose the latter alternative, and led the German as merry a dance as ever Teuton airman indulged in, flying right in underneath his craft and then rearing up and banking first to right and then to left, thus completely upsetting the German's aim each time he came screaming down at it.

It was an amazing entertainment, and it concluded with the jaunty return of the B.E., plastered with anti-aircraft shell-bursts, from a point some 15 miles across the lines, while the Fokker stood panting with mortification on its aerodrome somewhere in the dusty mists about Valenciennes. (Or so it appeared; actually the Fokker *Abteilungen* had their landing-grounds much closer than that.)

The Fokker "menace" was destroyed in the spring of 1916, chiefly by the De Havilland 2 and the F.E.2b, both "pusher" biplanes, the former a single-seater, and the latter a much larger machine built for two—pilot and observer. Other aeroplanes that had a share in the work were the previously-mentioned Vickers Fighter, and the Nieuport Scout—the tractor product of a French designer. This was a delightful little biplane, with a fine turn of speed and an excellent climb. It carried a Lewis gun mounted to fire along its axis of flight from a point above the centre of its top plane.

Two R.F.C. Pictures

It is with great regret that we are here compelled by lack of space to dismiss the Fokker monoplane, for the story of its downfall would easily fill several exciting chapters. We may, perhaps, be permitted to conclude our reference to the machine with two word-pictures. The first is of the front seat of a British two-seater fighter, engaged in the somewhat unorthodox duty of long reconnaissance, forcing its way through the air in the neighbourhood of St. Quentin on one of those clear frosty days so plentiful during the winter of 1915–16. Seated there, bunched up in the narrow confines of his cockpit, a Scots observer is

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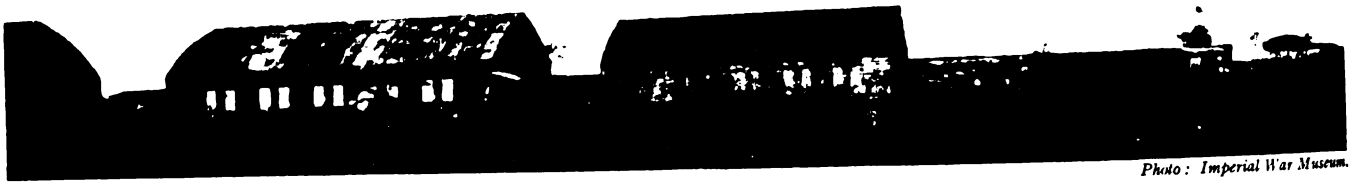

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

ON THE WARPATH

Bristol Fighters—type F.2b—flying over Verny aerodrome on June 26th, 1918, at the start of an expedition to the German lines. At this time the newly-formed R.A.F. was proving its worth by ever-increasing activity and co-operation with the other Arms.

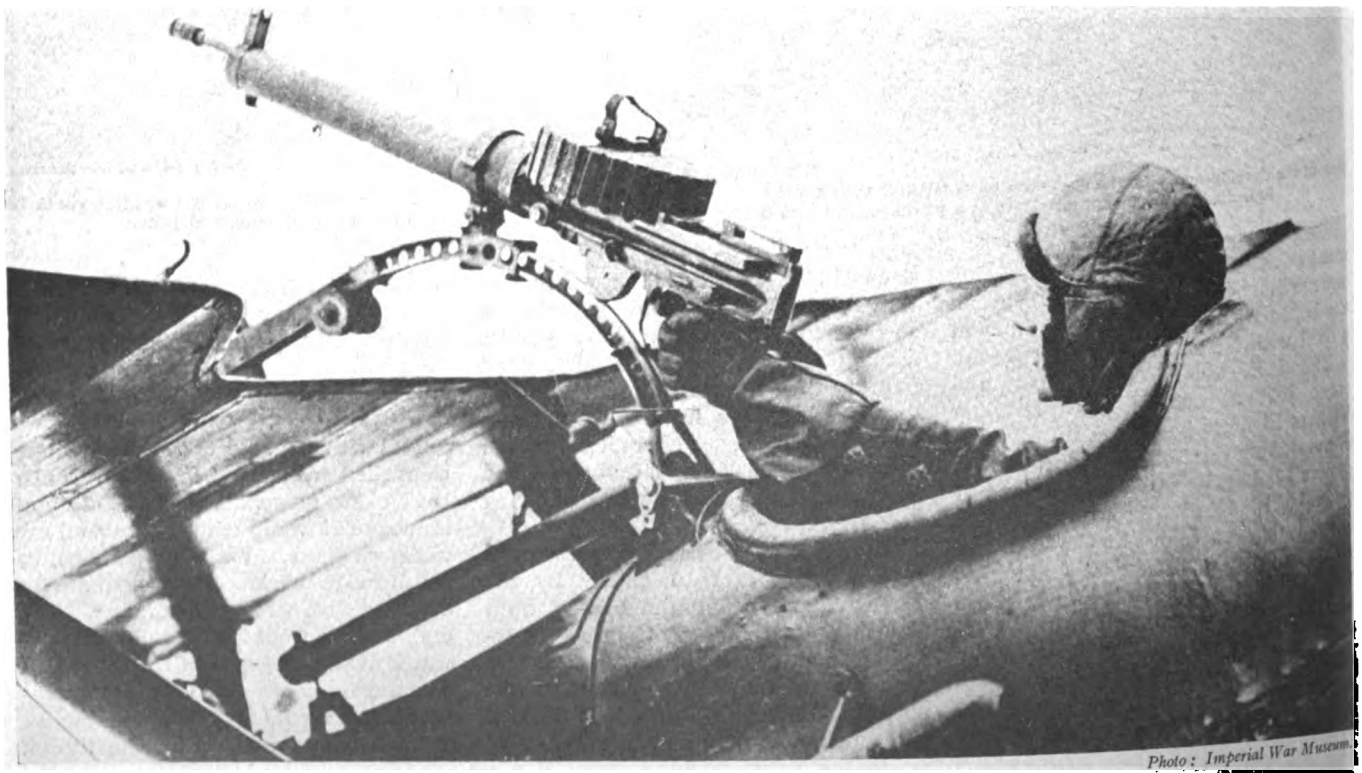

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

THE FOSTER GUN-MOUNTING

This mounting was invented by an R.F.C. flight-sergeant. The photograph shows the method of fitting a Lewis gun above the upper plane of a Nieuport single-seater Scout. The gun was fired by means of a Bowden cable. Equipped thus, the Nieuport Scout, a French machine, was a very valuable fighter. It was first adopted by the R.F.C. early in 1916.

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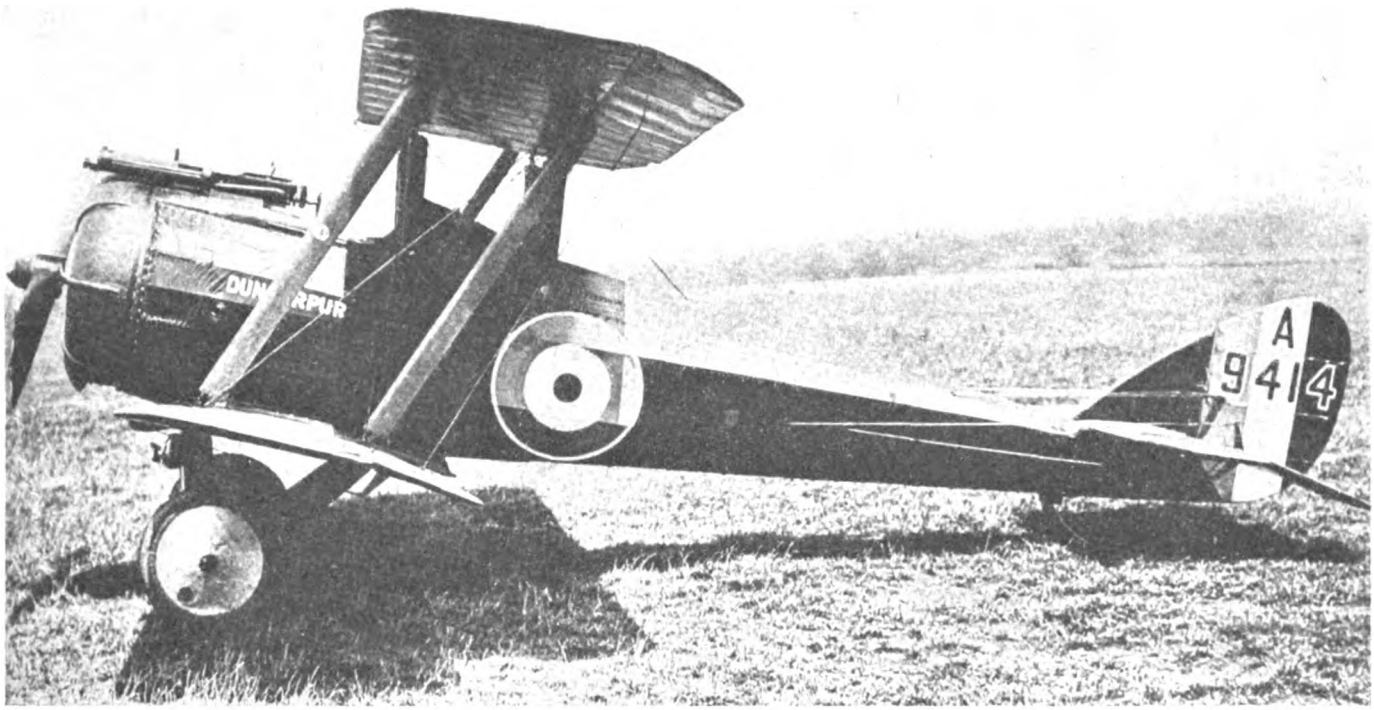

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

THE DE HAVILLAND 5

The D.H. 5 biplane shown here is fitted with a 110 horse-power Le Rhône engine. As regards other initials by which types of aeroplane were known, "F.E." stood for "Farman (later Fighting) Experimental," "B.E." for "Blériot (later British) Experimental," and so on.

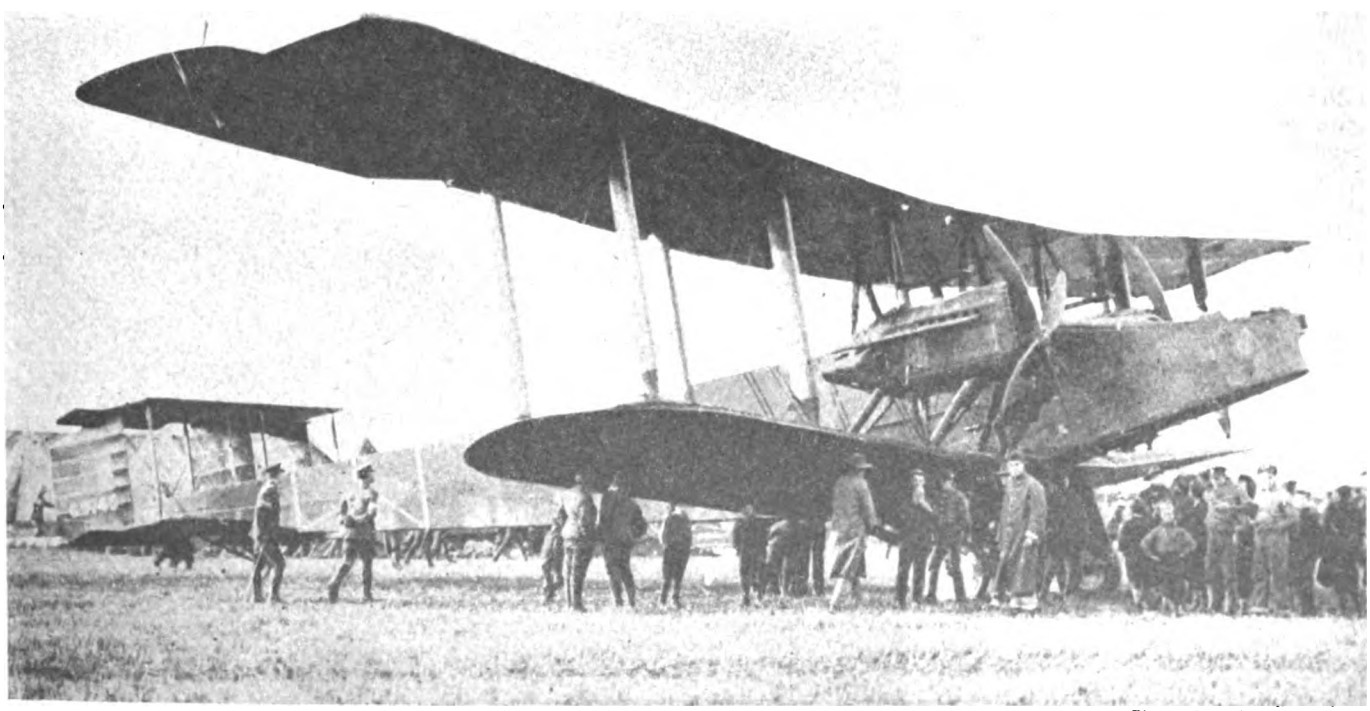

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

A GIANT BOMBER

A Handley Page twin-engined bomber, one of the giants of its day, photographed on November 21st, 1918, near No. 3 Australian General Hospital, Abbeville. The Handley Page 0/400 bomber was used extensively during 1917 and 1918 for conveying urgently-needed pilots from England to the front, and may thus be called the forerunner of the modern aerial troop-carrier.

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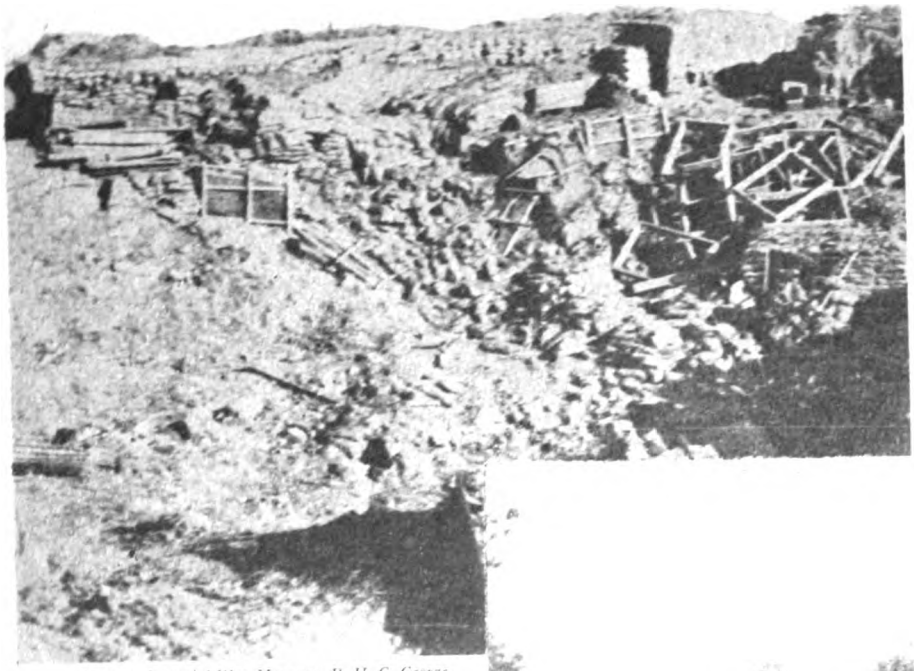

Photos: Imperial War Museum, R. H. C. George

HOOGE CRATER

On page 22 of this volume we illustrated Hooge Crater, and on page 23 gave a picture of Hooge Crater Cemetery, stating that it occupied the same site. This was incorrect, as the cemetery flanks the southern side of the road opposite Hooge Chapel (see lower photograph on page 61), while the crater was on the north or same side as the chapel. Above is another War view of the cavity, and on the right a lily-pond believed to be now filling it.

busily engaged in effecting repairs to his Lewis gun, which lies completely dismembered in his lap. Behind the British machine, at a distance of about 50 yards, a Fokker monoplane is flying merrily along, its pilot taking careful stock of his victim, and doubtless intending to delay shooting it down until directly above the town.

The picture is incomplete, because we do not see the sequel, in the course of which the British aeroplane swings suddenly round, with its Lewis gun spitting bullets, and the Fokker falls switch-backing earthward. . . .

The second scene shows us a tousle-headed boy superintending the adjustment of a Nieuport Scout in front of a roughly-made mound of turves on an aerodrome near Aubigny, behind Arras. The turves are calculated to stop machine-gun bullets, even if fired into them at point-blank range. It is late in the evening, and the mists are rising from the low ground between the aerodrome and Savy village, where the fat rats are sitting on the mud-banks of the Scarpe waiting to start out on their nightly foraging expeditions; but for Lieutenant Albert Ball of the Sherwood Foresters, attached R.F.C., time is of small account. The all-important matter is to get his Lewis gun firing accurately, so that he may leave the ground a little before dawn to-morrow and catch the early worm on the far side of the line.

It means little to him that his Flight Commander and brother pilots, over in the tumble-down farm in Savy-Berlette, have already changed into slacks and clean tunics, and are sitting about in the ante-room awaiting the announcement that "dinner is served, sir." As like as not, he will content himself with a few biscuits and a mug of home-made cocoa in the retirement of his own bell-tent

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on the edge of the aerodrome. Such is enthusiasm.

An All-round Ascendancy

Of more general importance than the subduing of the Fokker monoplane, although closely connected with this machine's downfall, was the all-round ascendancy of the Royal Flying Corps during 1916 over the enemy's Air Service along the whole length and breadth—especially the breadth—of the Western Front. This ascendancy was never more marked at any period of the War, except perhaps in the latter months of 1918; and it reached its culminating point during the First Battle of the Somme, when the R.F.C. virtually swept the German Flying Corps out of the sky.

So complete was our mastery at this period that during several critical days the German artillery simply did not dare come into action, knowing full well that to do so would be to invite annihilation, the air being crowded with British aeroplanes, their occupants waiting and watching for the tell-tale flash of any hostile gun. No wonder the German infantry, in its letters home, came to add the postscript: "Gott strafe the English, our gunners, and our Air Force!"

On a day in June, before the battle had started, a mock discharge of "gas" was made on a part of the British front south of Gommecourt, where the enemy's resistance was expected to be at its strongest; and while our guns opened up as if to herald the launching of our long-awaited assault, our aeroplanes flew low behind our foremost positions, taking stock of every German gun unwise enough to open fire in retaliation.

The day previously, every German kite-balloon operating along the British front, from the sea to south of the Somme, had been made to feel the insecurity of its position by a mass onslaught, in the course of which fifteen were attacked, some by special rockets fitted to single-seater aeroplanes, and others by phosphorus bombs. Five balloons had been destroyed in flames. Nor had this attempt been confined to the British front, the French and Belgians having made similar attacks at the same time—if anything, with results more paralysing to the enemy.

Statistics are notoriously misleading, but we may be forgiven if we seek here the help of a few of the more illuminating. The majority of us have some notion of the extent to which these islands were attacked by airship and aeroplane during the War. Those who have read with care the chapters which have already appeared, dealing with the story of those raids, will have ascertained the number of bombs dropped on Great Britain; the total fell just short of 9,000, and the weight exceeded 280 tons.

Some Aeronautical Statistics

During the Battle of the Somme, from the 1st July to the 17th November, 1916, the Royal Flying Corps dropped 17,600 bombs (ranging in weight from 20 to 336 lb. apiece), totalling 292 tons. In the same period, it exposed 19,000 photographic plates over the enemy's lines, and made 420,000 prints from the resulting negatives, its motor-cyclist despatch-riders seeing to the distribution of these among the various formations of the Army, such as mapping-centres and fighting-headquarters of divisions. It superintended, by means of wireless observation, the destruction or silencing of 8,612 artillery targets, set on fire 36 enemy balloons, and destroyed 164 hostile aeroplanes, driving down 205 others in a damaged condition.

There were two developments before, and one during, the Battle of the Somme, which deserve mention here before we pass on. Early in the year, permission had been obtained for the night-bombing of certain military ob-

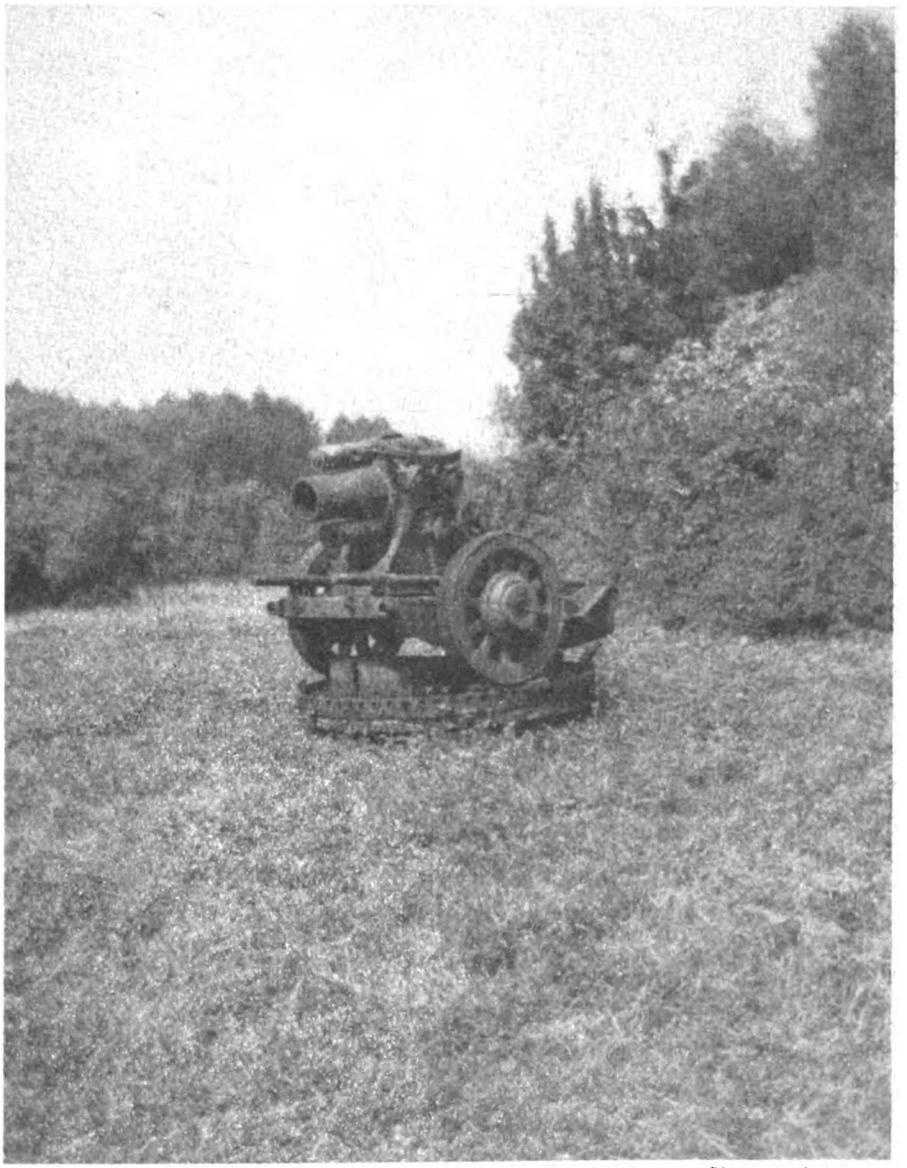

Photo: R. H. C. George.

IN THE GROUNDS OF HOOGE CHÂTEAU

The lily-pond, believed crater, illustrated opposite, is within the grounds of Hooge Château; and the piece of ordnance seen in the above photograph also stands in those precincts. Among a number of other interesting relics still to be found there are various "posts," bordering the paths, which prove on inspection to be old gas cylinders painted white!

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jectives some five miles behind the German lines; and before the end of February the enemy aerodrome situated near Cambrai had been so attacked. Profiting from the experience gained in this work during the ensuing months, pilots came, before the Somme Battle had reached its conclusion, to regard night-flying as a normal form of activity; and within less than a year, such flying was to be extended to single-seater fighter pilots.

The second development, which had had its beginnings in experiments conducted in the spring of the preceding year during the Battle of Aubers Ridge (May, 1915), concerned the hour-by-hour collection of intelligence relating to the progress of the attacking infantry; and this new duty was much amplified on the Somme. A host of ingenious devices, for the purpose of showing to the patrolling R.F.C. observer the location of the leading waves and their supports, were designed and made.

Some were good, and some useless. They included such things as bright metal discs sewn on to the back of the infantryman's tunic near the collar, and coloured flags, to be waved to attract the aeroplane observer's attention. The former frequently gave a position away to the enemy, and attracted the fire of hostile snipers if a man incautiously turned round in the sunlight; while the flags in the heat of battle were more of a hindrance than a help to the men detailed to carry them.

From the original in the Imperial War Museum.

CAPTAIN ALBERT BALL, V.C.

This portrait of one of the most celebrated airmen of the Great War is by E. Newling. Ball, who belonged to the Royal Flying Corps and the Notts. and Derby Regiment, won the V.C., D.S.O., and M.C., and was decorated for "most conspicuous bravery" during the period April 25th—May 6th, 1917. In the space of these 12 days he had taken part in 26 aerial combats, destroyed 11 hostile machines, driven down two more out of control, and forced several others to land. Before his death on May 7th, 1917, he accounted in all for 38 enemy aircraft.

French Girls Take a Hand

On the eve of the Somme battle, several hundred local French girls, recruited from the villages in the neighbourhood of Amiens, were set to work with needle and thread, making signalling panels of a type which could be thrown over the side of a trench and operated by means of cords; but in the end the most satisfactory method was found to be the lighting of coloured flares at the bottom of a trench or shell-hole—although there was always difficulty in ensuring that these would indeed be lighted, and contact-patrol observers as often as not had to rely upon the keenness of their eyesight for the accuracy of their reports.

In spite of the inherent and practically insurmountable difficulties in its way, however, contact patrol, as one of the most essential tasks now falling to the Royal Flying Corps, was henceforth to go from strength to strength. The commanders concerned looked to it as the most reliable authority for enabling them to say at any given stage of an operation: "My men have now reached such-and-such a line; urgent support is required at such-and-such a point."

It was a "nervy" job; pilots and observers engaged upon it were almost all the time flying within the arch formed by the shells passing towards their targets, and collisions from time to time took place.

A development to which reference has been made was the use of the aeroplane as a mobile machine-gun platform operating at a low altitude above the battle-area. The "official" use, at first, was restricted to one machine—an armoured B.E.2c flown by Captain Jenkins of one of the Corps squadrons, but it was the forerunner of much more work of this kind later. The idea began as a measure of safety, it being felt that the men who flew low above the fighting-zone watching for flares and other indications of our infantry's progress during an attack might find some measure of protection against

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fire from the ground in an aeroplane fitted with sheets of armour-plating. Jenkins turned the idea into an offensive one, taking a delight in flying along a strongly-manned hostile trench and raking it with his Lewis gun.

Development of Low-flying

It has already been related in TWENTY YEARS AFTER how the R.F.C. was instrumental in reporting the enemy's preparations for, and subsequent effecting of, the withdrawal to the Hindenburg Line. Low-flying aeroplanes co-operated in our advance, frequently taking an active hand in the fighting with their machine guns, and dispersing concentrations of troops holding up our infantry. The Battle of Arras, which opened on the 9th April, 1917, saw the development of this low-flying by two-seaters into yet another standard duty of the aeroplane in war.

The machines used for this work were still two-seaters (Sopwith biplanes, known as "1½-strutters," on account of the peculiar disposition of their inner inter-plane struts), but they had Vickers guns which fired, as did those of the Fokker monoplanes, through the arc of the revolving airscrew, in addition to hand-aimed Lewis guns for the observers, each aeroplane being equipped with one gun of each pattern.

The great feature of this battle, however, was the emergence of the German Flying Service from the slough into which it had sunk on the Somme in the preceding summer. Thoroughly reorganised under a new commander,[1] and provided with aeroplanes of greatly improved performance,[2] it began to show signs of aggressiveness which, even if it still kept its display almost entirely to the German side of the fighting-line, nevertheless constituted a serious challenge.

From the point of view of his balance-sheet, the policy adopted by the enemy was sound. Throughout the War he permitted us to challenge the command of the air above him; and it amounted to our having to expend approximately twice as much energy as he did to achieve any given object. Nevertheless, the fact remains that, in acquiescing in this retention of the initiative by the R.F.C., the German Air Service placed itself in the position of the under-dog; and, as we have gone some little way toward hinting, it remained in that unenviable position to the end.

[1] General Ernst von Hoeppner. This cavalry officer succeeded Colonel Thomsen on the 8th October, 1916, and was appointed G.O.C. the German Flying Corps.

[2] These were the Halberstadt and Albatros (D-type) fighters; single-seaters of good performance, well armed, and operating in pursuit flights under the leadership of men of the Oswald Boelcke tradition.

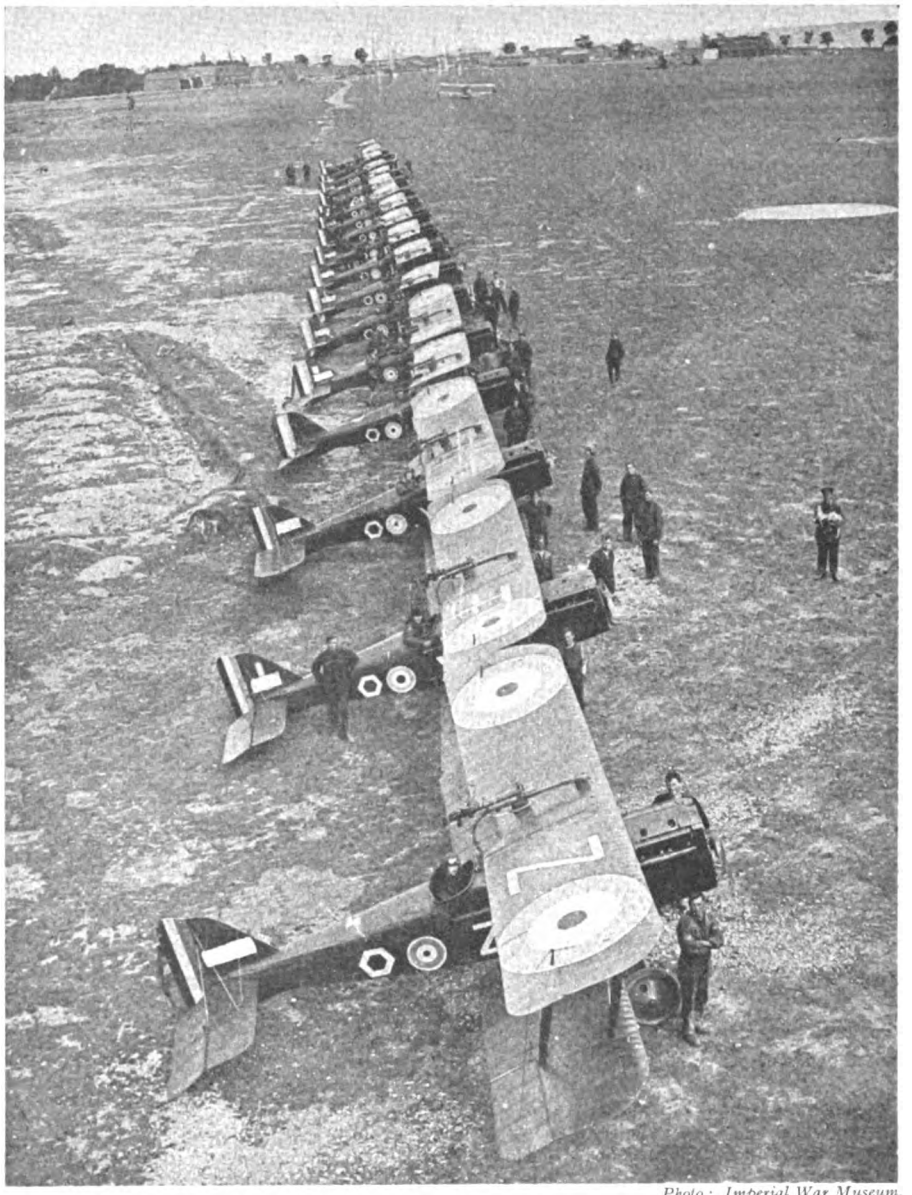

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

DRESSING BY THE RIGHT!

S.E. 5a Scouts of No. 85 Squadron, photographed at St. Omer aerodrome on June 21st, 1918. As air-fighting reached a more and more intensive stage during the closing months of the War, single-seater "scout" squadrons were constantly battling above the lines; and of this type of machine the S.E. 5a was one of the finest. "S.E." stands for "Scouting Experimental."

R.F.C. Strength in April, 1917

The strength of the Royal Flying Corps at the Battle of Arras had risen to a total of just over 900 aeroplanes, organised into five brigades of 10 squadrons apiece. Each brigade comprised two aeroplane wings and one kite-balloon wing; and an additional aeroplane wing operated direct under R.F.C. headquarters as a strategic reserve, for employment according to the situation of the moment.

In this headquarters (9th Wing) there was a unit, known as the Special Duty Flight, whose duties were cloaked in mystery to all but those actually concerned in instructing, equipping, or feeding it. The majority of these, even, thought they knew much more than they really did. The aeroplanes of this flight waged a curious war, confining their activities to the hours of darkness, generally going out more heavily laden than they returned, and eschewing anything so crude as a load of bombs. Let it suffice here to say that the work of the unit was effective, and of very considerable importance.

We have already touched on the more

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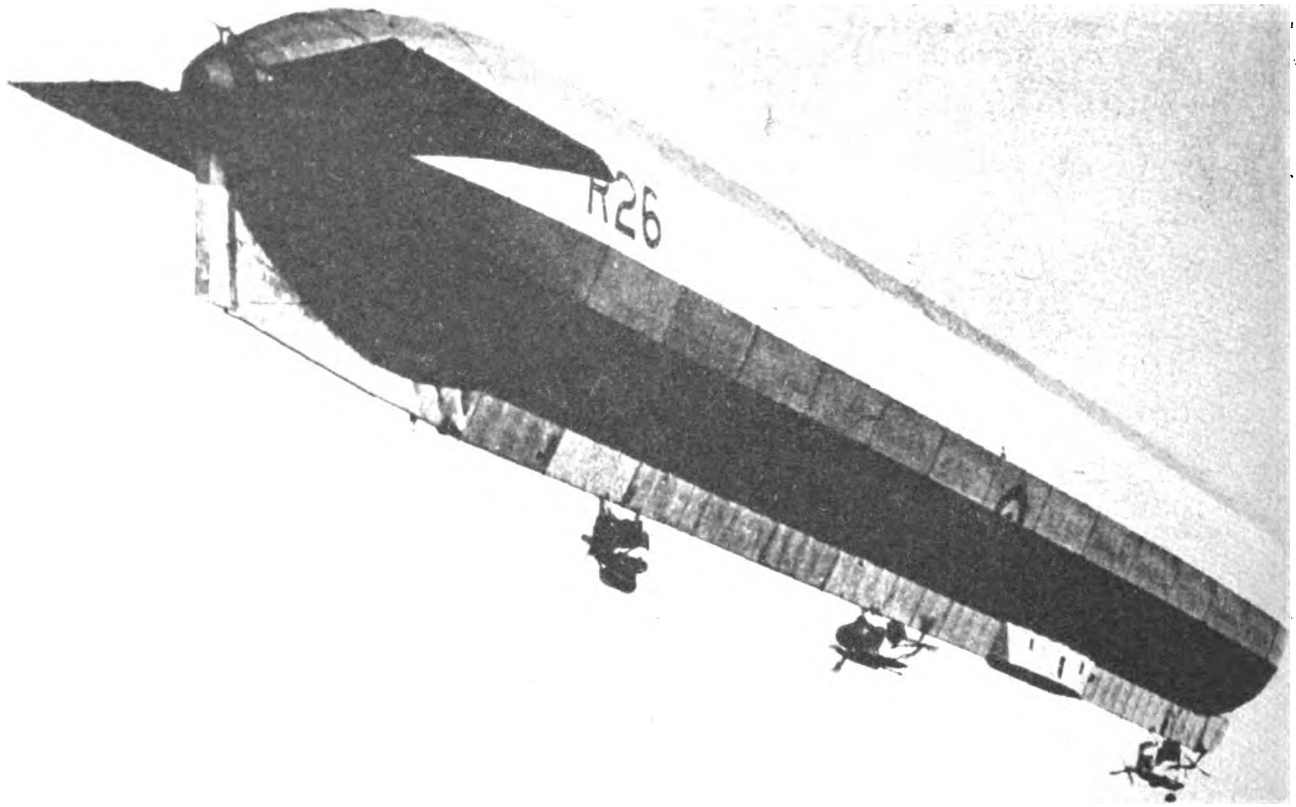

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

A BRITISH DIRIGIBLE

A photograph taken in the autumn of 1917, during the trial flights of the rigid airship *R26*. Built by Messrs. Vickers at Barrow, this craft belonged to the "R23" class, known as the external girder keel type. The first British rigid airship was completed in May, 1911, and was not a success. It was found that extensive alterations must be carried out before she could even make a trial flight; and then, when she was again brought from her shed four months later, she broke amidships and became a total wreck before taking the air.

stereotyped night-flying work of the R.F.C. During 1917, night-flying was very much increased. In the Spring, No. 100 Squadron arrived in the field, bringing with it a bevy of obsolescent day-fighters in the shape of twelve F.E.2b's with their planes painted black underneath and fitted with carriers for heavy bombs. From this date to the Armistice, night-bombing remained a recognised duty, and barely a night went by without this, or one of the other three "All Black" squadrons which were later added, causing consternation among the enemy's rest-billets and on his lines of communication. Relays of these machines would wander slowly about behind the German lines more or less all through the night.

During October of this same year was born (in the shape of the newly-formed 41st Wing) an organisation soon to be known as the Independent Force, Royal Air Force, and the night-flying practice spread to single-seater fighter aeroplanes—Sopwith "Camels." (Curiously enough, on the very same night it spread similarly to Sopwith "Camels" on the strength of the Home Defence units in the United Kingdom.)

With Flying Colours

The Battle of Third Ypres (July–November, 1917) provided a searching test of all these many developments; and we cannot do better than say that, in spite of the abnormally unfavourable weather-conditions which were encountered almost from start to finish, the R.F.C. emerged with flying colours. While the corps squadrons, now mostly flying R.E.8's,[1] performed marvels of co-operation with the divisions in the line, the fighter squadrons, now equipped with the S.E.5 (another Government-designed aeroplane), the Spad (a French machine), the Sopwith "Pup" and "Camel," the Nieuport Scout (much improved since its introduction in 1915), and the D.H.5, did equally good work in their own sphere, which included fighting on the grand scale, often with as many as 20 machines a side, and low-flying patrols, which implied an active share in the fighting on the ground.

1 The R.E.8 was a biplane of Government design, fitted with the 150-h.p. Royal Aircraft Factory engine. It had a Vickers gun firing through the airscrew, and a hand-directed Lewis (frequently two yoked together). It was so stable that on one occasion, when both members of the crew had been killed, one machine flew on for an hour and finally landed itself intact.

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Single-seaters were now flying level at something in the neighbourhood of 120 m.p.h., and at 19/20,000 feet were still in possession of their essential qualities. And, what was possibly more remarkable, there were two-seaters of almost equal performance. One could write whole books on the achievements of the Bristol Fighter and the D.H.4. The work they did embraced long-distance day-bombing in the case of the D.H.4, and Army—or strategic—reconnaissance in the case of the Bristol; and they fought as no two-seater had been known to fight previously. They and the single-seaters came up against such competent opponents as the Fokker triplane and biplane, the greatly improved Albatros biplane, the Pfalz biplane, the businesslike Hannoveraner biplane (a two-seater with a biplane tail, and the German answer to the Bristol Fighter itself), and the Halberstadt two-seater biplane—and yet they more than held their own.

Two Services Knit into One

With the battles of "Third Ypres" joining those of Arras and the Somme in a memory-picture already crowded with other struggles—each on its day the greatest experienced—we are left with a year of further history. On the 1st April, 1918, at a time when the British Army was enduring the severest trial in its existence, the Royal Flying Corps and the Royal Naval Air Service were at long last amalgamated into the Royal Air Force.

As was to be expected of such a union, in which each party knew the innermost weaknesses of the other, there were to be repinings in due course, but the early days were of the halcyon variety. From the First Battle of the Somme, in 1916, onwards, several squadrons of the R.N.A.S. had seen service alongside those of the R.F.C., operating under the direct orders of the latter; and the work of these naval squadrons (single-seater fighter squadrons equipped with such machines as the Sopwith "Pup" and triplane) had been of the greatest value. The formation of the Royal Air Force cemented the two Services into one operational whole, and gave the Commander-in-Chief of the British Armies in France and Flanders a considerably augmented power in the air.

When, on August 8th, 1918, the turn of the tide saw us once again take the initiative on the Western Front, the spirit and tradition of the R.F.C. and the R.N.A.S. were the motive-power that drove the squadrons forward; and until the moment towards noon on the 11th November, when the last "War Flying" entry was made in the Squadron Record Books, this power remained unimpaired.

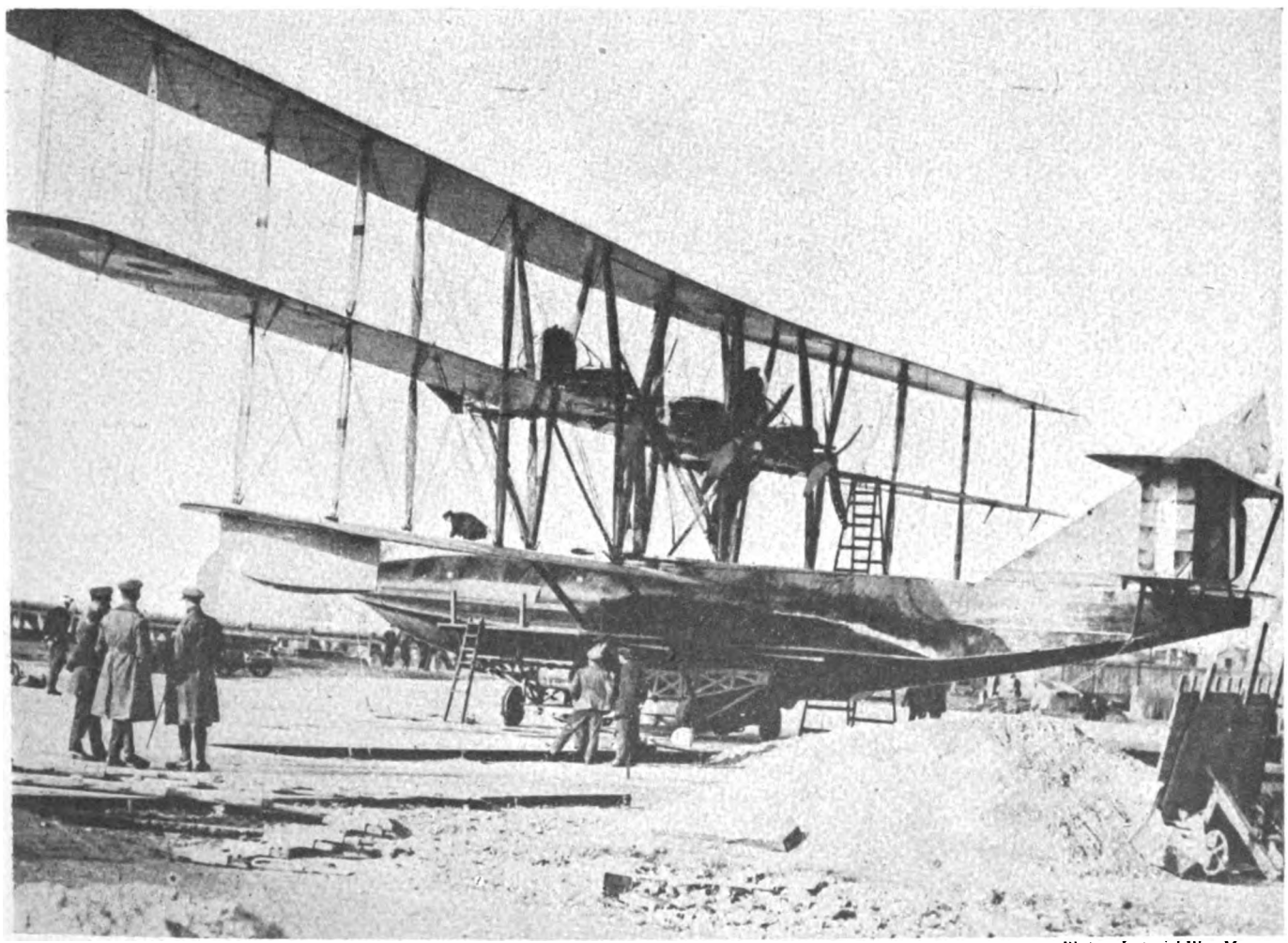

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

THE FELIXSTOWE "FURY"

This extraordinary triplane flying-boat was built to the plans of Lieutenant-Colonel J. C. Porte, C.M.G., and at the end of 1918 ranked as the biggest aeroplane in the world. Five Rolls-Royce "Eagle" engines, driving two tractor and three "pusher" screws, supplied the motive-power. The span of the two upper planes was 123 feet; the length, including the tail, 60 feet; the height from the keel, 27 feet 6 inches; the total weight, 23,400 pounds. The present photograph was taken at the R.N.A.S. Experimental Station, Felixstowe.

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CHAPTER XXXVII

THE R.A.S.C. IN THE MINOR THEATRES

In so far as organisation behind the lines was concerned, the Western Front was vastly superior to those other scenes of activity generally known as the Minor Theatres. The reason for this was fairly obvious. In France and Flanders the opposing armies remained for lengthy periods on lines that were clearly demarcated. As a result of this, activities in the back areas on both sides became highly organised. Far different was the tale in the minor theatres, where the lines were for ever in a state of flux. On Gallipoli, in Mesopotamia, and in Palestine, the work of the Royal Army Service Corps became, at times, most complicated; but even so, men and animals were fed and watered with the utmost regularity. Wherever it was called upon to serve, the Royal Army Service Corps managed, somehow or other, to maintain supplies; and this in the face of every possible obstacle and difficulty.

THERE have been few, if any, campaigns waged by the British Army which have lent themselves less to the operations of transport than the expedition to the Dardanelles. That enterprise, indeed, would seem to furnish a classic exception to the familiar saying that "war is movement." Neither does the definition of the task as the siege of the great fortress that was the Gallipoli Peninsula suffice to represent the facts, for two conditions normally belonging to siege warfare were absent.

Advantages of the Turks at Gallipoli

Firstly, the besieged were not completely cut off, and at all times were able to maintain both land and sea communication with their bases of supply; and secondly, the besiegers themselves lacked freedom of manœuvre, and were actually clinging precariously to the outer defences, from which it was at the same time impossible to advance and difficult to retreat. The situation was without parallel in the history of modern war, and possibly of war in any age.

The entire expedition was, as all know, undertaken under grave misconceptions as to what it really implied. No one appeared to know whether there were roads fit for any form of mechanical transport or, in fact, roads at all, although a message from General Maxwell in Egypt to Lord Kitchener came to light some months after the landing, to the effect that pack transport would probably be necessary.

However, in the absence of information it was decided, when the 29th Division was being prepared for embarkation, that the normal transport formations should be provided, except that in place of 3-ton lorries those of 30-cwt. capacity would be substituted. How hopelessly wide of the mark was even this compromise, time was soon to show.

It will be remembered that, besides the 29th Division, the forces for the original landing comprised the Royal Naval Division and the Australian and New Zealand Army Corps, amounting to 60,000 men and 13,000 animals, exclusive of the French contingent. Leaving Mudros on the night of April 24th, 1915, these troops, at the price of terrible losses, succeeded in getting a foothold on shore, the 29th Division at Helles and Sedd-el-Bahr, and the Australians and New Zealanders at Ari Burnu, north of Gaba Tepe.

By May 1st the Royal Naval Division and an Indian brigade had also begun their disembarkation at the toe of the Peninsula. On this date the advance had progressed less than two miles from Helles, while at Anzac the foremost troops were established hardly more than 1,500 yards from the shore, the country being extremely rugged and broken. In such circumstances the supply and transport arrangements could not follow any recognised system.

Difficulties of Landing Animals

Although it had been hoped that the first day's fighting would lead to a considerable advance, the decision as to the number of animals and vehicles to be landed depended on water-supply, and of this a shortage was reported. Again, it was found impossible to land animals in the early stages without a serious reduction in the rate of landing of the troops. These difficulties were met by a temporary re-organisation of the system of food and ammunition supply. Animals were cut down to a minimum; officers' kits and men's blankets were left behind; and in the event of an advance supplies and ammunition were to be provided from storeships, which were to land their cargoes at convenient points on the coast.

In accordance with these arrangements, all surplus animals and vehicles were left in Egypt. The troops were furnished with 200 rounds of ammunition and three days' food with which to land, while each transport ship was instructed to put ashore a reserve of 200 rounds of ammunition and seven days' food for each man disembarked. With respect to water nothing was left to chance. A steamer with condensing plant had been chartered, a large tank steamer hired at Port Said, and tins, skins, tanks, and other receptacles collected for the purpose of storing water on the beaches or sending it forward.

Nevertheless, both rationing and ammunition proved for the first three days an anxious problem, as very few animals had been disembarked. On the other hand, the work of transferring stores as far as the beaches proceeded well both at Helles and Anzac despite incessant hostile fire on the anchorages; and as early as the evening of the 26th certain localities were beginning to assume the appearance of large supply depôts.

It was not, however, until May 5th that the landing of the administrative troops of the 29th Division was completed, from which time onwards a comparatively regular and even flow of all that was required at the front was assured. It was about this time that there arrived the Zion Mule Corps, which had been formed in Egypt of Russian Jews who had fled from Palestine. This pack unit, commanded by Lieut.-Col. Patterson, a reserve officer,

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Photo: Imperial War Museum.

A FARM ON THE AISNE

Hurtebise hamlet, Farm, Finger, Monument, and Spur, all lie in that notorious sector known as the Chemin des Dames. This is a main road running east and west—parallel with, and some 7 km. north of, the River Aisne—about 50 km. south-east of St. Quentin. The French were engaged in severe fighting here in 1917, when this photograph of Hurtebise Farm was taken.

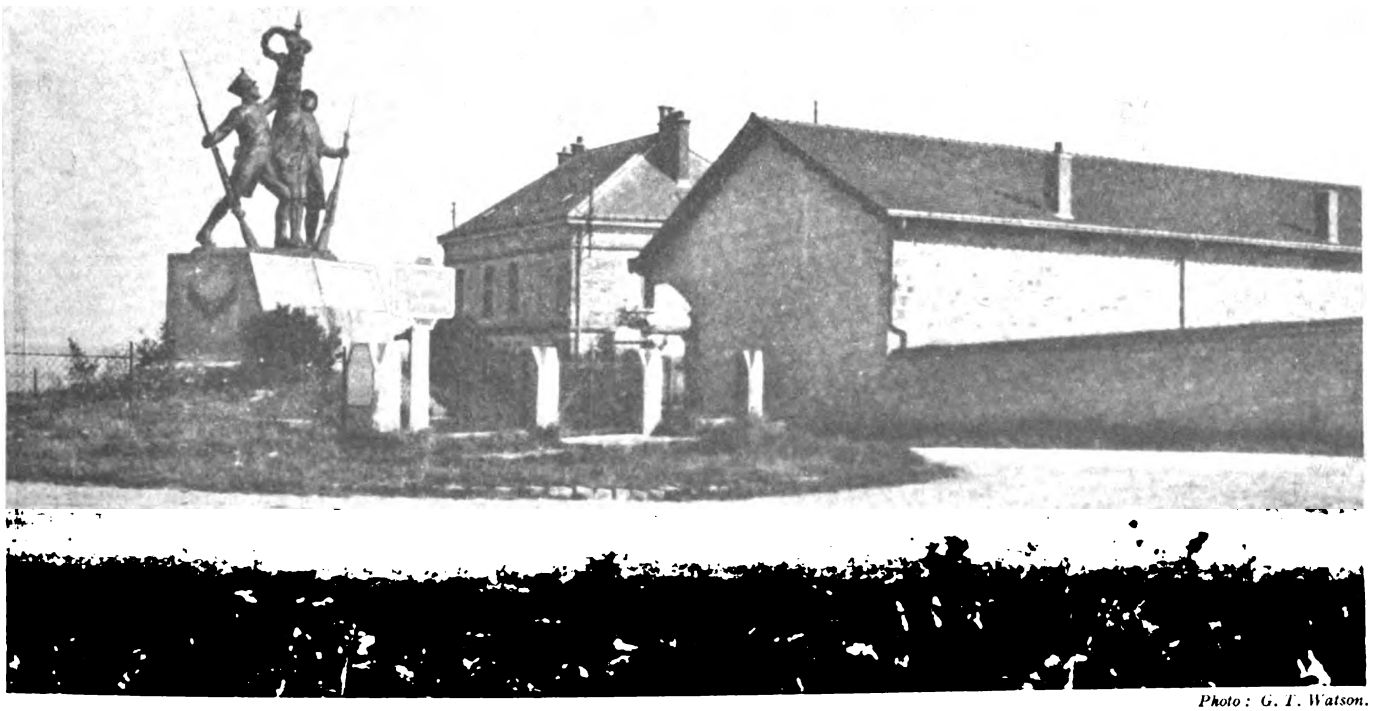

Photo: G. T. Watson.

HURTEBISE FARM IN THIS YEAR OF GRACE

Remote though this spot was from the proper theatre of British operations, our 21st, 8th, and 50th Divisions came in for a tremendous hammering here in May, 1918. They had gone into the line on a 15-mile front for a rest, the sector having hitherto been quiet for many months. Hardly were they established, however, when a heavy enemy attack was launched, and even the timely arrival of the 25th and 19th Divisions could not prevent a break-through.

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served with distinction at Helles in circumstances trying to even the best-disciplined troops.

Encouraging the Tyros

Landing while a battle was raging, it was at once called upon to take up ammunition and supplies to the men engaged, being piloted in the first instance by Major O'Hara, A.S.C., the D.A.Q.M.G. of the 29th Division, who at all times distinguished himself by being present where most needed. The example thus given by one of the divisional staff did much to stimulate and encourage the raw youths during the early trials inseparable from working by night, in an unknown country, and under constant subjection to heavy shell-fire.

One man, Private Groushkonsky, was awarded the D.C.M. for his gallantry in hanging on to his mules in the midst of a stampeding convoy, though shot through both arms, and personally delivering his loads to the troops in action.

The supply and transport situation at the end of April, when the first and most delicate operations were over, stood briefly as follows. At the great port of Alexandria there was a first-class base, whose only disadvantage lay in its distance from the theatre of action. To the advanced bases at Imbros and Lemnos, the distances were 680 and 650 miles respectively. From Imbros to Helles was 15 miles, and from Lemnos to Helles 60 miles: distances which, over a sea route, were bound to cause anxiety as to the building-up of reserves on the Peninsula, quite apart from the possibilities of enemy interruption.

In point of fact the enemy did interrupt the process, and that in a disastrous fashion. On August 13th, the transport *Royal Edward*, carrying drafts from Egypt, was torpedoed by a submarine, 300 men of the A.S.C., most of them elderly and unfit for service in the infantry, being among the 1,400 troops on board, of whom few survived, despite the magnificent discipline which prevailed in the sinking vessel.

The lengthy lines of communication imposed on all ranks tasks of maintenance quite different from anything they had contemplated—and, incidentally, gave many an experience of the Greek islands and Middle East generally which was to be elaborated when the Salonica campaign got under way in the autumn.

No Transport Problems

During the early part of May there was heavy fighting on both the Anzac and Helles fronts, with the net result that nowhere was it found possible to advance the line more than 600 yards.

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

AT GALLIPOLI AGAIN

In this photograph, taken on January 7th, 1916, we see the preparations for evacuation on W Beach. The troops left for the final stage of the evacuation of Helles (January 8th) numbered 16,918, which included 1,138 "Base details, beach personnel, etc." A picture of the blaze made by the huge dumps of abandoned stores fired during the night of the 8th/9th has appeared in an earlier volume.

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Photo: Imperial War Museum.

ON THE BALKAN FRONT

A photograph, taken in 1916, showing British A.S.C. men taking up supplies from the base to the line on mule-drawn light-railway trucks. Both the Bulgars and the Allies extended considerably the existing rail facilities behind their respective fronts, the extensions consisting not only of standard-gauge and narrow-gauge track, but even of rope railways. The enemy built at least three rope lines, the longest of which covered some 20 miles; and there were two Allied "telepherage," or cable railways. The mule-operated light line shown here is not specified, but is probably one about 6 miles long, which ran west of Lahana, behind the Struma front.

In these circumstances "supply" presented few complications and "transport" none, since it was only a question of moving forward over an insignificant distance whatever was landed on the beaches. Bread was produced by a field bakery located at Helles.

But in August matters began to liven up with the decision to bring the whole business to a head by an advance at Suvla Bay, north of Anzac. The ensuing fiasco represented the greatest lost opportunity of the War, and from the Army Service Corps viewpoint evokes a most interesting speculation. Although the surprise of the Turks in the area concerned was carried out as contemplated, various causes, including scarcity of water and ammunition, conspired to make the undertaking hang fire. The failure cannot be imputed to lack of preparation; but from conception to execution is a long step, and in this case there was some faltering in the taking of it.

At two of the beaches, owing to the landing craft going aground some distance from the shore, there was delay and inconvenience; and the precious time lost was never regained. The programme for the disembarkation of transport animals became seriously in arrears—by 2.45 p.m. on that critical August 8th there were only 160 mules ashore—and consequently food, ammunition, and water had to be carried from the beaches to the front line by hand (a process which gravely depleted the fighting ranks), while some units which had participated in the advance in the course of the afternoon of the 7th actually returned to the beaches for water.

"Something Went Wrong"

A distinguished critic has written that "something undoubtedly went wrong after the disembarkation had been most successfully effected." But he does not indicate that one of the principal causes of failure lay in the conspicuous absence of ways and means for the support and forward movement of the troops. Except for the legs of the weary infantry, there were no means of mobility. The infantryman, moreover, was sufficiently loaded with his rifle and pack, without being required in addition to fetch and carry from the rear.

Had it been possible to assist the IX Corps, in the early stages following its landing, by adequate rearward services, history might well have turned out very differently. As it was, a fundamental principle was violated. It was over 2,000 miles from England to Suvla, and but two or three miles from Suvla to the tactical objectives whose possession might well have decided the campaign in our favour; but it was those last two or three miles which made the difference.

Veterans of Gallipoli are not likely to have forgotten the storm of November 27th, when a hard frost and a blizzard followed 24 hours of torrential rain. Much damage was done to piers, and to the unsubstantial breakwaters on which supply so much depended, and numbers of barges and kindred craft

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Photo: Imperial War Museum.

ST. LAURENT-BLANGY

This village and Blangy its neighbour have been illustrated so many times already in our work that little or nothing remains to be said. The present photograph of the ruins of the church and main street generally was taken on March 8th, 1918. It will be remembered that St. Laurent-Blangy is a suburb of Arras.

foundered or were seriously damaged. Reserves on shore dwindled fast, and it was only by a fine display of resource and initiative that many special commodities necessitated by the weather were provided.

Yet, despite the precariousness of the position, and the lengthy and complicated lines of communications, there was no real question of a breakdown—in supply. Despite their trials, Sir Ian Hamilton's men were at least spared what their grandfathers had been called upon to endure in similar circumstances in the Crimea, when there had been serious neglect in the provision of adequate administrative services.

Evacuating Gallipoli

One further point of particular interest in connection with the Dardanelles may be touched on, and that concerns the evacuation—the striking success of which did at least do something to offset the Suvla failure. That evacuation was envisaged in three stages. In the first, all troops, animals, and supplies not required for prolonged operations were to be withdrawn. In the second, all men, guns, animals, supplies, and stores not essential for defence during a possible retardation of the contemplated programme by weather conditions were to be removed. In the final stage, when the troops on shore were to be embarked with all possible speed, such guns, animals, and stores as were needed at the last were to be abandoned.

Every practical step was taken to deceive the enemy, even to the extent of landing a number of transport animals and of pushing supplies to the front by day. (Withdrawals were naturally effected by night.) The final act, carried out in the Suvla and Anzac areas on the night of December 19th/20th, was wholly successful, very little being left to the Turks as booty.

Fifty-six sorry transport mules were abandoned alive at Anzac, but the supplies which had had to be retained to the last moment were destroyed by puncturing the tins, soaking the contents in paraffin, and fixing automatic means of firing it. The operation at Helles was equally fortunate, except that a larger quantity of material, supplies, and animals had to be relinquished, the latter being killed before the troops embarked.

To have made away with the whole of the accumulation before the evacuation of the personnel would have involved a risk of betraying the movement to the enemy. As it was, most of the valuable commodities were saved. But at Suvla nearly 1,500,000 rations of preserved meat, over 1,000,000 rations of biscuit, 100 tons of bacon, and a large quantity of forage were destroyed. At Anzac the loss was not quite so heavy, though it included some 60 items, the largest of which ran to 350 tons.

Yet, when it is remembered that the daily average of food supplies landed on the Peninsula by the A.S.C. was 763 tons, it will be allowed that matters were cut as fine at the end as due precaution would justify. The mechanical transport, of which there was some at Suvla, and practically all other vehicles were

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saved. Four muled divisional trains and an Indian mule-cart train—the latter alone involving 2,500 animals—had been employed on the Peninsula.

The A.S.C. in the Balkans

With the failure of the great adventure against the Turkish capital, the Salonica expedition took its place. Here the few staff officers, including Colonel Striedinger of the A.S.C., who landed in advance of the troops, found themselves in an awkward position. But though on neutral territory and liable to arrest, they none the less proceeded to get on with their job. For instance, during the first fortnight, despite every obstruction from the Greek Government, some 16,000 tons of hay were purchased locally, and other items in addition. On the transport side, however, the Greeks cunningly defeated the Allied efforts by requisitioning nearly all animals and vehicles for the use of their own Army.

The military situation was originally obscure, but it was hoped that a hand could be held out to the hard-pressed Serbians, and accordingly the British 10th Division, with two French divisions under General Sarrail, were moved northwards to endeavour to open communications with them at Veles, about 120 miles from Salonica. Sufficient transport units had been landed to assure the maintenance of communications, but it meant an exacting and sustained effort, the muled waggons of one company in a forward stage having to do 24 miles every day for a considerable period. The weather conditions and disintegrating roads made the movement of convoys exceedingly trying, and the snows and frost encountered in November were responsible for much sickness among men and animals.

It soon became evident, however, that the power of resistance of the Serbians was broken; and early in December the British, heavily attacked by superior forces, were lucky to be able to extricate themselves and withdraw to Greek territory, where a great defensive line was to be constructed. It can fairly be claimed that in that movement the A.S.C. took a leading share. In its initial stage the animals of the divisional train were working as many as 18 hours a day, and travelling on an average through 20 miles of heavy going—for the roads had by then become almost lakes of mud.

Six mules were normally required for each general service waggon, and at certain spots 10 or even 12 were necessary. Especially serious was the task of evacuating sick and wounded, and the fact that much of the movement had to be done at night did not tend to simplify matters. Nevertheless, the arrangements worked without any real hitch. They were, however, but a prelude to the complicated business of converting transport units into pack

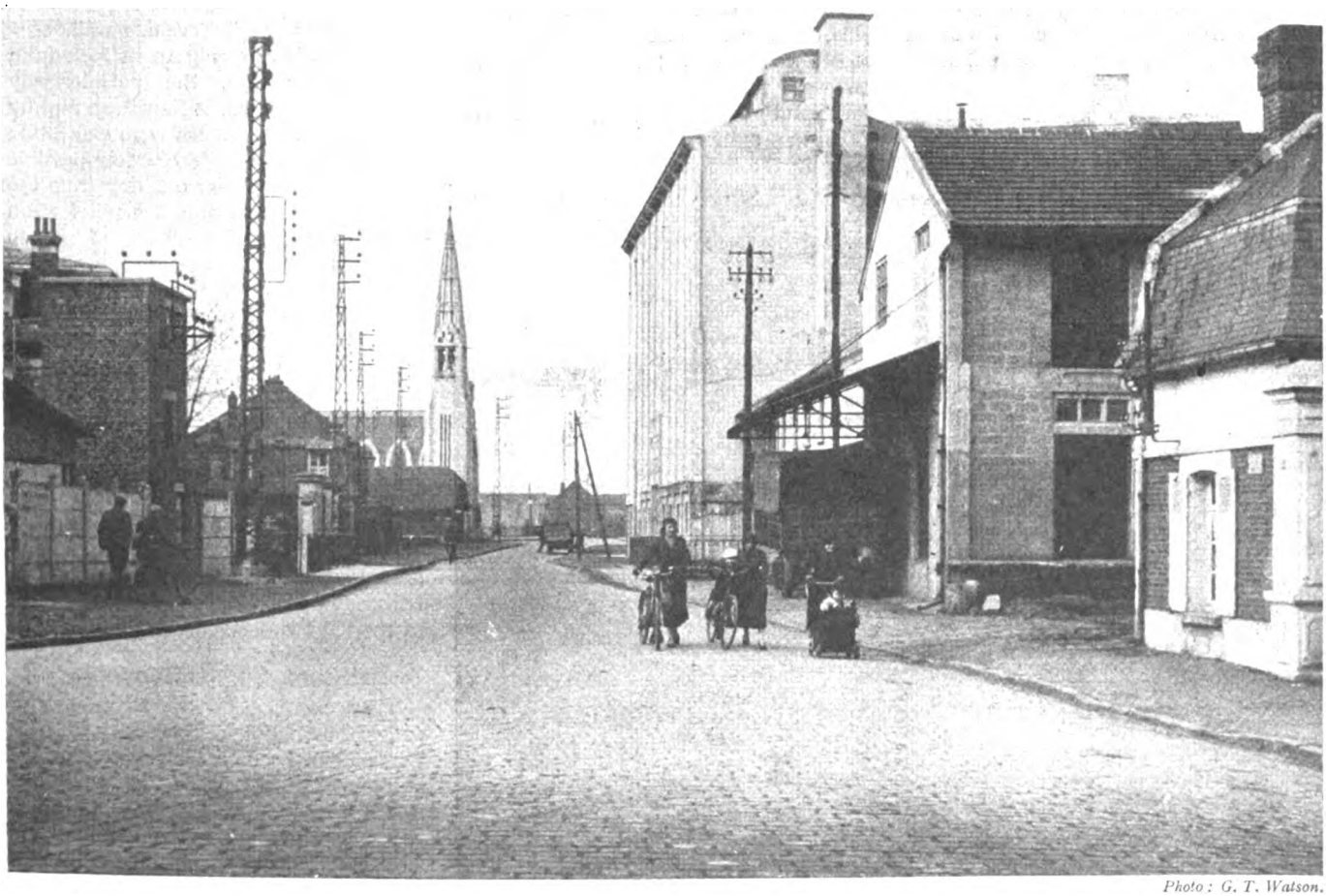

Photo: G. T. Watson.

SYMPTOMS OF RECOVERY

The large building somewhat like a cinema, on the right of the street as seen here, is a modern and well-designed brewery. Present-day St. Laurent-Blangy forms a single commune with its neighbour and part-namesake, their joint population amounting to 3,150. The bridge visible in the middle distance is one of those crossing the Scarpe.

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Photo: A. P., Paris.

BADLY HOLED

The building in which a shell has made this unpleasant breach is the wayside station of Beaumetz-Rivière, 10 km. south-west of Arras on the line and road to Doullens. The station serves two villages—Beaumetz-les-Loges, which it adjoins, and Rivière, on the Crinchon stream 2 km. to the south-east.

transport; for it was only by this means that the troops in the mountains could be provided for during the second stage of the retreat.

No Easy Trek

In the absence of roads they had, indeed, to make their way back to Salonica by such tracks as were available, their transport being obliged to pass through two difficult gorges with awkward fords. But the situation was successfully mastered, and after four days the bulk of the force was once more in the Salonica area.

For the Corps, though, there was no interval of rest, since the change back from pack to draught had to be made in a few hours; and mules which had arrived in camp in the morning wearing their pack-saddles were hauling supply-laden waggons during the afternoon, when orders were being issued for the troops to take up a new position.

Meanwhile, the Greeks continued to obstruct. For example, several hundred tons of hay which had been paid for were stored in a barn under a British guard. The Greek authorities forbade the hay's removal, and added a sentry of their own to enforce the prohibition. The wily vendor then offered it to the French, who bought the same consignment in good faith, and sent another guard to ensure that no one else laid hands on it!

Moreover, the Greeks forbade the sale of petrol, and placed the inevitable guard over the entrance to the premises of the Standard Oil Company, which held the only considerable stock. This establishment happened to be next to a small British supply depôt, so the personnel of the latter quickly got over their difficulty by having their requirements pushed over the intervening wall.

Nevertheless, owing to ill luck from submarine action, the petrol-supply more than once caused anxiety, and by Christmas, 1915, stocks were absolutely exhausted. It was fortunately possible to borrow enough for one day from the French, and great was the relief when next morning a shipload of 50,000 gallons reached harbour safely.

Between the hostility of the Greeks and the depredations of enemy submarines, combined with the constant increases of the force in number, the Corps was often hard put to it to feed the troops other than in hand-to-mouth fashion. All readers who have ever been charged with supply duties must remember well the feeling of having little or nothing in reserve for an emergency. It is a horrible sensation, and analogous to that of the commander who has exhausted his reserves before the issue of the fight is decided.

Photo: A. J. Insall.

DESERTED

Not a soul was to be seen when our photographer took this picture—a circumstance which denoted the lunch-hour. Neither Beaumetz nor Rivière was ever in the firing-line, but both were well-known British billeting-places; the latter being the larger of the two. Our wartime photograph was taken in 1915, while the sector was still in French hands.

A Brilliant Suggestion

There were, of course, all manner of suggestions from well-meaning individuals at home, one cable suggesting that the shortage of wood-fuel could be rectified by the use of olive trees. Since the value of a mature olive tree amounts to some £80, even a generous Government would have been unprepared to go quite so far! A further cause for anxiety was the wholesale pilfering by natives, despite every practicable pre-

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caution. Army foodstuffs were openly sold in the shops of Salonica, and the nature of our relations with the Greeks made it difficult to deal effectively with the matter.

It is fair to recall, however, that the shortage of reinforcements which began to make itself felt early in 1916 gave rise to the bold idea of recruiting a number of native muleteers, and that, despite the interdiction of their Government, some 2,000 were taken on and proved very satisfactory after a brief training in the Base Transport Depôt. The fact that they were comparatively immune to the malaria and dysentery which ravaged the personnel of the Corps, especially in the Struma area, further justified the experiment.

As an instance of the heavy toll that the conditions took of the overworked British Army, one mechanical transport company which landed on June 30th, 1916, had 220 of its personnel and all its officers in hospital with sandfly fever by July 6th. The man-power problem became so serious that fresh sources of recruitment were eagerly sought. As drivers the Maltese proved of little use, but 3,000 Cypriots who were taken on were far more satisfactory.

Yet, full as were the hands of the A.S.C. with the maintenance of its own numbers, this maintenance proved but a part of its responsibilities. In July, 1916, the Serbian Army, 130,900 strong, was brought from Corfu ; and since it had no mechanical transport, the Corps was called upon to provide it with some. Six companies, numbering 2,400 all ranks, were allotted, one having just come from the Cameroons ; and their spirit throughout was beyond all praise.

Gratitude of the Serbs

Excellent relations were maintained with the Serbians, who for their part were more than generous in their gratitude for the contribution made to the successes of their Army, and particularly to the brilliant series of operations which eventually enabled it, in the autumn of 1918, to retake its country, so to speak, in its stride. Much of the work throughout was performed in mountainous terrain, but the Fords and Albions with which the units were equipped stood up to the task splendidly ; and one company, Number 688, had the honour of being awarded as a unit the French Croix de Guerre—the first instance of such a distinction being bestowed on members of the British Army, and one which, until the end of the War, remained very rare.

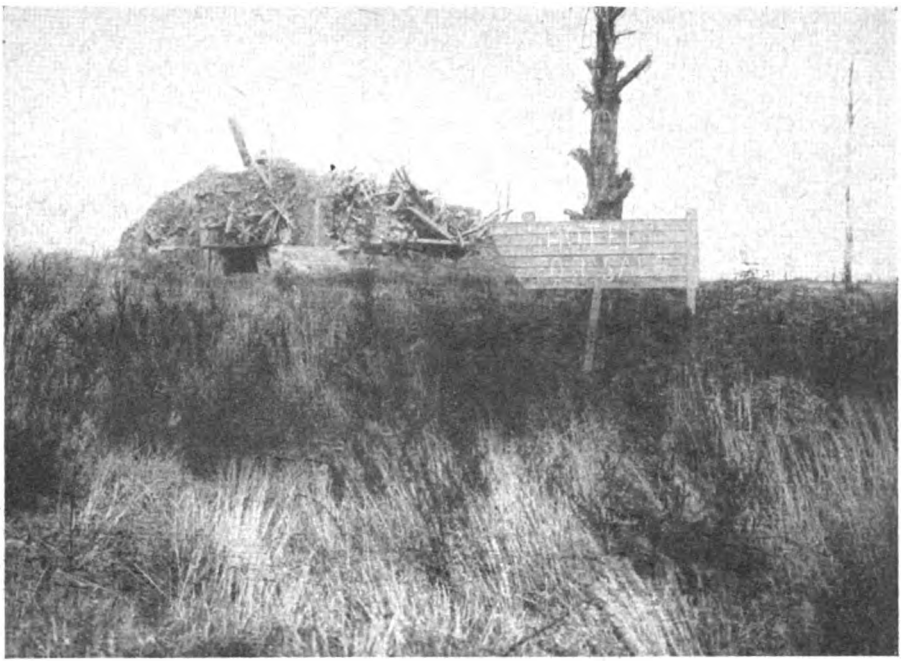

Photo : Imperial War Museum.

HUMOUR AT CONTALMAISON

The " hotel " referred to on the notice-board consists of the shapeless remains of the Château de Contalmaison. This notorious village, 6 km. north-east of Albert, was illustrated by us on page 10 of Volume One ; and its prominent rôle in the first Somme battle was outlined in a caption on page 560 of that volume.

Serving as it did with a foreign army, this contingent of the Corps never, perhaps, received the notice or the credit which was its due. Its performances during the final six weeks of mobile warfare are, both from the professional and personal point of view, deserving of close study.

Shortly after the arrival of the Serbians on the scene, the French found themselves in difficulties over the feeding of their troops in the Struma valley, and

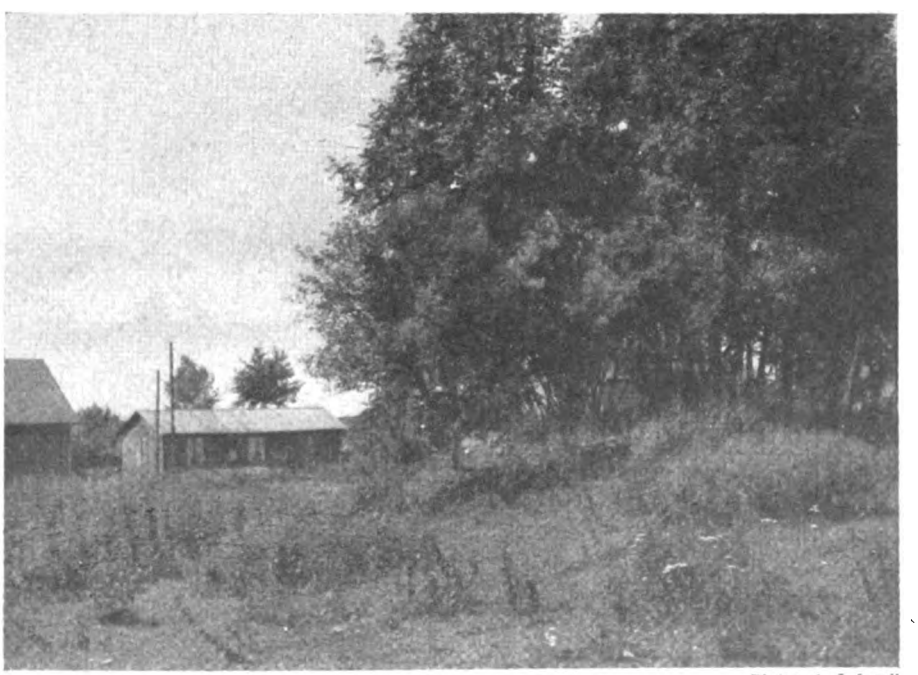

Photo : A. J. Insall.

ALMOST LOST

The ruins of Contalmaison Château are fast disappearing, for the clump of trees seen here is growing above them. The grounds are now occupied by a British cemetery. On March 25th, 1918, Contalmaison and its ridge were gallantly held, during the retirement of the V Corps, by the infantry of the 47th Division, supported by " details."

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again British assistance was invoked, to the extent of provisioning their sector for some time and lending them a considerable proportion of transport which could not be returned for several months. And as if these responsibilities were not enough, the pro-Ally Greek National Army, organised by M. Venizelos, took the field, two divisions occupying a sector previously held by the British.

The task of supplying them again fell on the broad shoulders of the A.S.C.; and, as in every other theatre, the latter soon found itself involved in duties which, though outside its normal rôle, had not been allotted to any other branch of the Army. In December, 1916, a Motor Boat Section was formed as an Army Service Corps unit, for the purpose of patrolling lakes Langaza and Beshik.

These boats, armed with machine guns, were about 30 feet long, and, weighing four tons, had to be conveyed to the water on specially-improvised vehicles constructed in the Base Transport Depôt. Their duties were to keep all native boats off the lakes at night, and to prevent any fishermen from landing on the northern shores. They had several fights with the Bulgars.

The Salonica Fire

Saturday, August 18th, 1917, was a day which will long be remembered by the Salonica army, for it was on that date that a fire broke out which destroyed a large portion of the town—actually about a square mile—in a few hours. The part then played by the Corps is not likely to be forgotten in the history of the ancient city. Curiously enough, two new fire engines had arrived only a few days before, one having already been installed at the Base Mechanical Transport Depôt, while the other was still at the docks.

Both were on the spot at once with scratch crews, although neither was completely ready for service; and they did splendid work, the driver of one remaining at his post without sleep for 60 consecutive hours. One engine was in action for 17 days, and the other for 10, owing to a succession of sporadic outbreaks after the first conflagration was over.

There were afterwards 80,000 homeless people with whom to deal, and, although all the Allies took a share in their evacuation along the Monastir road, it was the A.S.C. M.T. Companies which bore the brunt. An independent eye-witness has described the scene as follows:

"An order was given over the telephone, and forthwith from all directions our unrivalled transport service poured out its innumerable lorries and motor-vans into the town. Their order was simply to take up the refugees and hurry

Photo: Imperial War Museum

FOOD FOR THE "EXILES"

A huge dump of stores for the nourishment of the British forces "marooned" on the Balkan front. In the right-hand half of the photograph, the snow-clad mountains may be faintly discerned on the skyline. The original illustration is undated, nor is the locality indicated.

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Photo : Imperial War Museum.

IN THE WADI GHUZZE

This wadi, or ravine, is in Palestine, and debouches into the sea about 5 miles south-west of Gaza. The present photograph was taken on September 17th, 1917, at Sheilal, a settlement 15 miles south-east of Gaza, and shows camels of the Camel Transport Corps in the course of being watered. Of this splendid force, General Allenby was to write at a later date : " During the operations in the hills of Judæa and of Moab, the troops often depended for their supplies on the Camel Transport Corps. The drivers "—who were Egyptian—" displayed steadiness under fire and devotion to duty in the face of cold and rain such as they had never previously experienced."

them out of danger. Up to that moment a rich merchant could not have hired a lorry for an evening for £1,000. After it the tatterdemalions of Salonica were given all the care of a fine lady being handed into her carriage by her footman."

Efficacy Taken for Granted

During the long period of trench warfare which lasted until the final victory in September, 1918, the maintenance problem was, to all appearances, reasonably straightforward. But the real triumph of the Corps was precisely that it did create this appearance, and that the efficacy of its work was taken for granted. In actual fact there were difficulties which were not obvious. The margin of reserve was at all times small enough to cause anxiety ; for, since the army was dependent in the main on imports, the enemy made intensive efforts against the Allied shipping. Few zones were as thickly infested by submarines as were the waters round and about Salonica, and losses were very heavy. On numerous occasions disaster was averted only by the timely arrival of an emergency cargo to replace another, or even two or three others, which had been sunk.

Again, the communications between the base and the front were unsatisfactory. The Struma Front, usually held by three divisions, was dependent on the single artery of the Seres Road, which very indifferent route had to serve between 40,000 and 50,000 men, and thousands of animals, 50 miles from railhead. Nor did stocks permit of any substantial reserves being built up in the vicinity of the troops, even if the tactical situation had permitted this to be attempted.

The story of the remaking of the Seres Road for the carrying of the immense volume of traffic which flowed along it for 30 months is a fine tribute to British thoroughness and persistency. Those who made many weary journeys up and down that route will recall it with pride. Dozens of steam-rollers were brought from England ; the adjacent country was prospected for hard stone, and quarrying was started ; ox and buffalo transport and local labour were organised, and hundreds of thousands of tons of " metal " were poured on to the road.

Along the Seres Road

The work went on day and night, acetylene flares being lighted when darkness intervened. And even when, by the middle of 1917, the job had been finished, the road still swallowed up an immense amount of labour and material to keep it in order. Over 2,000 lorries, and hundreds of motor-ambulances, motor-vans, motor-cycles, and mule-drawn limbered waggons, toiled incessantly along the route. Before repair was taken in hand the M.T. vehicles had only been able, with the utmost diffi-

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Photo: Imperial War Museum.

AT JAFFA

A busy scene on the wharf of this famous old port, where boatmen of the Egyptian Labour Corps are engaged in the unloading of stores from surf-boats, November, 1917. Jaffa, the immediate neighbour of the great new Jewish city of Tel-Aviv, lies 35 miles north-west of Jerusalem.

culty, to get as far as Lahana—35 miles from Salonica—where muled limbers took over their loads and struggled forward, often with mud up to their axles and to the bellies of the mules.

There never was and there never could be any rest for the transport. Convoys were out at three in the morning and at all hours of the night, under fearful conditions of wet and cold in the winter and heat and dust in the summer. But the work was always carried on. That it gained its meed of appreciation is evident from the final despatches of the Commander-in-Chief, Sir George Milne:

"The work of all branches of the Royal Army Service Corps [the prefix Royal had been conferred on November 27th, 1918, four days prior to the despatch in question] deserves special praise. Their responsibilities include not only supplying the British Army requirements, but also those of the whole Greek Army and a very large proportion of the Supplies for the other Armies in Macedonia.

"That in spite of difficulties by sea and by land, the Supply and Transport Services of forces extending from the Black Sea to the Adriatic never failed for one day is a great tribute to the work of all ranks serving with the British and with the Serbian Army.... Large areas of country have also been brought under cultivation in order to supply troops from local resources under the management of the Royal Army Service Corps."

With that, surely, the men of the Corps will be content. They existed to sustain the Army; and they did sustain it, through good and evil days, and in every situation in which it found itself.

Egypt and Sinai

As the campaign in the Balkans exemplified a semi-mountainous type of warfare, so that in Egypt and Palestine showed a complete contrast in its desert operations, for which maintenance problems demanded different solutions. In no theatre were more diverse forms of transport called into use.

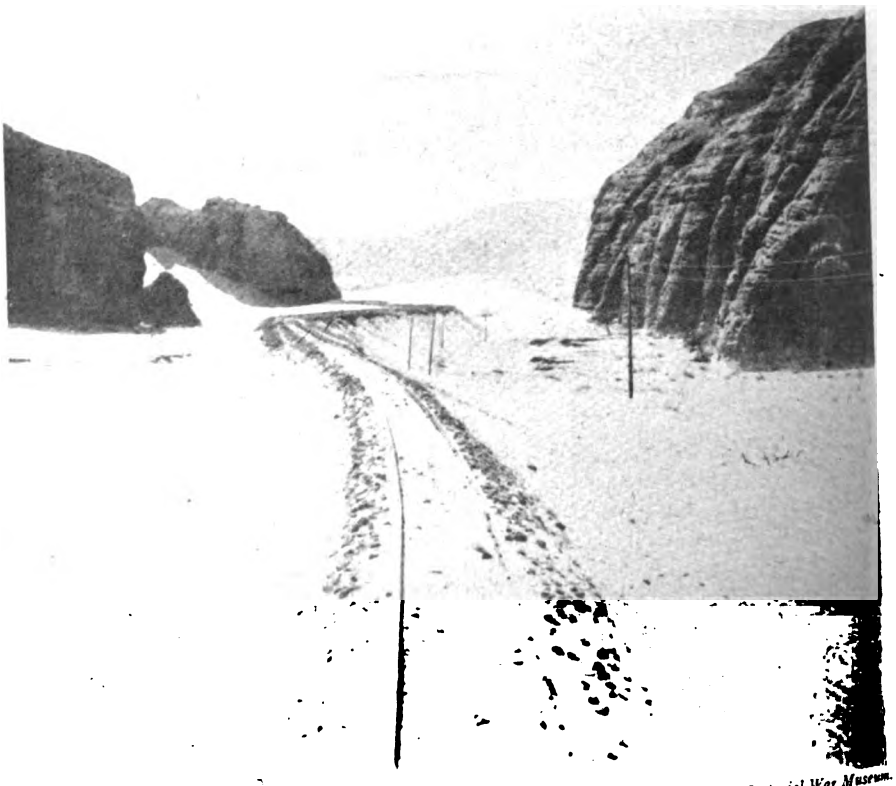

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

THE UNDYING BATTLE

The never-ceasing battle of the Abu Taqa is waged not by man against man, but by man against the desert sand. In some parts of England and Wales we are given a certain amount of trouble by sand-banks and dunes; but there is nothing here to match the problems which beset transport in desert lands. The trains which run over the Abu Taqa track are often stopped by huge waves of sand which have piled in quite a short while over the line.

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Except for the activities in the Western Desert against the Senussi, the British forces were until early in 1916 engaged in the passive rôle of defending the Suez Canal. One feature of the A.S.C. is worth noting, and that is the Motor Boat Company, which, after Gallipoli, had been transferred from Lemnos to Ismailia. The boats were used for transport and patrol work on the Canal until they were sent to Palestine, where they provided detachments on the Dead Sea and Sea of Galilee, at Haifa, and at Tripoli in Syria.

The operations against the Senussi were not important, for at no time were more than 7,000 men employed; but they ranged over a wide area, and furnished an example of light motor transport applied to a "small war." By the use of such transport the occupation of the Siwa Oasis, 200 miles south-west of Matruh, on the coast, was made not only possible, but easy.

Again, it was in the Western Desert that organised camel units were first utilised on any large scale, 2,000 animals being employed successfully, despite a certain scepticism as to their value, which seems to have been mainly based on apprehensions as to their proper management.

At the outset of the great British offensive launched in 1916, which was destined to reach Aleppo after rather more than two years of strenuous fighting, Qantara was developed as a great Base Supply Depôt for an army which ultimately attained a strength of some 500,000 men and 160,000 animals. As an indication of its size, it may be recorded that at one time this depôt contained 120,000 tons of haystuffs and 100,000 tons of grainstuffs alone.

The initial business was, however, to get the troops across the Sinai Peninsula; and to this end, since wheeled transport could be little used owing to the sand and rocks, the A.S.C. took in hand the organisation of the Camel Transport Corps. In past campaigns the camel had not always proved satisfactory. In Afghanistan in 1879–80 a tremendous proportion of beasts were lost. In Egypt in 1884–5 over 4,000, out of 7,000 purchased, became casualties. The reason for both these disasters was that no service existed capable of supervising work with these animals.

A Fine Camel Record

During the Great War, however, out of the 72,000 camels employed by the A.S.C. in this theatre—a number which, placed nose to croup, would have reached from London to Manchester—some 10,000 only died or were killed. True, the latter figure may seem high, but the camel is at all times a difficult

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

A DREAM COME TRUE

Many and many a time must R.A.S.C. drivers have dreamed of rations which would transport themselves from the depôts to the lines; and here, in this Mesopotamian scene, behold! we see the dream come true. A meat ration follows docilely on its own legs in the wake of our advancing infantry. The animals have been photographed while in the act of crossing the River Diyala, the year being 1917.

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and delicate animal to work, and compared with losses in previous campaigns the figure is astonishingly low.

With the desert crossed and the army established on the southern borders of Palestine, a further reorganisation of the transport services became necessary. This took the form of employing limbered waggons, each having a team of four mules controlled by long reins. As a supplementary measure, with a view to facilitating movement in the Judæan hills, two donkey pack companies of 2,000 animals each, with one driver for every three animals, were formed, and did excellent work. How well they stood up to their varied tasks may be gauged from the fact that only 268 donkeys in all were lost.

When the First Battle of Gaza was fought, on March 26th, 1917, the railway across the Sinai Peninsula had been pushed forward as far as Rafa, 18 miles from the scene of action; and three weeks later, when the battle was renewed, the railhead was carried to within six miles of the front line—an advance which greatly eased the maintenance services. But the fighting was disappointing in its results, and in June Sir Edmund Allenby relieved Sir Archibald Murray.

As the preliminary to further operations, a period of intensive administrative activity was entered upon, forward supply depôts being located right up to the troops, and even being subject to enemy shell fire. Subsequent events were to show the wisdom of this policy, for it was vital that, if the army got moving, its impetus should not be checked. Beersheba fell at the end of October, and this was the prelude to operations which drove in the enemy flank, forced him out of Gaza and gave him no rest until he was precariously established on the line between Jerusalem and Jaffa, some 50 miles from his former positions.

Pursuing the Turk

The work of supply during the pursuit was most arduous, for railheads were left far in rear, and a succession of rainy days reduced much of the country to a morass. But mechanical transport was utilised where possible, while camels, working in echelons along the coast (upon which opportunity had been taken to land stores), enabled our movement to be carried continuously forward until the Jerusalem—Jaffa line was attained. Here was a striking example of the power with which highly organised and adaptable rearward services endow a large army.

If in the first phase of the invasion of Palestine it was the camel which figured so prominently, and in the second the mule and the patient donkey, in the third and last it was mechanical trans-

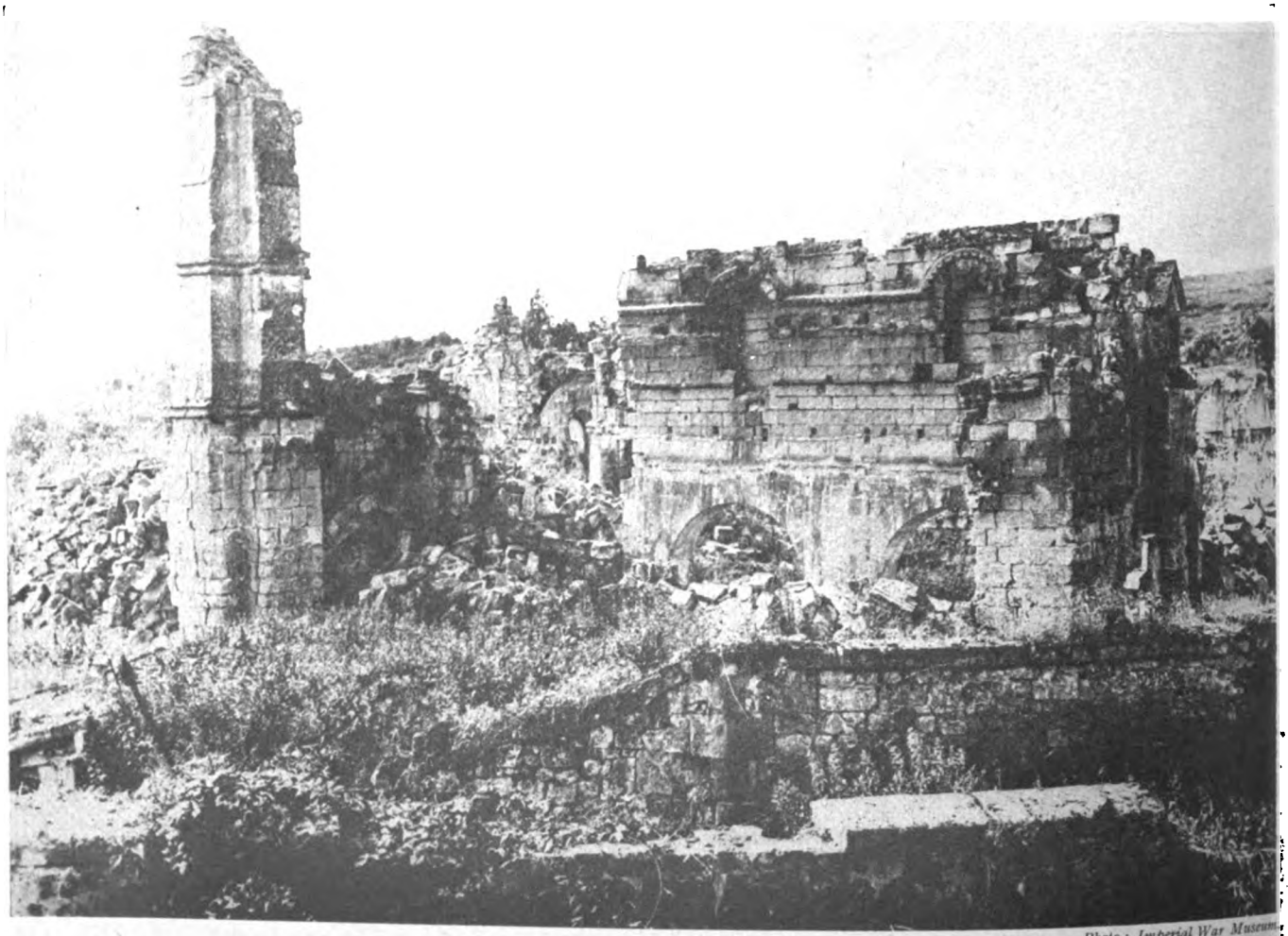

Photo: Imperial War Museum

NOT FAR FROM SOISSONS

The formerly splendid Norman church seen here—traces of "dog-tooth" decoration can still be discerned above the upper windows—is that of Nouvron-Vingré, a smallish village 10 km. north-west of Soissons and 4 km. north of the Aisne. The French drove the Germans from here when the latter were retreating to the Hindenburg Line (March 18th, 1917), lost the village again during the *Friedensturm* push of May—June, 1918, and recovered it on August 18th, 1918. The picture is dated June, 1917.

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port which came into its own and, in so doing, added a notable page to its early history. Indeed, its work ranks among the " high spots " of the whole campaign which culminated in the annihilation of the Turkish armies. With commendable foresight, no less than 40 companies had been made available in the forward zone by the time Allenby's final blow was struck. Of these, 19 were engaged in drawing heavy artillery.

To recount the A.S.C.'s share in the happenings which followed the famous Battle of Megiddo would require a volume. It will suffice here to indicate what must surely be among the Corps' most enduring memories. Within 36 hours of the start of the offensive the enemy was in full retreat, and a general pursuit ensued. As has been described in an earlier volume of this work, the three cavalry divisions of the Desert Mounted Corps, pouring through the gap made by the artillery and infantry, gave chase to beyond Damascus, to Homs, and to Rayak, the 5th Cavalry Division with its armoured cars reaching, by October 31st, a point 15 miles north of Aleppo, after having covered 500 miles in 40 days.

Work Night and Day

The maintenance of these troops was made possible only by the absence of rain and the consequent possibility of using lorries (which bore the brunt of the whole performance), aided by the prompt manner in which supplies were dumped along the coast northwards. During most of the period the companies were working continuously night and day ; and, as the advance went on in seemingly never-ending fashion, their numbers became so rapidly depleted that it was difficult to provide even one man per vehicle.

Indeed, when the lorries of the 5th Cavalry Division arrived at Beirut, some became immobile for want of drivers—and this despite the fact that many of the sick remained on duty. During ten weeks from the 19th September, 57 per cent. of the A.S.C. personnel with the Desert Mounted Corps were admitted to hospital. So hot was the pace that by early October one company alone had 106 sick in hospital, out of a total of 161.

Yet all the time that the cavalry went on, the M.T. followed at its heels, refilling from the coast or from any local resources which it could tap as it went. Aleppo was captured on October 26th, and—as was also the case at Haifa and Homs—the lorries entered the same day as the troops. It was a great and memorable achievement, over ground which would ordinarily have been deemed impassable in many places. And withal an average of 81 per cent. of vehicles of the companies which participated had been maintained on the road.

General Allenby later characterised the efforts of the A.S.C. under his command as " a triumph of organisation and perseverance " ; but perhaps an even more striking tribute was paid by the Turkish General Refet Pasha, when he made a post-War offer to the British Commander-in-Chief " to fight the Palestine campaign over again with an equal commissariat."

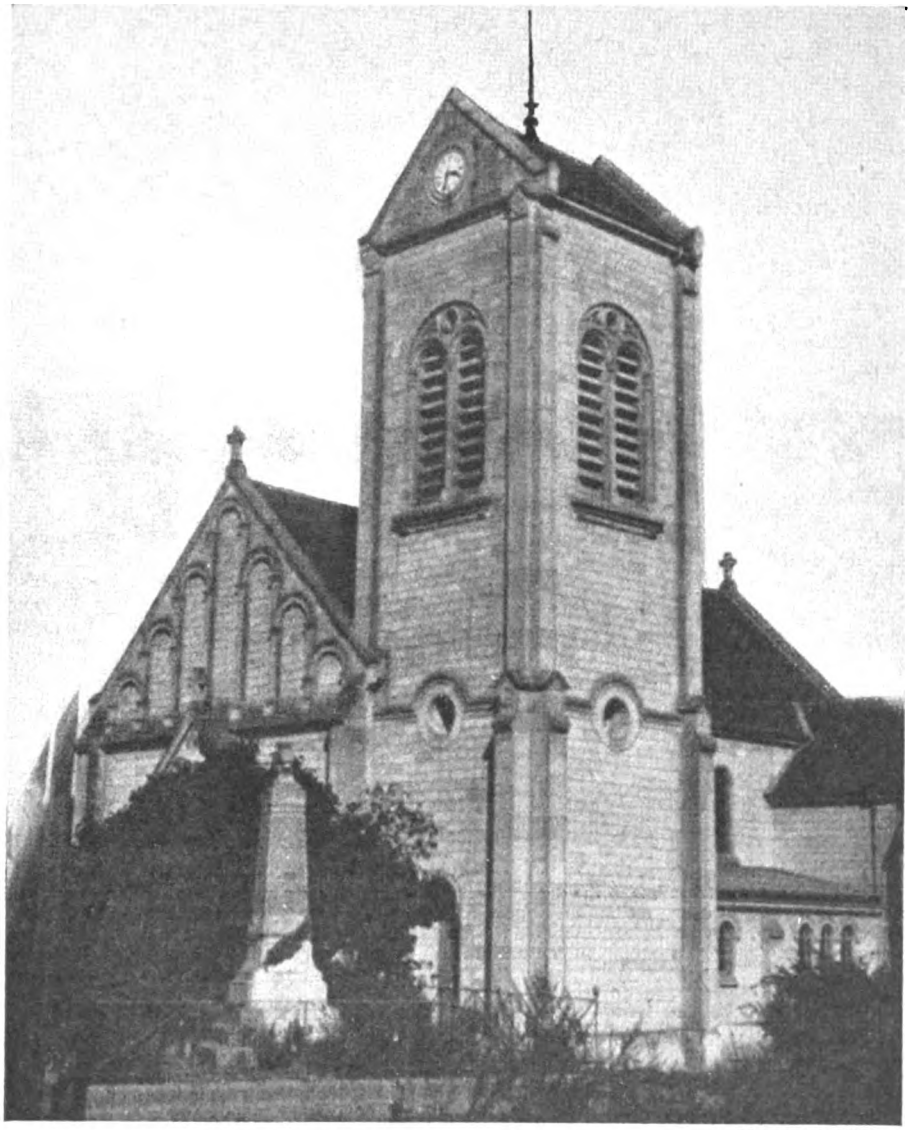

Photo : G. T. Watson.

COMPLETELY NEW

The Germans first entered Nouvron-Vingré during their advance to the Marne, in the last days of August, 1914, prior to which the II (*i.e.* central) Corps of the B.E.F. had withdrawn across the Aisne in this area, a number of troops retiring through Nouvron itself. After the German retreat from the Marne, however, the British in returning northward passed on the eastern side of Soissons, and did not again enter the Nouvron region.

The Sufferings in " Mespot "

Whatever may have been the hardships undergone, and the difficulties overcome, by the E.E.F., they were completely surpassed by the bitter experiences of the army in Mesopotamia. Not since the Crimea have British troops so suffered and endured. The horrors have been so fully described both officially and unofficially that it would be redundant to re-emphasise them here ; but for the purpose of recalling some experiences of the A.S.C. in this theatre, certain aspects of the local conditions, though already indicated in our account of the campaign, may again be touched upon.

Roads were to all intents and purposes

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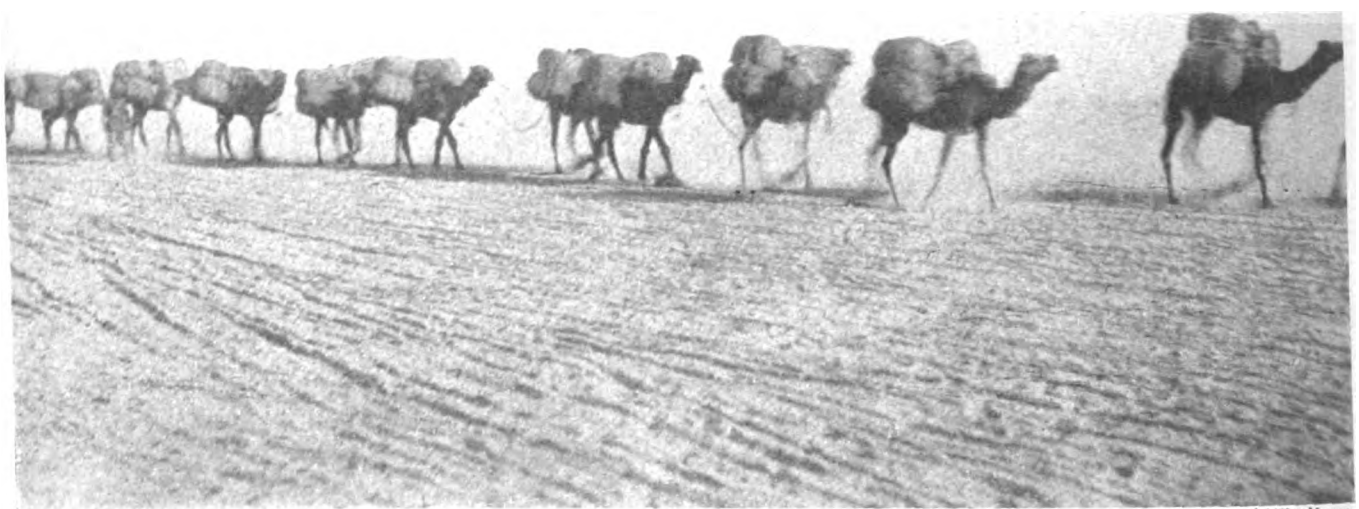

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

CONVOY ON THE MARCH IN MESOPOTAMIA

Looking like a scene from one of the desert films which periodically spring into fashion at our cinemas, this illustration shows a camel convoy on the march with supplies near Es Sinn, an important place 7 miles from Kut-al-Amara. There was fighting at Es Sinn in September, 1915; and on March 8th, 1916, General Aylmer attacked the Turkish positions there, but fell back after failing to take the Dujailah Redoubt. British troops eventually advanced through the village to the Shatt-al-Hai on December 13th, 1916.

non-existent. In the rainy season the whole country becomes an almost impassable morass, and in the summer dust and lack of water render movement away from the main rivers extremely arduous. There were no railways, except a stretch of 70 miles northwards from Baghdad to Samarra; while by the river-route the former town is some 500 miles from the Persian Gulf. Normal amenities of life, as judged by the meanest of western standards, were absent.

The climate from April until well into October is one of the fiercest in the world, scorching winds, accompanied by dust-storms, being among its more disagreeable features. Apart from a few palm-trees which fringe the rivers, the whole of the Mesopotamian plain is treeless, and the effect of monotonous wastes of sun-baked mud is indescribably depressing. Swarms of flies, sandflies, and mosquitoes assist to spread malaria (sometimes of a malignant type), sandfly fever, enteric, and cholera.

The Corps did not make its appearance on this scene until 1916, when three M.T. companies arrived in January, three months before the fall of Kut; and it assumed direction of the supply and transport services only in August, when a staff was sent out from home—the forerunner of some 660 officers and 12,000 other ranks who eventually participated in the campaign.

Until this time the responsibility had been in the hands of the Indian S. and T. Corps, which, in respect of neither its organisation, its experience, its training, nor its material, was equal to a task of such magnitude and complexity. There was a shortage or lack of almost everything necessary for the prosecution of operations. In the words of the then C.I.G.S., Sir W. Robertson, "The operations were allowed to develop without proper regard to the vital questions of supply and maintenance." The results were so terrible that they cannot be exaggerated.

When General Maude Took Over

It was in August, 1916, that General Maude assumed the command which he was to hold until his death in Baghdad 15 months later. He was a man of strong will and immense capacity for work, and he had a thorough understanding of administrative problems. The greatest energy was therefore pursued in putting affairs in order. The port of Basra was as yet undeveloped. No wharves had been completed; ships had still to be off-loaded in the stream into lighters, and the loads then landed, sorted, and re-transferred into barges for haulage 300 miles up the Tigris.

Labour was unorganised, and consequently it was impossible to deal with more supplies than were required for day-to-day needs. No reserves could be built up. The Base Supply Depôt itself was in utter confusion. All its contents were heaped together—bacon, jam, forage, medical comforts, and everything else; there was no taking of stock, no precautions against fire, no shelter against the weather, no housing for the personnel, and no room at all for expansion. Everything had to be sorted out. There was not even any system of checking incoming supplies.

Two months were required to reduce this chaos to order, and the determination and resource with which the task was accomplished was among the most

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outstanding achievements of the Corps during the whole course of the War. Land transport was provided to bring units up to their establishments, and M.T. was brought out. The Base Supply Depôt was entirely reorganised, shedding to cover perishable goods being erected, forage being moved to a new site accessible to incoming shipping, and a frozen-meat ship being ordered urgently from England.

The whole of the ration scale for both British and Indian troops was recast; for, incredible as it may seem, up to that time the old Indian system had remained in force, by which a ration comprising no less than 40 alternatives could be drawn, or at any rate demanded. A fixed ration of a generous nature was substituted, and provision made for ample supplies of tinned milk, fruit, Marmite, peas, and lentils, which had previously been lacking.

Cultivating the Desert

Canteens were started. Experts were obtained for the inauguration of grass farms, 250 acres being planted with vegetable seed, while pumps and ploughs were imported for the cultivation of barley. At the same time local purchases, especially of grain and hay, were increased to the amount of 6,000 tons a month. Purchase officers were sent as far afield as Luristan and Shustar, in Persia, for sheep, of which 70,000 a month were required. Bakeries were everywhere established, and the troops provisioned daily with bread. Petrol was acquired from the Anglo-Persian Company at Abadan, on the Persian Gulf.

But to enumerate the manifold reforms would be tedious. It suffices to add that a stocktaking of supplies revealed enormous discrepancies, and that the Home authorities were constantly demanding news as to what was being done to rectify the "scandals."

One may now recall the effect that all these steps had on the military situation. At the beginning of August the army totalled 150,000 men, of whom the main fighting force of 65,000, with 30,000 animals, lay at Sheikh Saad, east of Kut and 300 miles from the base at Basra. Besides these there were 27,000 men and 13,000 animals on the Tigris line, and 15,000, with 5,000 animals, on the Euphrates.

The total daily tonnage of foodstuffs required was 900, of which 600 went to Sheikh Saad; and the problems were, firstly to maintain current needs, and secondly to accumulate such reserves as would endow the striking force at this place with mobility. General Maude ordered a 25-days' reserve to be ready by November 15th, the date on which he proposed to resume the offensive against the Turkish army covering Kut.

This meant the amassing of 12,000 tons of foodstuffs at Sheikh Saad, in addition to the daily 900 tons needed for the whole army. Yet by October 15th the reserve had reached 23-days' supplies for men, 16-days' fuel, and 30-days' grain for animals. Only eight days' hay was up, however, as it was

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

IN A TURKISH STRONGHOLD

A photograph of British transport crossing the Jabal Hamrin mountains, north of Baghdad, during the first week of April, 1917. The range had previously been, and was for some time to continue, a strong bastion of the Turkish defence; and in March, 1917, General Keary's column, consisting of two weak brigades, had been heavily routed at the foot of the hills by the Turkish *XIII Corps*, more than one-third of the British and Indian troops engaged having been killed.

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found difficult to deal with this bulky article.

Not for a day nor even for an hour must the effort be allowed to flag; on the contrary, it had to be continually intensified as the strength of the forces increased. By the end of November a further 50,000 men and 10,000 animals had been added, and the numbers rose steadily until they reached high-water mark at 420,000 men and 100,000 animals. And this with the most primitive of communications.

"All Present and Correct"

Land transport was always a complicated problem, for river communications could not at all times be relied upon; and a compromise had to be effected between the maintenance of sufficient animals to meet all likely emergencies, and the avoidance of any serious superfluity of idle beasts which would consume supplies and so impair mobility. It was with pardonable exultation that the Corps found it possible to inform the C.-in-C. on November 15th that his commissariat was "all present and correct."

Once the advance started, it went from success to success. Kut was recaptured on February 24th, and, after heavy fighting on the Diala river, south of Baghdad, that city was occupied on March 11th. The lines of communication then extended a distance of 500 miles by river from the base. During this phase, and those succeeding it, the army was continually expanding, moving, and engaging in action with the enemy; but all the time the supply and transport services kept pace with it.

When the means of conveyance consisted, as they did, of river barges, Army transport carts, lorries, motor-vans, and camels, it was imperative for the supply personnel to know the capabilities of each, and the factors which governed their use. When it rained, as it did just after the operations had begun, M.T. and camels became ineffective in that roadless country, and the Indian A.T. cart was the only practicable form of transport. Sir W. Robertson recounts how, when the rout of the enemy in the Kut area became known in London, the first question that Mr. Lloyd George asked him was, "Will Maude get to Baghdad?"

"I replied in rather guarded terms," says Robertson, "that it depended on the condition of the supply and transport services."

The C.I.G.S. was absolutely right, but he need have had no qualms. Except for a few days at the beginning of March, which were required for regrouping the river transport, the advance swept uninterruptedly and victoriously forward. This was because the Corps had looked ahead, and was therefore not caught at a disadvantage, even by movement the extent of which could hardly have been anticipated. The troops were fed by land and by water. Barges were turned into moving depôts. The M.T. and animal transport took up the chain where the barges could go no farther, and carried supplies to the utmost limits attained by the troops.

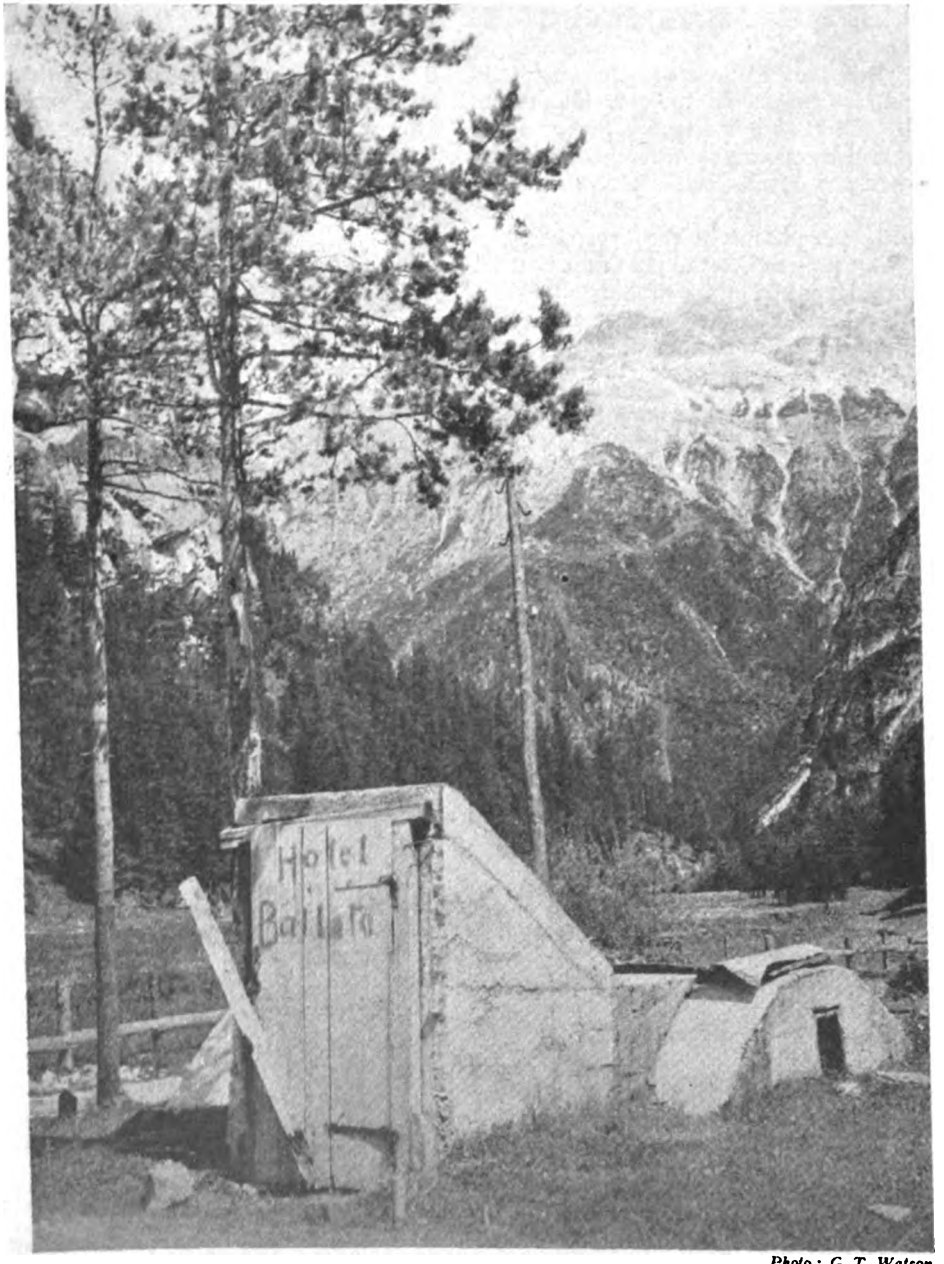

Photo: G. T. Watson.

THE ITALIANS, TOO, HAVE THEIR SOUVENIRS

The above is a contemporary photograph, taken by one of our Western Front photographers during a visit to Italy, and showing in the foreground an old Italian "pill-box." The name on the door—"Hotel Ballita," or "The Dance Hotel"—bears evidence to a vein of humour well in keeping with that evinced by the Tommy. In this region (the picture was taken at Cimabanche, near Cortina), a district later occupied by British troops, towers the 8,000-foot high Col di Lana, made famous when the Italians, whose line of fire it interrupted, destroyed an Austrian position on the summit by blowing off the whole mountain-cap by means of a land-mine. This amazing feat, under a thin fictional disguise, not long ago formed the theme of a highly popular film.

Ford Vans and Kut

The fact that the M.T. bore so large a part in the operations must have caused many heart-burnings among those who had taken a share in the attempts to relieve General Townshend at Kut a year before. It is recorded in a critical

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study of the campaign compiled at the Staff College, Quetta, that had even a few companies of Ford vans been at the disposal of General Aylmer to have endowed him with the necessary freedom of manœuvre, the relief could have been effected.

With the fall of Baghdad the most important portion of the campaign was over, although the activities of the Mechanical Transport branch then entered upon their most intensive stage, no less than 7,000 vehicles being eventually employed. One by one the Turkish garrisons north, north-east, and north-west of the capital were subdued, the movement of troops being effected by Ford van companies, which showed themselves capable of going anywhere in the dry weather. They went into Kurdistan; they went into Persia. Some Peerless lorries even got as far as Enzeli, on the Caspian Sea.

The most sketchy of surveys relating to the A.S.C.'s experiences in the Mesopotamian theatre would be incomplete without some mention of the base organisation, which maintained no less than 42 M.T. companies, as well as the repair shops for six armoured motor batteries and six anti-aircraft sections. Every item had, of course, to be obtained from England, and one of the greatest handicaps was that of personnel. Towards the end of 1917 no further reinforcements were available, and Indians had to be trained as substitutes.

In addition, Burmese companies were formed, local Arabs, Armenians, Chaldeans, and Jews were tried with varying success, and a certain number of Mauritians were called upon with good results. A few Chinese were also employed. It can readily be imagined that, with this mixture of races and babel of tongues, patience and perseverance were essential; and when it is remembered that the majority of trainees were either semi-skilled or wholly unskilled, it is a marvel that the results were as satisfactory as they were.

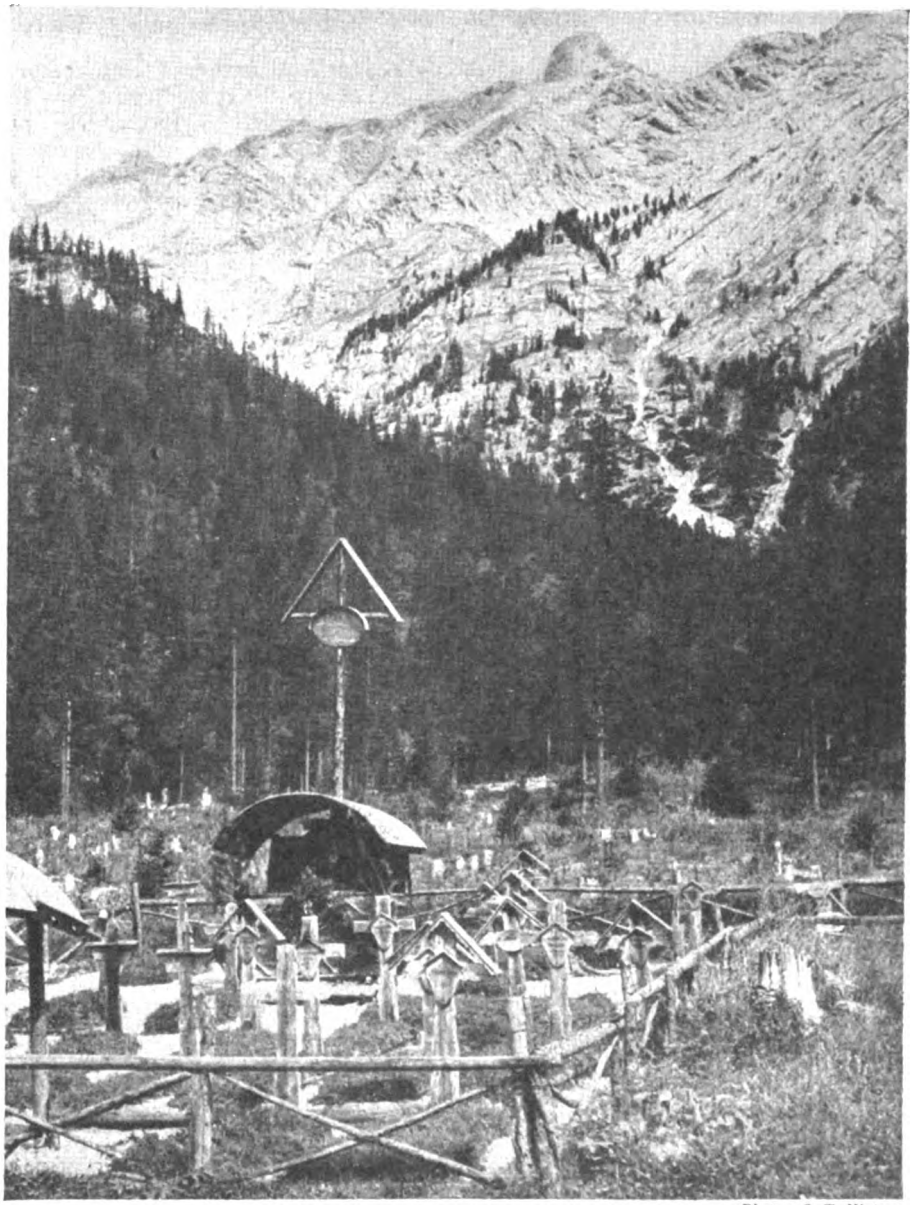

Photo: G. T. Watson.

WAR IN THE HEIGHTS

A pathetic reminder of the grim struggle which went on amid the Alpine fastnesses: a contemporary picture of a little Austrian cemetery, its humble wooden crosses still surrounded by the stumps of war-shattered trees. The location is on the slopes of Monte Cristallo, again near Cortina; and it is possible that readers who were stationed in or near this spot may remember the burial-ground, which lies by the side of the road north of the town. One of the things which impressed itself most deeply upon the men of our Italian Expeditionary Force was the immense heights at which it was possible to carry on warfare. Monte Cristallo rises 10,550 feet above the sea—yet for more than two years Italian artillerymen maintained a battery of 6-inch howitzers on the top!

The A.S.C.'s Greatest Triumph

The contrast between the latter-day Corps administration and that which had preceded it is directly reflected in the strategical successes gained one after another by Generals Maude and Marshall. From the time that the War Office took over control from the Indian Government, the campaign was well supported, and on the whole well "found." But such fundamental assets would not have sufficed had there not been on the spot a skilled personnel capable of improvisation, of adapting itself to conditions, and above all of foresight. In this respect the campaign was beyond all others a triumph for A.S.C. methods and training.

In a further sense the Mesopotamian undertaking proved a landmark in the history of the Corps. The old departmental conception of the services of supply and transport was utterly swept away, and not only because departmental methods, as exemplified in the Indian system, had failed; these were bound to fail when put to any serious test, just as the organisations which had preceded the A.S.C. had failed. It was also because the old-fashioned ideas, by which the Corps was regarded as an organisation solely concerned with the collection and issue of foodstuffs and their distribution by convoys laboriously toiling in the wake of an army and rarely approaching the scenes of its fighting activities, had ceased to bear relation to reality.

Here, in a war of movement, the Corps came into its own as the dominant

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agent in the mobility of the Army. On the efficiency of its fast-moving M.T. columns the operations largely depended, and thus was constituted a new auxiliary Arm whose scope was not confined to the provisioning of troops moving under their own power, but included the movement of the troops themselves, both for strategical and for tactical purposes.

Nevertheless, it would be unjust to ignore the co-operation of the Indian Supply and Transport Corps, which had, in the early stages, struggled with inadequate direction and hopelessly inadequate resources. Moreover, much of the executive supply work, and practically all the animal transport work, it carried out until the end, and co-operated most loyally with its British comrades.

The A.S.C. in East Africa

The Army Service Corps did not participate in East Africa until 1916, and its intervention was then confined to a directing staff for S. and T. services, and thirteen M.T. companies, which thus gained valuable first-hand experience of bush-warfare. Up to the time of their advent, maintenance had been carried out partly by the Indian service and partly by the South African Army Service Corps, supplemented by personnel drawn from local sources.

Considering the conditions, the size of the country—twice that of Germany—and the extraordinary racial mixture of which the army consisted, it was inevitable that affairs should have been in confusion. The appointment of General Smuts, with the idea of seeing the campaign prosecuted more vigorously, was made the occasion for an attempt to bring order into administrative matters. But the new C.-in-C. had his own ideas, and they were unorthodox. He determined to act at once, without time for preparation, deeming, and probably correctly, that any risk was preferable to that of delay.

" Efforts like these," he said, " cannot be made without inflicting the greatest hardships on all, but it is equally true that the commander who shrinks from such efforts should stay at home."

That, in brief, was the story of the campaign, and it poses the question as to what extent maintenance problems should influence a plan of operations. The answer is surely clear to every A.S.C. soldier ; and this is that, vital as such problems are, they should not be permitted to dominate the situation. In consequence, imperfections—and even, up to a point, deficiencies—in the services must be accepted, if more important strategical results are thereby to be gained.

The intricate nature of the operations has already been indicated in the chapter devoted to them. The net results were that the enemy was flung out of his colony, and continually compelled to retire, although, owing to his greater mobility, he could not be brought to decisive action.

During all this time the Corps " lived dangerously "—no bad training for it. The price was, however, tremendous. The first three months of the advance, which involved 28,000 men, cost us 28,000 oxen, mainly owing to tsetse fly, while sandfly attacked oxen, mules, and men indiscriminately. The life of an ox was not more than six weeks.

Nor, in any theatre of war, did the M.T. units experience more heart-breaking and terrible conditions. With a large army and long communications, the decision to use M.T. was right enough. But unfortunately, owing to the heavy demands of other theatres, especially of Mesopotamia, sufficient vehicles of a light type were unprocurable. The heavy lorries had ceased to exist by the summer of 1916 ; since the end of May the " lift " had not sufficed to carry more than half rations, and it never came up to full requirements, in spite of such renewals and replacements as could be effected.

While this was partly due to lack of lorries to keep pace with the ever-lengthening lines of communication, it was partly due also to the lack of adequate workshops in the advanced sections, and to the deficiency of spares for replacing the continual breakages caused by work across such hopeless terrain. The cotton-soil, whether in wet or dry weather, could not stand heavy traffic, and reacted so that the heavy machines simply broke up.

Difficult Roads

Where small timber had to be cleared, it was found that, owing to the wear of the road or track after very little use, tree-stumps projected, causing casualties to pneumatic-tyred vehicles. Consequently it was necessary for road corps to follow up the original pioneer parties to ease gradients, to metal-over or corduroy bad places, to bridge rivers, and to cut out tree-stumps. Heavy rains were another adverse factor in certain areas, rendering it impossible even to operate pack mules.

Losses among personnel were enormous. On one particularly unhealthy line of advance they exceeded in a month the total strength of the original units. On the Kilwa line vehicles were long standing idle for lack of drivers, while in the workshops, inadequately protected or ventilated, night-work was successfully substituted for that by day. It was, in truth, a horrible campaign, deadly to all the forms of life condemned to share in it.

One small party of troops, isolated from the world by a sudden torrential downpour, lived for a fortnight on hippopotamus meat. There is record of a British detachment, during the American War of Independence, having existed for a fortnight chiefly upon oysters ; and the experience of the party in East Africa may be set beside it as one of the curiosities of our military history.

Easy Days in Italy

No more than a passing reference is needed to the share borne by the A.S.C. in the first campaign ever waged by a British army in the mountains and plains of northern Italy—a country which furnishes a welcome relief from the mud and rain of France and Flanders. Possible intervention in that theatre had been foreseen six months before ; in November, 1917, troops were despatched from Haig's forces, and certain preparatory measures had accordingly been taken.

Moreover, to deal with a mere 100,000 men was, despite some minor difficulties, child's play at this late stage of the War.

Those who had the good fortune to serve in Italy have for the most part the happiest of recollections. Not that the work was light, for the organisation of the base at Arquata involved some prodigious labour, while the transport system required adjustments to fit it for mountain warfare. But generally the normal formations, supplemented in some instances by a rack-and-pinion railway, and by wire rope carrying-cradles known as the teleferica, sufficed.

The excellence of the roads, of course, greatly facilitated movement at all times, and especially after the break-through at Vittorio Veneto ; and the general pursuit which followed, when the troops were maintained with ease and regularity, confirmed, if confirmation were needed, how sound the organisation was, and how effectively it was understood by all ranks.

Feeding the Citizens of Murmansk

Quite out of the ordinary, however, were the adventures of the Corps in North Russia. When, in June, 1918, troops were sent to both Murmansk and Archangel, it was with the impression

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From BEAUFORT to ARVILLERS

Then and Now

Photo: A. P., Paris

THE CHÂTEAU DE BEAUFORT

Beaufort lies about 3 km. north of the Amiens–Roye road, and just west of the Rosières–Montdidier route. It was already behind the French lines at the time of the First Battle of the Somme, and did not become acquainted with the enemy until March 28th, 1918. On this date the British 24th Division (XIX Corps) and part of the French Groupement Mesple abandoned early in the morning their positions just east of the village, and by nightfall were some kilometres to the rear of it. Beaufort was again the scene of very fierce fighting on August 10th.

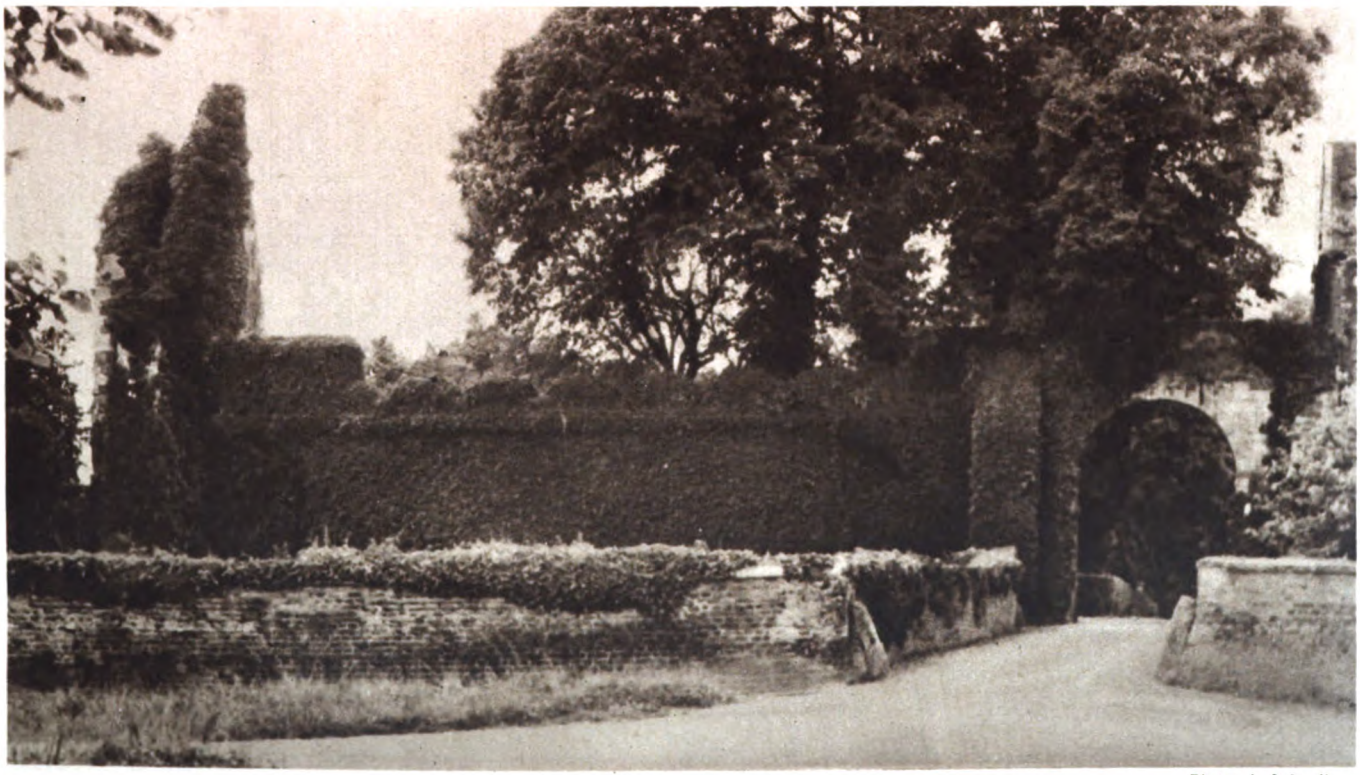

Photo: A. J. Insall

A MAJESTIC GATEWAY

Our wartime photograph of Beaufort Château was taken immediately after fire had gutted the splendid mansion on June 30th, 1916. The modern building, of which the entrance, adjoining a fragment of the old ruin, is shown above, has been grandly built somewhat on the lines of an English country house. Its owner, M. de Garsignies, and his wife, virtually "run" the village, and are invested with an almost patriarchal dignity by its 170-odd inhabitants.

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Photo: A. P., Paris

A RUSTIC CORNER

Notwithstanding a certain degree of dilapidation, the village of Bouchoir, as pictured here, illustrates well the remarks made in an earlier caption, to the effect that the Somme country of pre-British days was something akin to Paradise. The photograph—a French one—was taken on May 14th, 1916, when Santerre was still a region of trees and flowers and old-world-cottage charm.

Photo: A. J. Insall

ON THE *ROUTE NATIONALE*

Bouchoir is situated in the north-eastern angle of the scissor-pattern formed by the intersection of the two main highways mentioned in connection with Beaufort. The above view of the Amiens-Roye thoroughfare—a *route nationale*, corresponding with our Class A roads—shows the approach to the village from Amiens. As implied by the upper photograph, Bouchoir, like Beaufort, was behind the Allied lines from the outset of stabilized warfare. There is now one British cemetery, in which lie 537 United Kingdom, 214 Canadian, and 6 Australian dead.

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Photo : A. P., Paris

OPEN TO THE HEAVENS

It is said that in war the first casualty is Truth. It might be added—in respect of the Great War, at all events—that the second is generally church-towers. This photograph shows the gaping interior of Bouchoir church during the comparatively sheltered epoch which furnished the village view opposite. Notice in particular the bullet-marks on the right-hand pillar, and above the pulpit.

Photo: A. J. Insall

THE CONTEMPORARY EDIFICE

The 30th Division, XVIII Corps, took up a position which included the ruins of Bouchoir on the morning of March 26th, 1918, and remained there for about 24 hours. A retreat was then made, during heavy fighting, owing to a belief that the French were ready to relieve the division. This having proved to be incorrect, however, the abandoned ground was gallantly recovered, and Bouchoir was not relinquished until adjacent withdrawals compelled a retirement soon after noon. The recapture was effected on August 9th by the 8th Canadian Infantry Brigade.

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Photo: A. P., Paris

THE VILLAGE POND, ARVILLERS, MAY, 1916

Arvillers lies just south of the Amiens Roye road, and just north of the main route to Roye from Moreuil. On March 27th, 1918, it was the retirement of the 107th Brigade (36th Division) to the eastern edge of Arvillers, about midday, which occasioned the second and final withdrawal of the 30th Division from the Bouchoir line, as related on the previous page. The new line taken up by the two divisions was only about a mile to the west of the earlier one, and they were able to remain on it overnight.

Photo: A. J. Insall

WHERE A POND EXISTS NO LONGER

The XVIII Corps divisions at Bouchoir and Arvillers were just north of the huge re-entrant driven into the French line on March 27th by the successful German thrust at Montdidier. During the night of the 27th 28th, troops of the French Groupement Mesple should have relieved the 30th and 20th Divisions (the latter, officially in support of the former, was in fact mixed up with it); but only a small part of the relief took place, and the two weary formations did not go into reserve until the afternoon of the 28th. Meanwhile Arvillers had been lost about noon.

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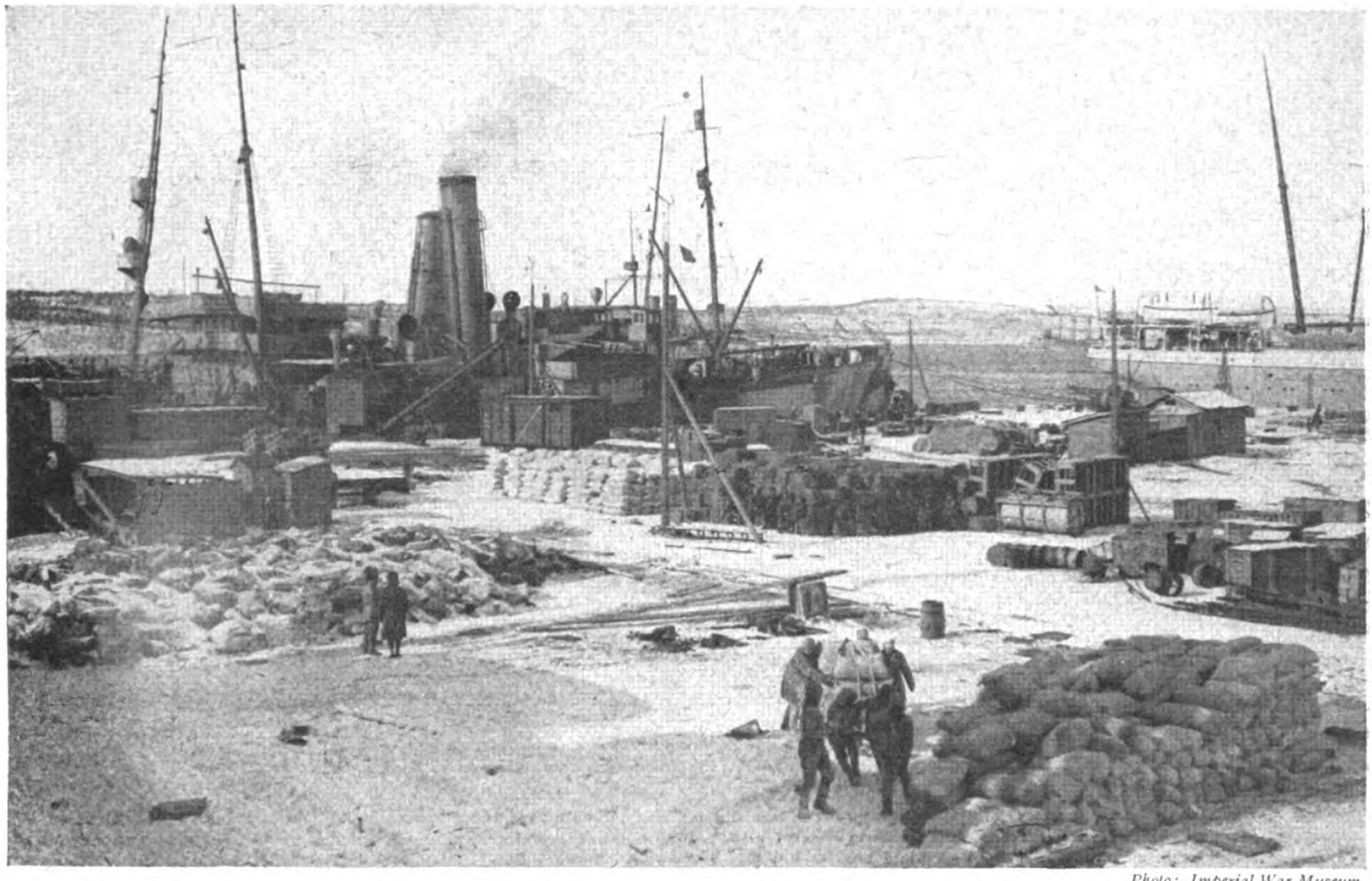

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

IN THE FROZEN NORTH

An R.A.S.C. store-dump in the most northerly region penetrated by this ubiquitous corps—Arctic Russia. The scene is laid on the quayside of Murmansk during May, 1919. Despite its northerly situation, the port is ice-free all the year round, a circumstance which proved of no small value to the British. Nowadays the town possesses a large fishing-fleet, and also manufactures fish products.

that food supplies were fairly abundant locally. The illusion was quickly dispelled, and at Murmansk it was even found politic to feed 100,000 of the population, ponies for transport being obtained by bartering foodstuffs against them.

When winter came, sleighs had to be substituted for wheeled vehicles; and, pending the arrival of the former from Canada, the Corps set up its own factory to make them. By January, 1919, there were 500 sleighs, with 2,000 reindeer, and 1,000 Laplanders to look after them. The honesty and loyalty of the Lapps deserves emphasis, for during their employment—and the shortage of personnel rendered supervision extremely slight—not one ounce of Government property was stolen or lost.

Summary of a Fine Record

The close of the Great War found the A.S.C. at the height of its prestige; and, in conclusion, it is fitting to summarise its record under the supreme test.

Sound organisation is not measured by the efficiency of the machine under given conditions, but by its adaptability to conditions unforeseen. To attain this, simplicity and capacity for expansion are the prime elements. Both were present. The structure, as has already been noted, had been designed to meet the needs of a campaign in Western Europe, and in its essential principles remained unchanged throughout the War. Yet the organisation would have fallen short of its purpose had it failed to provide men capable of meeting abnormal situations, and to furnish a cadre able to absorb and assimilate 30 times its original numbers.

It did not so fail. Whether on the Gallipoli Peninsula, among the mountains of Macedonia and of Italy, in the bush of East Africa and of the Cameroons (where it provided the sole unit of the Imperial Army), amid the deserts of Mesopotamia and of Palestine, or upon the snow-bound wastes of North Russia, it proved equal to every call made upon it.

In East Africa, as in Mesopotamia, the Corps was set to remedy the mistakes or make good the shortcomings of others; and, throughout, its activities extended well beyond the strict exercise of the duties of supply allied to transport. Its share in the heavy artillery work has already been mentioned. Towards the formation of the Tank Corps in 1916 it contributed large drafts of personnel. When the Machine Gun Corps came into being in the same year, the additional task was imposed on it of providing a great school at Grantham for the instruction of thousands of recruits in riding and driving.

No Mean Contribution

All these and many other activities outside its real field were from 1916 onwards carried out under the grievous handicap of a personnel continuously in a state of flux, and increasingly made lower in bodily efficiency by the transfer of its physically ablest members to the fighting Arms. Never did the Corps take its stand on the plea that "one cannot do more than one's job." At all times it preferred the ancient adage that "one has never finished doing one's duty."

And in so acting it made no mean contribution to the achievements of the British Army.

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Photo: Imperial War Museum.

BRITONS IN BONDAGE

The fact that large numbers of troops may be taken captive at one time is not necessarily a reflection on their ability or courage. Often, on the contrary, it proves that they have clung to their posts to the last, deliberately allowing themselves to be surrounded, that by doing so they may retard the enemy long enough to enable others to escape. The above picture shows a collecting-station in May, 1917.

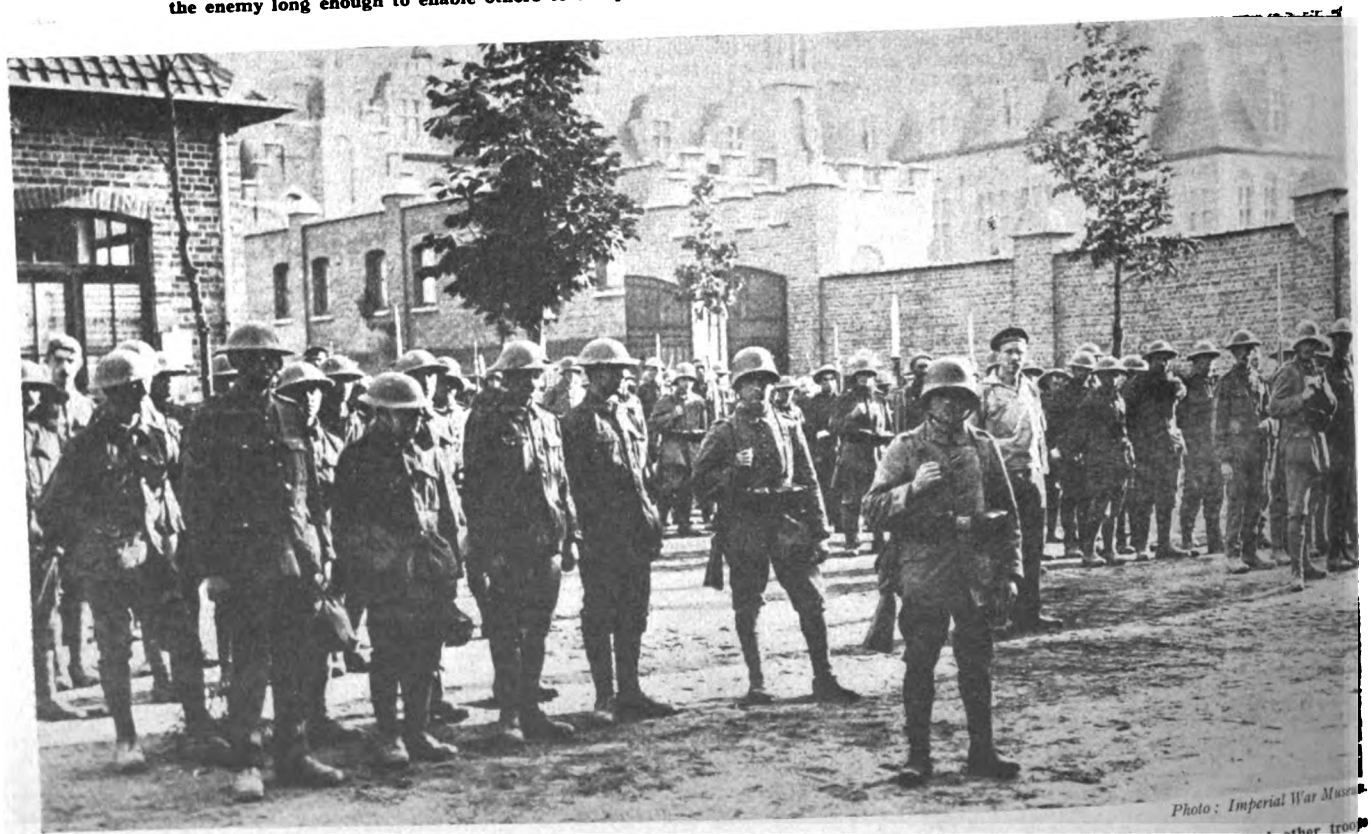

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

IN A BELGIAN COURTYARD

This interesting photograph shows British prisoners, chiefly of the K.R.R.C. and Northamptons, captured by German Marines and other troops during the successful enemy attack of July 10th, 1917, on our positions about Nieuport. In this engagement, known as the Battle of Lombartzyde, the Germans claimed to have secured 27 officers and 1,250 other ranks. The present picture was taken in the courtyard of the Hôtel de Ville at Bruges.

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CHAPTER XXXVIII

MEMORIES IX.—THE LIGHTER SIDE OF *KRIEGSGEFANGENSCHAFT*

Life in a German camp for prisoners of war, which is a free translation of the title of this chapter, was not a pleasant experience, and, as the Great War dragged on, economic conditions in Germany itself became so difficult that but for parcels from home many of the prisoners must have died of starvation. Here a British officer who was wounded and captured at the First Battle of Ypres gives a racy and authentic description of the general atmosphere in a German prison camp, which will be appreciated by all those who were unfortunate enough to undergo a similar experience.

AFTER a tedious parley between the escort and the camp guard, the double gates in the barbed-wire fence were thrown open, and the latest batch of officer-prisoners-of-war was passed through.

Nocturnal Arrival

"*Verfluchte Engländer*," commented the *Landsturm* N.C.O.; "*Gott strafe England!*"

Out of the darkness ahead loomed up the shape of a large building, with here and there a lighted window in its flat façade; the main block of the local "*Heil-Anstalt*,"[1] now converted to housing prisoners of war. Midnight was past, and the whole place seemed sound asleep.

Another interminable wait, while someone was being aroused to take over these starving, dog-tired British officers.

"*Marsch!*" came the order. The party was led round the corner towards another block, and ushered into a long, empty dining-hall. Its members sank down on the nearest benches, and would all have gone off to sleep, had not a sudden, loud roaring noise assailed their ears.

"What's that?" asked Lieutenant W——. "Someone's in the Devil's own rage!"

"It's only some officer giving an order," said Captain M——, who had lived in Germany. "They all do it!"

The door flew open, and an elderly, grey-haired Prussian *Oberstleutnant*[2] bounced shouting into the room. This was the camp commandant, risen from bed to receive the first British officers he had ever seen. The prisoners looked at him, awe-struck; the camp staff stood around, rigid, awaiting his orders—which might well be to lead the prisoners forthwith to execution.

The commandant, in fact, merely wished them to be fed; and as none of them had eaten for 48 hours, this was a good beginning. Famishing, they fell upon the cold sausage, smoked ham, and brown bread; while the *Oberstleutnant*, between roars, curiously, almost benevolently, watched the animals feed.

The party had been gathered straight from the battlefield; dirty, dishevelled, unshaved, they looked like a pack of tramps from a casual-ward. Indeed, the *Oberstleutnant* had serious doubts about them; he consulted his interpreter, who assured him that these were really officers—though, being *Engländer*, they were naturally of a villainous aspect.

Searching Questions

It was now discovered that Captain M—— spoke fluent German; to him the *Oberstleutnant* put some searching questions. Why had the English colonel no cap? (It had been snatched from his head at Cologne.) Why did this other officer wear such curious breeches? (They were "made-in-Germany," forcibly exchanged for his pair from Savile Row.) Why, in the name of God, was England fighting against Germany? To all these questions Captain M—— could only reply—"*Herr Oberst, ich weiss nicht!*"[1]

"Then who," persisted the Commandant, "is this dark-skinned youngster?" He pointed to Lieutenant W——, whose long black hair badly needed cutting. "*Ist er Japaner? Nein? Vielleicht Indier?*"

A ripple of laughter at W——'s expense ran round the tables; and W——, an expert facial contortionist, did a double squint. The interpreter, fearing an outburst, hurriedly explained that this was an all-white batch.

"So?" said the commandant, still suspicious; "then away with them to bed!" His voice rose again to a roar: "Put them with the Russians—they must get to know their allies!"

Chuckling, he saluted the prisoners and departed. The interpreter, thankful to be rid of him, politely requested them to follow to the dormitory. Here he switched on the lights, and revealed close rows of beds filled with sleeping Russians, for the most part in their day attire, and many in their boots. Every window in the room was tight shut, and the air was thick and reeked of cigarettes.

By this time the new-comers were ready to lie down anywhere. The interpreter pointed out some unoccupied, and unsheeted beds, said "Good-night, gentlemen," went out, locked the door, and turned off the lights. A faint glimmer shone through the windows; a few wakeful and inquisitive Russians came to exchange friendly greetings in French, to stare at these strangers, and to glean news from the outside world. Had Warsaw fallen? Had Grand Duke Nikolai crossed the Vistula? Was it true that the French had won a great victory, and were advancing to the Rhine? Whereabouts was the English Army? And how came they here?

The answers to their questions being vague or incomprehensible, at last the most persistent retired baffled—snores and silence reigned once more. Twice during the night an Englishman arose and stealthily opened a top window; twice, with equal stealth, a Russian closed it. Thus was found a bone of contention which for long poisoned the relations of the Allies; until an order was issued from the camp office that all windows must be kept shut at night, and that sentries were to shoot at anyone opening them.

"Fug" henceforth was a special *strafe* for *Engländer*.

Visit by the All-highest

On the sandy parade-ground inside the camp, the whole strength of the officer-prisoners was mustered. This

[1] Sanatorium. [2] Lieutenant-Colonel.

[1] "I do not know."

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was a special occasion, the visit of inspection by the local army-corps commander. Every building of the *Heil-Anstalt* had been scrubbed and aired as never before, the black-and-white-striped sentry-boxes newly painted, the awkward squad of *Landsturm* guards spruced and tidied into the semblance of first-line soldiers. Over all, the united flags of Germany and Austria fluttered in the breeze: while marked and familiar symptoms of inspection fever in the camp staff filled the prisoners with secret joy. Rumour said that General von B—— was a real Tartar.

Roll-call was begun betimes; experience had shown that though other prisoners could be counted with little difficulty, to check a large batch of mixed Russians, all bent on confusing the result, was a tedious business, sometimes producing an inexplicable surplus, at other times a serious shortage, and always engendering heat and hoarseness. This time, a youthful Imperial Guardsman having been early detected in impersonation and marched off to "Cells," half-an-hour sufficed for a correct count, leaving another half-hour's wait until the inspecting officer's arrival.

The parade, which faced the main building, was called to attention as General von B—— appeared at the top of the entrance steps. Tall, thin, hook-nosed, forbidding, he paused to survey the scene with a supercilious and conquering air. Close behind him his chief staff-officer—a typical round faced, spectacled, shaven-headed, barrel-waisted Saxon—the camp commandant, and an aide-de-camp hung on the great man's words while a string of smaller fry trembled in the background.

Soured in temper by not having got an active command in the field, General von B—— regarded this mob of foreign prisoners as personally responsible for depriving him of his chance. By their feebleness they had clearly allowed Germany to win the War. But none of the glory was to be his.

The Belgians, perhaps considered by their captors as the least blameworthy—and anyhow their country had been thoroughly "strafed"—held the place of honour on the right; next came the hereditary foes, the French, then a large contingent of Russians, and last and least a small sample of the "contemptible" British Army.

Excellenz did not shout his orders; he merely snapped a few words from his rat-trap mouth, and his staff-officer bawled them at the commandant. The latter, repeatedly saluting and bowing, passed them on to the parade, *ore rotundo*. Not understanding a word, the parade did nothing; so von B—— set out to inspect it.

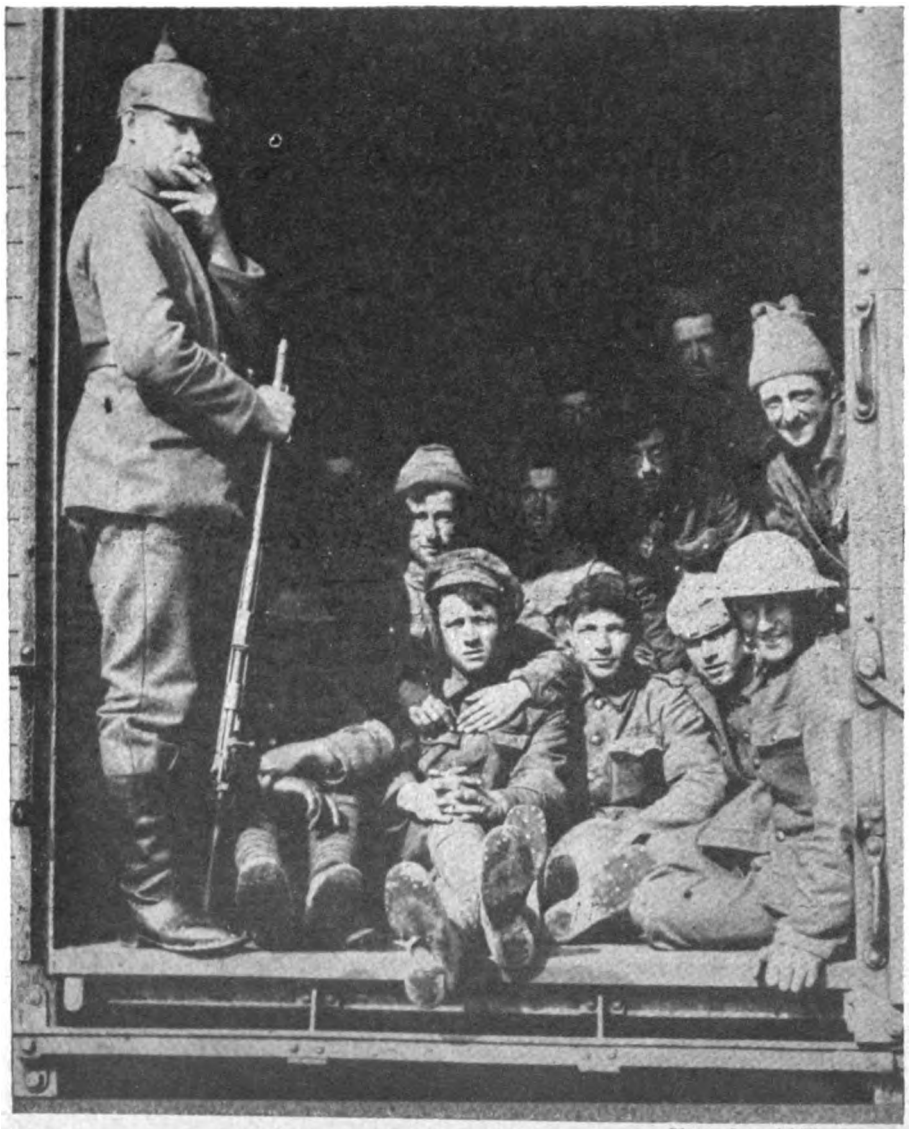

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

OFF TO GERMANY

A party of British prisoners photographed as they were being sent east by train after capture on the Arras front, May, 1917. The Battle of Arras—this particular Battle of Arras—lasted from April 9th until May 15th, 1917, during which period a considerable number of captives fell to either side. The ultimate balance, however, thanks mainly to the great success of the offensive in its early stages, was well in favour of the British.

Altogether Beneath his Notice

On the extreme right, in a black overcoat and high, gold-braided képi, stood the former Military Governor of Antwerp, General D——, who failed to see that the inspecting general was about to shake hands. The concentrated stare of so many unfriendly eyes must have struck chill to von B——, he made no further gestures, but, on reaching the British, abruptly turned his back, as though they were altogether beneath his notice.

They had hardly recovered from their surprise at his bad manners, when the interpreter came hurrying towards them, his red, farmer's face distorted with anger. Roughly he commanded them all to step forward; then drew them up in line close in front of General von B——. The rest of the parade then looked on amazed while the interpreter, who had never before ventured to address any officer other than politely, read out, at the top of his voice, a printed notice concerning the Treatment and Duties of Prisoners of War.

They were to know that in Germany the *Behandlung*[1] of prisoners was in-

[1] Treatment.

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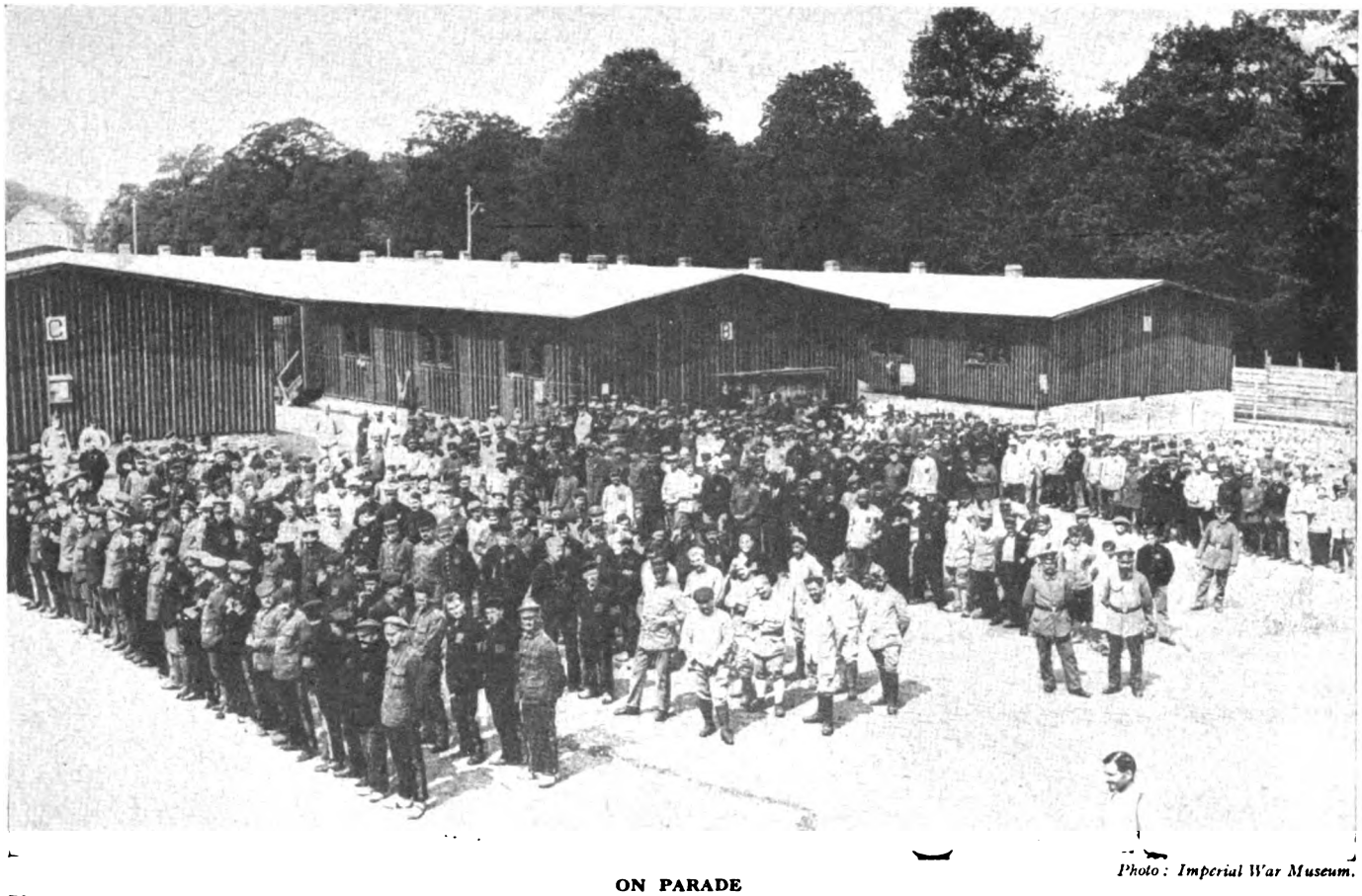

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

ON PARADE

The internment camp whose parade-ground we see here is that of Giessen, and the assembly of prisoners is principally interesting for the many nationalities involved, Russians being prominent. Giessen is a town in Hesse, near Frankfurt-am-Main, and is a minor centre for heavy industries. It is also of some historical interest, for it possesses a university founded in 1607, and a botanical garden dating from 1609.

variably humane and generous, unlike the "unworthy" practice of other nations, who ill-treated and abused helpless German prisoners. German nature was too noble to descend to such baseness; they regarded their prisoners as honourable men who had fought for their country. But woe betide those of them who should dare to disobey any order, not only of German officers, but of the German guards; who were "earnest men," filled with the desire to do their duty!

"Now go!" shouted the interpreter, with simulated ferocity.

"Well, that's that!" muttered Captain M——. "Look out for the squalls! We're the bad boys!"

As the echoes of this tirade died away, resentful murmurs and subdued groans rose from the onlookers. General von B—— heard them; he seemed to hesitate whether to order a general "straf"; looks of horror passed between his agitated myrmidons. But, with a menacing scowl, he merely ordered the parade to be dismissed, and then turned his mind to discovering some administrative scandals, or disciplinary shortcomings. The prisoners rejoiced to think that their jailers were going to be properly "put through it."

As soon as von B—— was out of sight, the British were surrounded by friends, all anxious to offer their sympathy and voice their disgust. From a high-up window of the "Cells," the incarcerated Imperial Guardsman looked cheerfully down: his brother-officers below shouted encouragement. All of a sudden he vanished as the window flew up with a bang.

"*Sales Bòches!*" exclaimed a Frenchman; then, shaking his fist at the flagstaff:

"*Je m'en f—— de ces drapeaux!*"

Christmas Day—Russian and British

It was Christmas Day; the British officers waited in the corridor till the Russian Mass should be concluded and they could get their turn at the "Church Room."

The Russians had a "Pope" of their own: a fat peasant priest, swept up somewhere in East Prussia, who was allowed to conduct the Orthodox service, and who had his vestments and incense, and his full choir. The choir, of course, included his whole congregation—as many Russians as could get into the room; it needed no training, since the words and music of the chants were familiar to everyone, and part-singing was a national accomplishment.

The British waited patiently, while wafted incense, and the deep-throated responses of the choir, filled the passage. From time to time a half-suffocated Muscovite squeezed out of the door; but otherwise the melodious and fervent exercise seemed likely to last all day. At length the attention of a Russian friend near the door was tactfully drawn to the time; he conveyed the hint somehow to the "Pope," who reluctantly brought the service to a resounding finale.

The door was flung wide; incense and Russians poured out; and the British, as soon as they got in, threw up every window. "The Pope," who had begun to disrobe, fled incontinent on feeling the icy draught caused by these fresh-air fiends.

A time-expired German harmonium,

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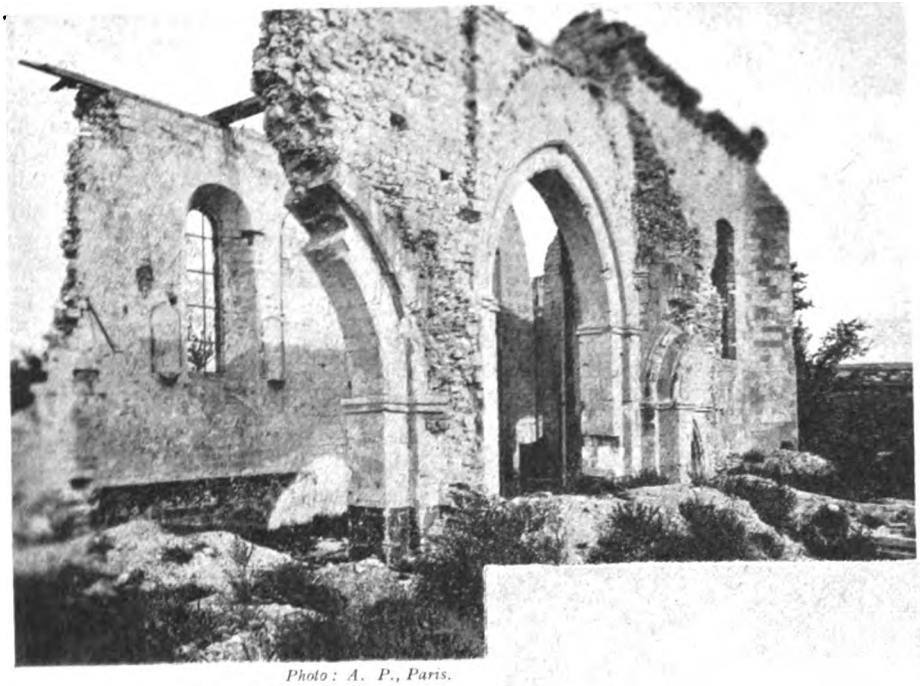

Photo: A. P., Paris.

AT CURLU

Curlu, yet another notorious spot on the north bank of the Somme, lies on a hairpin-bend of the river 3 km. due north of Frise, and just south of the Albert—Péronne road. The above photograph of the wrecked church is dated September 20th, 1917. The view is taken from the south side.

a battered copy of the English Prayer-Book, and of Hymns Ancient and Modern, had been got from the interpreter; and some pencilled copies of the hymns completed the outfit. But when it came to the point, no British officer present could undertake to play a note.

Fortunately Captain S—— had a French chum, young Capitaine A—— of the Zouaves, who owned to some musical accomplishments, and who, half in jest, offered to act as organist.

The "Lion of Morocco," *alias* "Moosoo" to his English friends, had put on his black, laced jacket and wide scarlet trousers in honour of the occasion. With his blue eyes, florid complexion, and curly red hair crowned with a jaunty fez, he produced an effect worthy of the pencil of Caran d'Ache; and a more incongruous Christmas organist, or a more heartening spectacle in these dreary surroundings, could hardly be imagined.

"*Quelle vâche d'instrument!*" he exclaimed, after some laboured chords: "a piano is one affair—but this bag of wind! *Tiens!* So these are the English hymns? Wait then a moment, I will try them over. This one first? *Mon Dieu! Comme c'est difficile!*"

"Not a bit, Moosoo! That's splendid!" encouraged Captain S——; "no, not yet—wait till I give you the word to begin."

Colonel B—— took up the Prayer Book, and coughed for silence. The interpreter came in, and took a back seat. His duty was to see that the assemblage indulged in no conspiring against the authorities, and uttered no treasonable sentiments. He wished to know why Capitaine A—— was here; was he a Protestant?

A Liar Without Shame

The "Lion" showed his white teeth in a broad smile. He was a Catholic; but he wished to shock the interpreter.

"Me? Protestant? But no! I

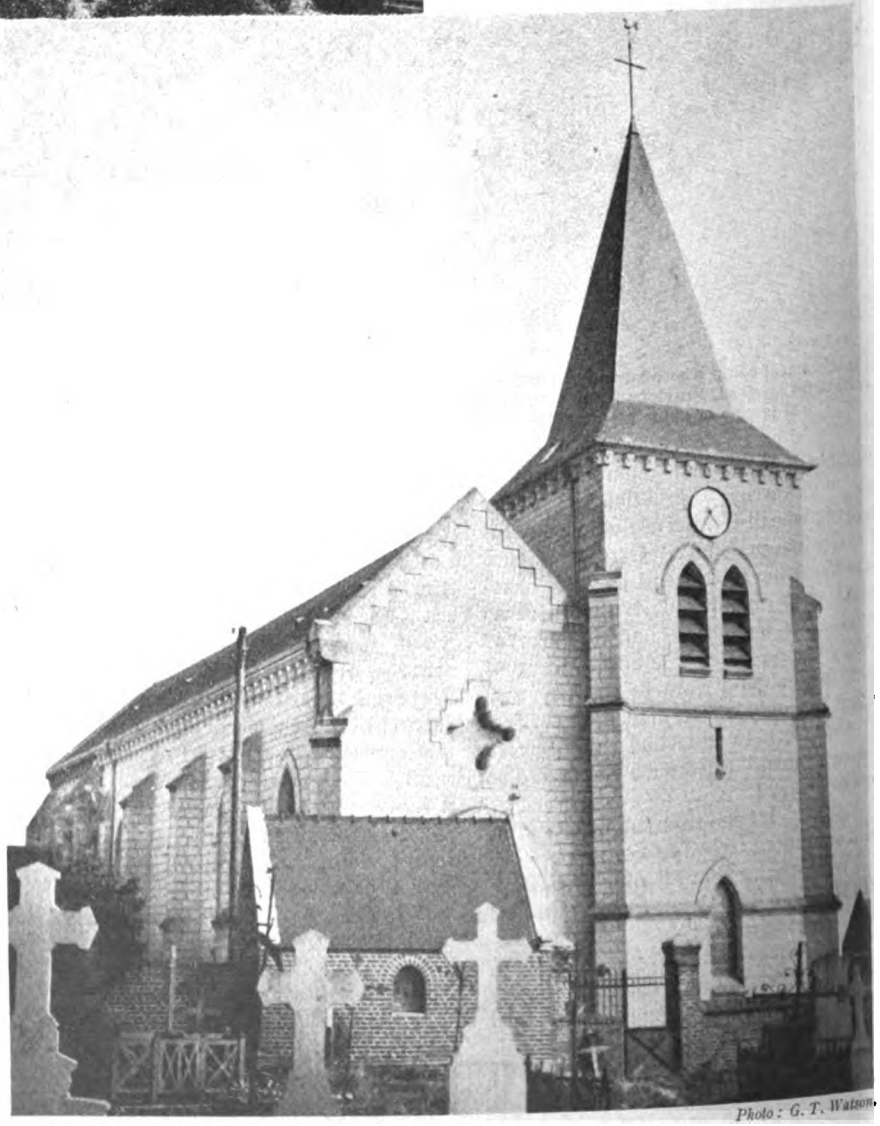

Photo: G. T. Watson.

A THICKSET EDIFICE

Prior to July 1st, 1916, Curlu lay just behind the enemy front line. On that date, however, it was captured, not without difficulty, by the 11th Division of the French XX Corps. Our Allies' first assault, in the morning, failed to break into more than the outskirts of the village; but a second attempt in the evening carried all the German positions. Despite some bitter fighting in the cemetery, the French suffered few losses, and did not call on their reserves.

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am Atheist! I am here as organist only, for these gentlemen!"

"Dearly beloved," began Colonel B——, before the interpreter could do anything but register another bad mark for Capitaine A——. He read steadily on, till he found himself praying for "Albert Edward, Prince of Wales," realised his book was of the last century, muttered "As you were," and resumed more cautiously. The Frenchman fidgeted on his music stool, stared at the serious faces of his new friends, and wondered if their seeming piety were only a pose.

"Now's the time, Moosoo!" whispered S——. The "Lion" knit his brows, settled himself firmly, and plunged into *Hark! the Herald Angels.* The harmonium rocked and creaked. Captain M—— led off, the rest followed nervously. The organist's expression grew tense, his shoulders went up at each false note, his feet wrestled with the stiff pedals.

Once or twice he looked round, as though about to say something; perhaps to beg for more time to get level with the singers, or to call their attention to the key. But as S—— kept nodding encouragement, he shrugged again and plodded on in silence.

"I think we'd better cut the other hymns," said Colonel B——. "Let's finish with *God Save the King.*"

"Moosoo" played this fortissimo—to drown M——, and to annoy the interpreter. At the end he received a shower of compliments.

"*Voilà*! I do my best," he laughed, "but what can you? The harmonium is *Allemand—et poitrinaire!*"[1]

He gave it a resounding kick.

"Damaging the property of the Deutsches Reich," noted the interpreter. The commandant should certainly be told; perhaps, then, this insolent Capitaine A——, who behaved like a sort of chartered libertine, would be shut up along with the obstreperous Imperial Guardsman? But nothing could be done about it to-day; it was Christmas, even for prisoners.

[1] Consumptive.

Escape Frustrated

Sudden orders had come from the army-corps command that the whole British contingent in the *Heil-Anstalt* was to be sent forthwith to another *Lager.* Whether some spy had discovered what the constant swelling in bulk of the prisoners' gardens portended, or whether some sounds of tunnelling-work going on beneath the sentries' beat had reached their ears, or whether this move was only another attempt to make the *Engländers'* life more of a burden, none of them could guess; and at least two more days' work was necessary before any underground escape could be attempted. Swearing as heartily as the Army in Flanders, they began to pack up.

On the last evening, several impromptu feasts were arranged, the British contributing freely of their surplus stores, which they could not carry away. The most select party assembled in the quarters of General D——, ex-Governor of Antwerp, doyen of the *Kriegsgefangener.* A dozen sat

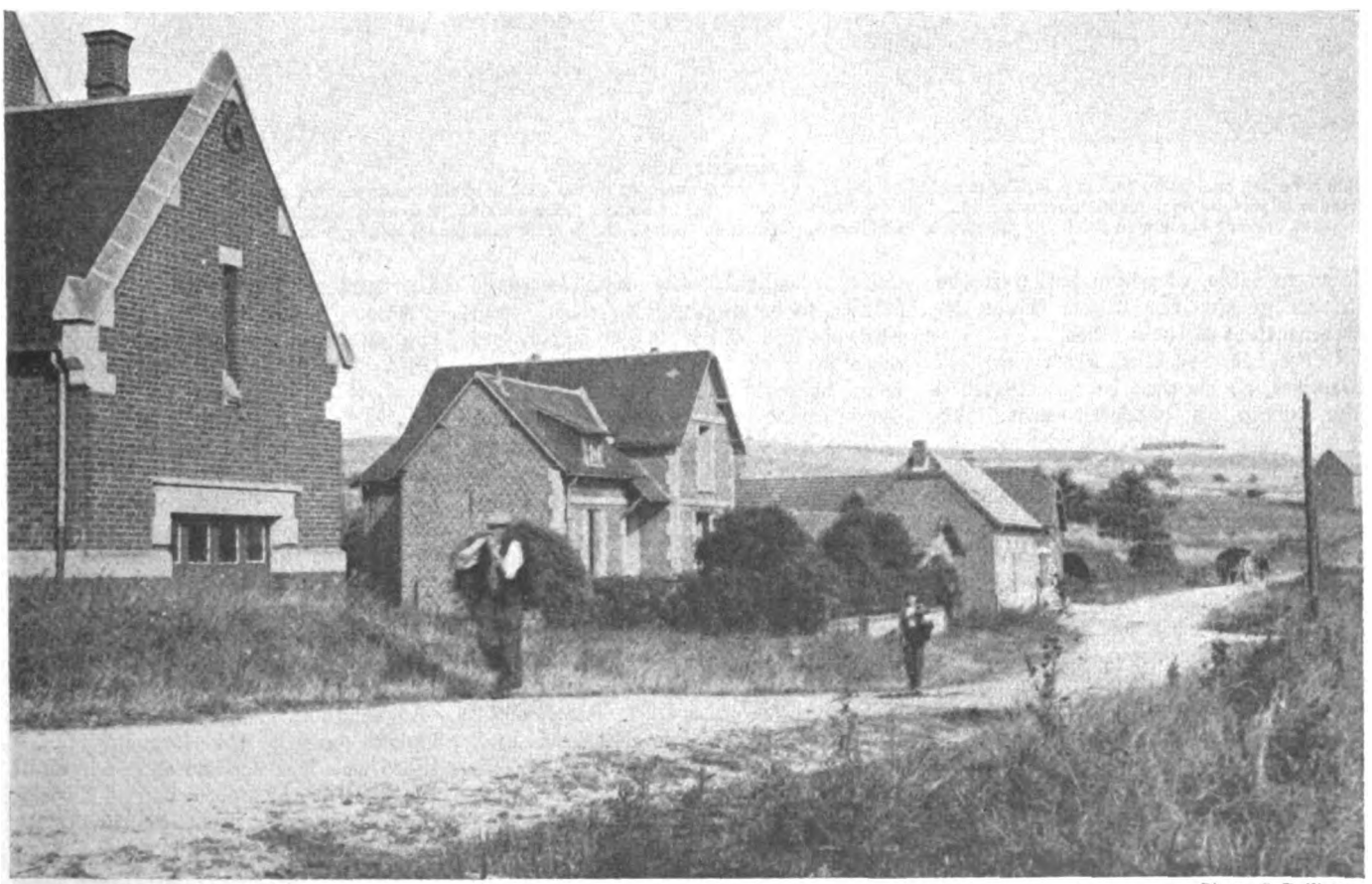

Photo: G. T. Watson.

CURLU: THE VILLAGE HIGHWAY

The enemy came back to Curlu on March 25th, 1918. On the 24th, the 21st Division, forming the right flank of the VII Corps, had retired into the village about 5 p.m., after holding off the enemy for five hours. Late that night came the G.H.Q. order transferring all the VII Corps troops north of the Somme from the Fifth to the Third Army; and it was as the flanking troops of this Army that the shrunken Corps put up, on the morning of the 25th, one of the most magnificent defences of the March Retreat. Curlu was evacuated, chiefly owing to artillery fire, soon after 10 a.m. The final recovery of the village was made on August 28th, 1918.

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Arrival of an Inspecting General, Gütersloh

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A MOMENTOUS EVENT

This amusing and by no means unskilful drawing is one of an albumful executed by the author of the accompanying chapter during his wearisome sojourn in various German prison-camps. The theme, which is that of an inspecting general visiting the camp at Gütersloh, Prussia, aptly illustrates the opening account in the text. Gütersloh, in the region known as Westphalia, is celebrated for its local rye-bread, called *Pumpernickel*.

down to table, of whom half were the British guests, the others senior representatives of their Allies.

General D——, bluff, hearty, *un vrai Flamand*, as his own friends described him, made an excellent host; his Belgian orderly was a skilled cook, the courses were many and mixed, and the wine plentiful if unavoidably synthetic. At the end of this curious, confused banquet, the General rose to propose the health of his guests. Formerly a distinguished professor of fortification, he spoke at first with the measured precision of the class-room, but then with more developed eloquence, fit for such a farewell oration, until even those of his guests whose French was weak felt their ears tingling, and modest blushes mantling their cheeks.

Their French, Belgian, and Russian friends thumped applause, and raised their glasses, with shining eyes, to drink their health. A Belgian major, unable to maintain the perpendicular, sank back in his chair, continuing to ejaculate at short intervals, "*À bas les Bôches!*"

It fell to Colonel B—— to respond; and now his hold on the French language seemed to be slipping altogether away. Still, cheered on by his own party, and desperately anxious to express his gratitude, he managed to blurt out a few words about *chers camarades* and *brave Alliés*; words ecstatically received by those same Allies, and punctuated by the irrelevant curses of the giddy major.

Thus all was harmony; but as the guests had to be on parade in the small hours, they tore themselves early away, amidst much hand-gripping and back-slapping. General D——, blocking his retreat, embraced Colonel B——, exclaiming, "*Mon colonel, l'accolade!*" The Colonel extricated himself, and, fancying that he was about to be embraced by a Russian officer, with whom, owing to language difficulty, he had never exchanged a word before, shot out of the door, into the arms of his brother-officers, who were all doubled up with laughter.

"Sh! Sh! They'll hear you!" he hissed, as he drove them down the passage.

Uproarious Farewell

At 2.30 a.m. lights were shining in all the buildings, and the whole camp was astir. The other Allies came crowding round the British, bent on giving them a good "send off." The camp adjutant, the interpreter, and the staff strove by voice and gesture to separate the *Engländer* from the disorderly mob of their friends; but finally the Guard had to be summoned, and with fixed bayonets placed themselves between the two groups.

The column was ranked with its head close up to the wicket-gate, at which each departing prisoner was to be marked off on the roll. A dense throng of Allies looked on—in the foremost places those who had become close friends of the British through constant association in study, games, or theatricals. Right under the arc-lights stood a group of young Russians—Guardsmen, Cossacks, staff officers—all in their third year of imprisonment; they watched with mixed feelings their friends' departure. The *Anglisky* might be going on a first stage towards home and

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Photo: Imperial War Museum.

PRISONERS' HANDIWORK

This remarkably fine memorial at Giessen Camp was made and erected entirely by the prisoners. It bears the date 1917, and the inscription is in Latin for the obvious reason that this was the only tongue more-or-less common to all the nationalities concerned. Russians constituted by far the highest proportion of the captives taken by the Central Powers, just as Russia's casualties were the heaviest of any belligerent.

England—the War couldn't, surely, go on much longer—but what chance was there of ever meeting them again?

It was just a week earlier that the first news of the Revolution in Petrograd had been posted up on the camp notice-board; the last letters from Russia were a month old. The future for these Russian officers began to look dark indeed; and the incorrigible optimism of their British chums would sustain them no longer.

"Cheerio! Come to London after the War, old chap! Good luck!"

"*Proshchaite! Vsevo Noroshavo!*"[1]

From a door at the end of the main block appeared General D——, buttoned up in an overcoat over his night-attire; he stood smiling, fingers to the peak of his képi, in acknowledgment of cries of "*Au revoir, mon général!*" Colonel B——, the last to go, held out his hand.

"*Encore l'accolade, mon colonel!*" cried the General, flinging his arms round the Colonel's neck.

"Hourra!" roared the onlookers, as the tail of the column passed through the gate; and some who tried to follow were hurled roughly back.

"Good-bye! Good luck!"

Outside, the *Oberstleutnant* waited. It seemed that the tally was still incomplete, and his temper was at boiling-point. Nevertheless Colonel B—— felt that etiquette demanded that he should take formal leave of the old man, whose régime, if severe, had, on the whole, been human. Having got a few lines of correct German by heart, he discharged them with the best pronunciation he could achieve.

The *Oberstleutnant* listened with a stony stare, which slowly melted into a grin.

"You speak much better German than you did at first!" he said; evidently thinking—"you'll speak it still better before we've done with you!"

Then, suddenly recollecting himself, he bowed from the waist, saluted, and turned again to the parade with loud roars.

It was already late, and the British Captain H—— was nowhere to be found: which was not remarkable, since overnight he had become transformed into a Russian.

A Hotel in the Harz Mountains

It was high summer in the Harz. Far off, above the endless ridges of pine woods, the peak of the Brocken showed dimly in the haze; near at hand, the lake beyond the prison-camp enclosure was still as glass. It was the summer of 1917, when the news-bulletins spoke daily of hundreds of thousands of tons of British shipping *gesunken*, of British armies invariably repulsed, on all fronts, *mit blütige Verluste*.[1]

The prison, a summer hotel, all glass and woodwork, whose main feature was a large *Speise-Saal*,[2] now housed an all-British batch of some 200 officers, ranging from old-stagers collected in 1914–15 to others of the Somme period, or of the more intensified air-war era that followed it.

Life indoors, except at meal-times in the big hall, was exceedingly cramped; but at this time of year the use of a small garden, and exercise ground, made

[1] With bloody losses. [2] Dining-hall.

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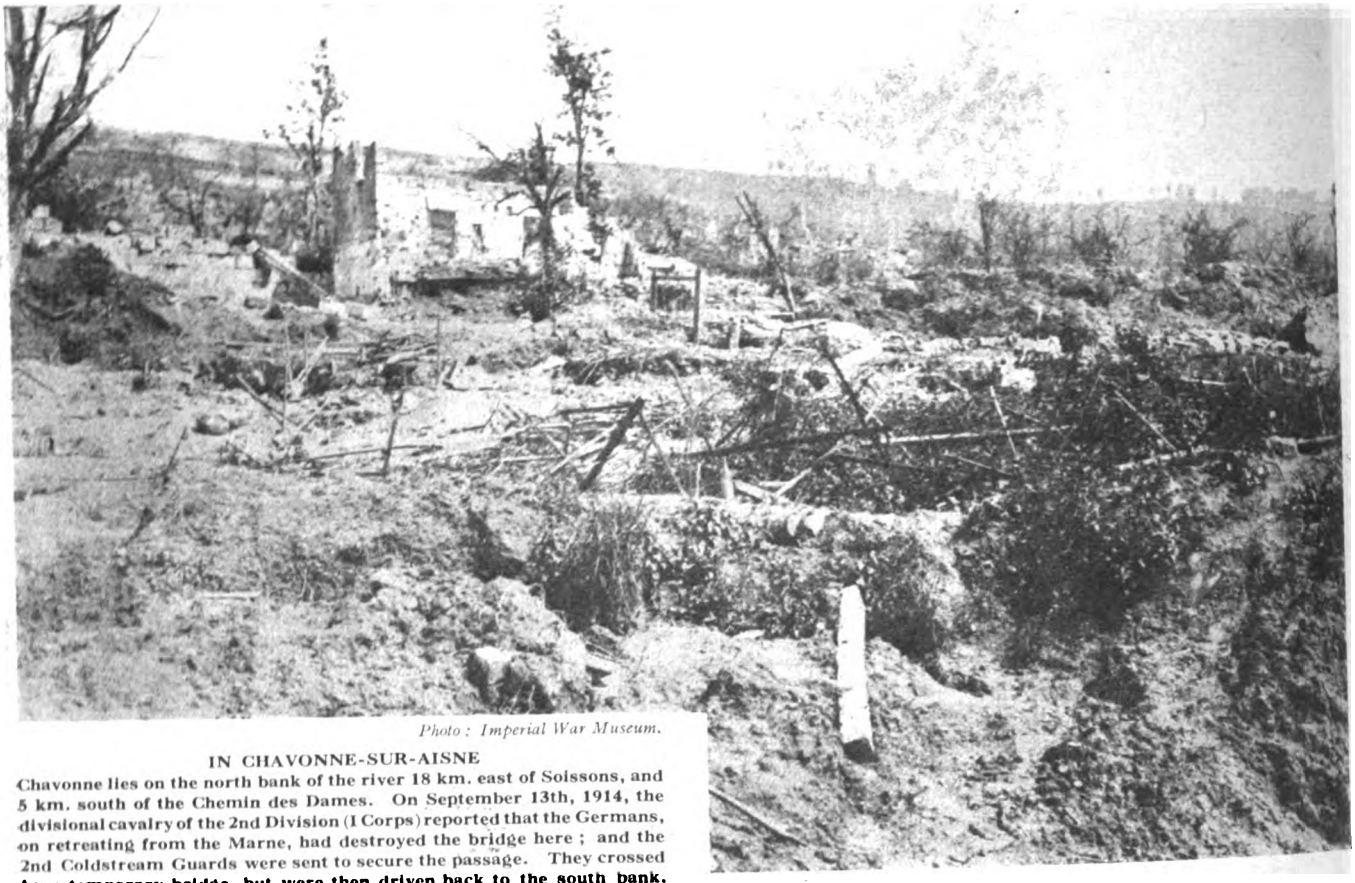

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

IN CHAVONNE-SUR-AISNE

Chavonne lies on the north bank of the river 18 km. east of Soissons, and 5 km. south of the Chemin des Dames. On September 13th, 1914, the divisional cavalry of the 2nd Division (I Corps) reported that the Germans, on retreating from the Marne, had destroyed the bridge here; and the 2nd Coldstream Guards were sent to secure the passage. They crossed by a temporary bridge, but were then driven back to the south bank.

CHAVONNE CHURCH

The wartime photograph shows the old church behind wrecked German trenches abandoned after an attack at Chavonne in May, 1917. A year later, British troops were once again involved here, in the nearly disastrous German assault to which reference was made beneath the lower picture of Hurtebise Farm on page 611. Our divisions then involved constituted the IX Corps.

Photo: G. T. Watson.

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Photo. A. P., Paris.

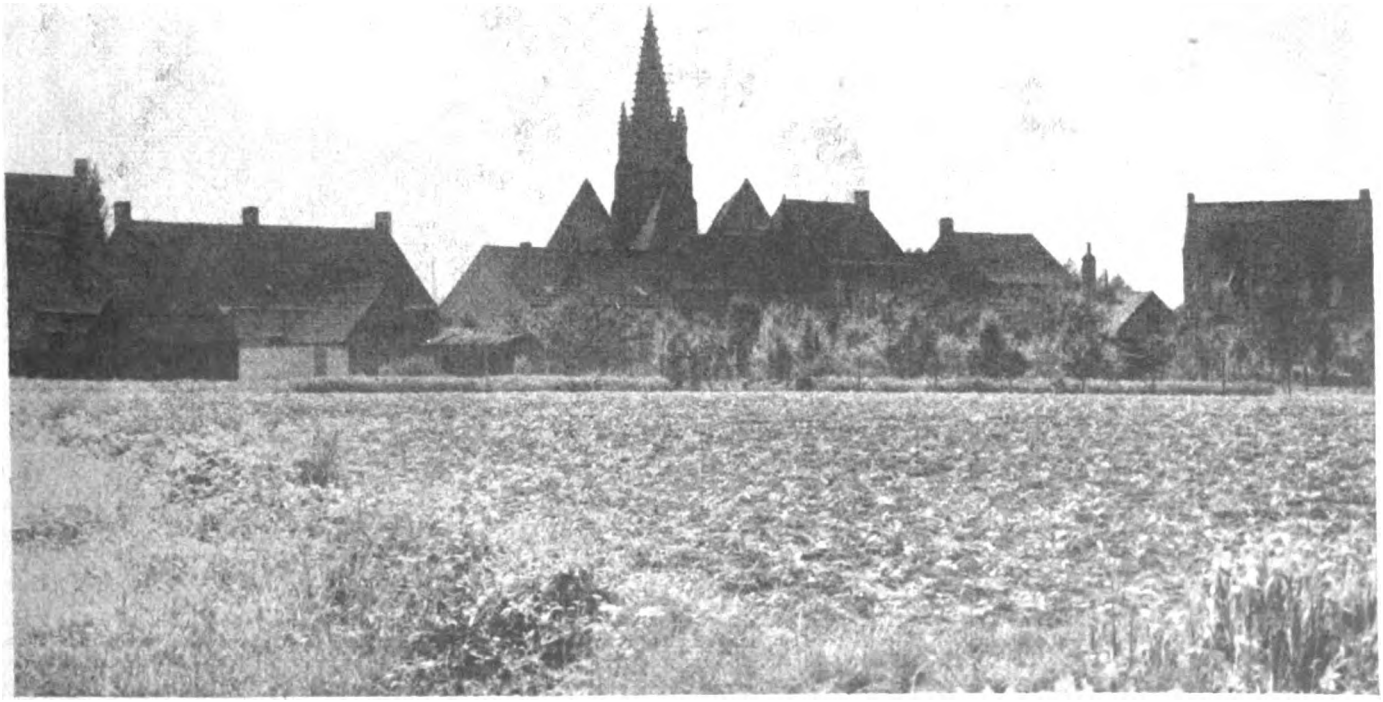
ZUYDSCHOOTE CHURCH

The illustrations on this page take us from extreme south to extreme north, for Zuydschoote, as readers may remember from the photographs and information on page 41 of this volume, lies 7 km. to the north-north-west of Ypres near the road to Dixmude. As stated earlier, the village never fell to the enemy; but this picture of the church, taken on July 15th, 1916, proves once more that they found it a convenient target.

FLEMISH SERENITY

In May, 1915, the French regained the west bank of the Yperlee Canal at Lizerne, immediately east of, and almost adjoining, Zuydschoote; and more than two years later they made this locality the jumping-off point for their share in the initial attacks of the Third Battle of Ypres (July 31st, 1917). The village was further damaged during the activity of spring, 1918.

Photo: A. J. Insall.



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life tolerably pleasant. The ancients of the *Landsturm* who guarded the perimeter were even more bored than the prisoners; but the close proximity of the forest, offering abundant cover to anyone attempting escape, forced them to maintain a sulky vigilance.

On this balmy morning, three British field-officers and a naval commander were enjoying a game of badminton. The two sentries on the nearest beat watched them, amazed; to these "earnest men" their childish antics only afforded fresh proof of what they had always heard—that the *Engländer* were all mad.

"Silly game, but good for the figure!" said the commander; "the old blighters seem quite interested!"

Actually the only real interest taken in them by their guards was due to their known possession of tobacco, chocolate, and soap; pieces of which, if cautiously asked, they had sometimes handed out—doubtless for some ulterior reason known only to themselves.

A Corrupt Sentry

The badminton court which the prisoners had made was shut off from the outer fence by three strands of plain wire joining it to a store-hut; and thus a kind of No Man's Land lay behind the back line at one end. As the game waxed faster, first one, then another shuttlecock flew over on to this space. The nearest sentry, after a cautious look round, retrieved one, and tossed it back, uttering the unmistakable word *Tabak*.

"*Danke sehr*," nodded the commander. "I really must give the old cock an ounce, later on!"

"You'd better not be seen giving it," said Colonel B——. "That interpreter has spies everywhere. Ah! I thought so! He's 'for it!'"

The sentry, now rigidly at attention, saw the commandant, his interpreter, and the N.C.O. of the guard appear round the corner; and after some boisterous colloquy, he was marched off to close arrest.

"Hard lines!" said the commander. "My service; I must hit 'em a bit softer."

The new sentry was a dour-seeming greybeard; he ignored the players. When, at the end of a prolonged rally, one of the two remaining shuttlecocks was driven clean out of bounds, he deliberately crushed it with his Blücher boot.

"No tobacco for you, my lad!" swore the commander. "Let's finish the game—be careful, now!"

The last shuttlecock fell into the middle, between the wires. The players stood looking at it doubtfully.

"Wait till the sentry's at the far end of his beat; I can pop through and get it," said Colonel W——. "There's no rule about this inner fence, it's not like the perimeter."

"Hi! Look out, man! He's going to shoot!" cried the commander, as the sentry turned suddenly, unslinging his rifle, and opening and closing the breech. Colonel W—— crawled out

Photo: A. J.

BEHIND MONTDIDIER

A contemporary photograph of Esclainvilliers, an unassuming village at the junction of two by-roads 14 km. west-north-west of Montdidier and 9 km. south of Ailly-sur-Noye. Sheltered behind the Bois de Coullemelle, and always well behind the French lines, the place escaped capture by some 6 km. in April, 1918—the only season at which it was seriously threatened. Notwithstanding considerable damage by bombardment, Esclainvilliers is to-day among the most picturesque of the reconstructed Somme settlements.

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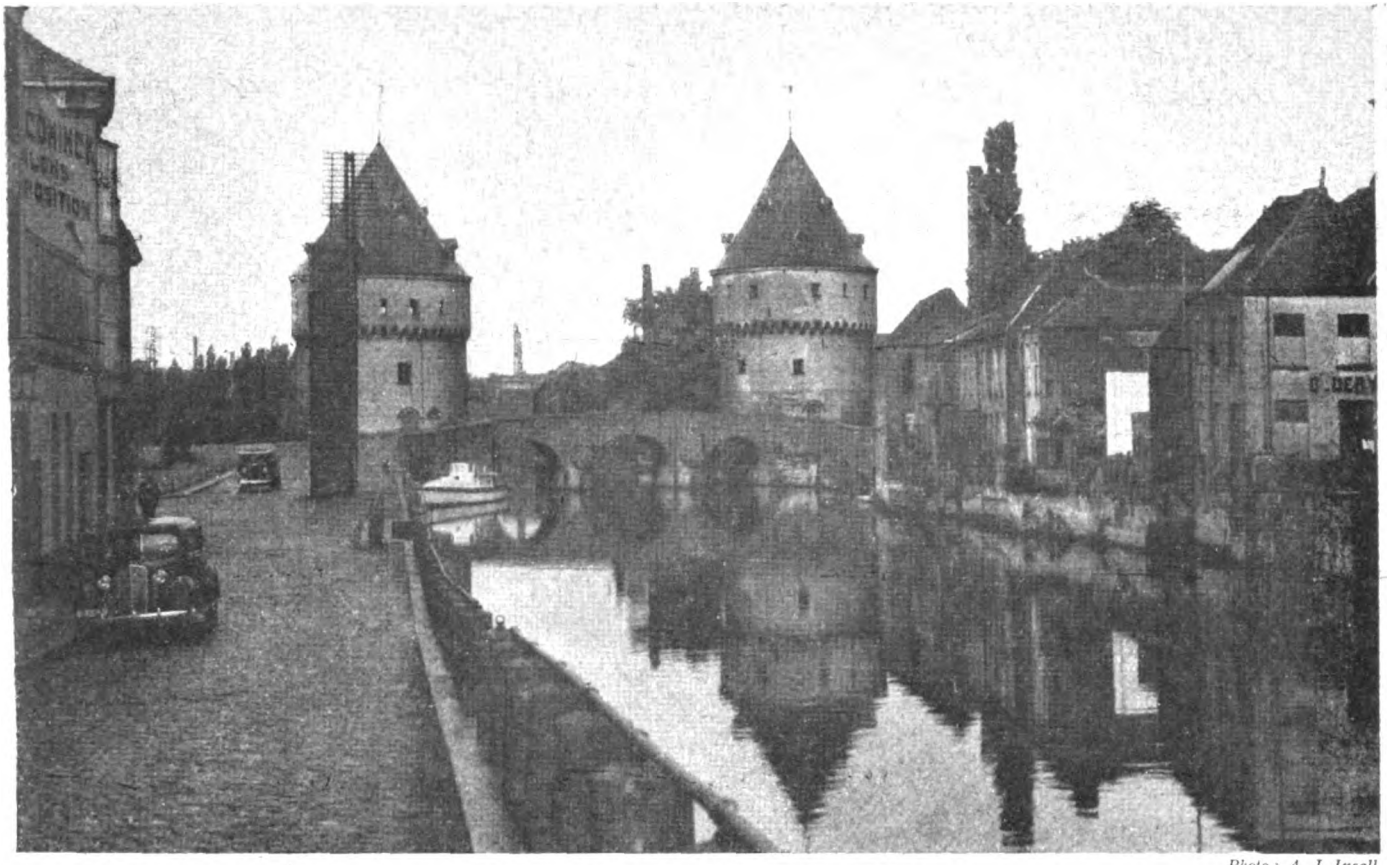

Photo: A. J. Insall.

AN EXCEEDINGLY ATTRACTIVE SCENE

It is hard to believe that so delightful an old-world spot could ever have been involved in the Great War fighting; but the town is Courtrai—or Kortrijk, if you prefer to be Flemish—and is situated just over 10 km. north-east of Menin, and was in German hands from October, 1914, until its recapture by the 9th Division of the Second Army on October 16th and 17th, 1918. The Communal Cemetery, used by the Germans as a prisoners-of-war burial-ground, and by the British Army from November, 1918, until April, 1919, has since been among the few cemeteries kept open by the Imperial War Graves Commission for the interment of bodies discovered on the former battlefields. The river in the picture is the Lys; the twin towers, dated 1413 and 1465, are survivals of the town-walls demolished by Louis XIV.

quicker than he had gone in, leaving the shuttlecock in No Man's Land. The sentry halted, with his rifle at the ready.

"We'd better come away," said the commander. "It's 'Shooting Bill'—never know when he may loose off!"

Neutral Inspection

By the grudging consent of the German *Kriegsministerium*, a Neutral official was making a tour of the prison-camps. His journey to the Harz reminded him of happier days, when good beer was cheap here, and plump, flaxen-haired *Mädchen* walked singing in the forest. To-day he had to listen to the usual tiresome complaints of a crowd of restless prisoners, whom he regarded as uncommonly lucky to be out of the war into which his own countrymen might at any moment be dragged.

Still, he listened politely, expressed deep sympathy, and promised vaguely. Yes, of course, he would have a look at the "Cells," particularly the "Hen-house" next the pig-sty; would speak to the commandant about the quite inadequate sanitary conveniences, the lack of space in the quarters, and the periodic and devastating searches for contraband by the Green Police from Berlin. He would inquire on the spot into the incident of "Shooting Bill," and the paper bull's-eye target flaunted by someone on the outside of Hut B. There was the mark of a bullet in the wall? Tut! Tut!

But when it came to Colonel W—— and his shuttlecock, the visitor could not restrain a smile.

"Don't you think that was about the limit?" asked the colonel, still angry that, as he believed, he'd nearly been shot at.

"Oh! yes—indeed it was," said the other, soothingly; "but how delighted I am to find that you were not really shot! My situation here would have been so much more awkward! As it is—suppose I obtain some more shuttle-cocks for you, through our Legation?"

The visitor took his leave without waiting to sample the commandant's lunch; but the staff officer who had brought him here decided to remain and make an afternoon of it; for he suspected that the commandant, a commercial-traveller in civil life, had illicit stores of food and drink. The pair shut themselves up in the office; and a sharp-eyed prisoner noticed sundry long-necked bottles, together with some tins oddly marked "H. & P., Reading," being smuggled in.

End of a Perfect Day

As twilight deepened to dusk, and the prisoners, duly counted, had all been shut up indoors, the two were observed making an unsteady course for the camp gate. While the key was being got, the staff officer, whose legs seemed paralysed, was propped against the gate by his friend; and on its being incautiously opened, he fell flat.

The "earnest men" bundled both into the carriage. Night followed, peaceful, without alarms. The police dogs, sated with morsels thrown to them by the inmates, sniffed languidly round the perimeter, yawned, and fell asleep.

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Photo: Russell

EARL BEATTY

The late Earl Beatty, Admiral of the Fleet, was made Commander-in-Chief of the Grand Fleet when Admiral Jellicoe was appointed First Sea Lord in December, 1916. Sir David Beatty, as he then was, held this position until the end of the War, when the rather uneventful two years of his command were in some measure atoned for by the surrender of the German Navy. In the negotiations for this momentous happening he played a dominant rôle, and was afterwards responsible for receiving the enemy vessels and escorting them to Rosyth.

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CHAPTER XXXIX

SURRENDER OF THE GERMAN FLEET

Perhaps the most dramatic episode connected with the Great War was the surrender of the German Fleet. To the Germans themselves, and particularly to the German officers and other ranks most nearly concerned, the humiliation must have been bitter indeed. Over a period of years the Germans had laboured to bring into being a fleet which, both as regards the quality of the ships and the efficiency of the personnel, was a finely-tempered weapon. Its prowess during the War years could not fairly be described as unworthy, and to the men who had manned these great fighting ships the ceremony of tamely handing them over without firing a shot was not one which could have commended itself. But it had to be, and in the following chapter this historic event is described in full.

In that chapter of TWENTY YEARS AFTER which dealt with the request of Germany for an armistice, and the granting of one by Marshal Foch on November 11th, 1918, the conditions which the German delegates would have to accept were briefly summarised. So far as the German Navy was concerned, Marshal Foch, acting on the advice of the naval officers detailed to attend the armistice negotiations, laid down that 10 German battleships, 6 battle-cruisers, 8 light-cruisers, 50 destroyers, and every German submarine were to be handed over to the Allies.

Decay of the German Navy

When this ultimatum was delivered to Germany, her Navy had undergone a terrible transformation. It had ceased to be the magnificent force which had been respected by its opponents. By the 11th November, 1918, it was, largely speaking, in the hands, not of naval officers under the orders of the German Admiralty, but of Soviet committees. Over many of the ships there floated the red flag; and under this ensign indiscipline, inefficiency, dirt, and disorder reigned supreme.

It will be as well here, before we come to the narrative of the actual yielding up of the fighting ships in accordance with the terms of the Armistice, to give a brief summary of the happenings in the German Navy since we last read of its doings in the pages of this work. During the first week of June, 1917, symptoms of unrest had appeared in the High Sea Fleet. Work had now largely come to consist of coastal patrol duties; there was great lack of excitement; officers and men were getting on each other's nerves; and, to crown all, the food—owing to the ever-tightening blockade—was becoming scarce and of indifferent quality.

In August, the men of the *Prinz Regent Luitpold* refused to put to sea; in other ships the mutinous spirit showed itself; and the body of the *Westfalen's* captain was picked out of the water with a knife wound in the neck. A Sailors' Union was formed, in co-operation with Socialist associations; but eventually the naval authorities got the upper hand, and two of the ringleaders were shot by sentence of court martial, three more being awarded 15 years' penal servitude.

Although, however, the morale of the German Navy had evidently sunk, there was as yet no sign of collapse; and in Chapter LX (Vol. II), which dealt with the naval operations of 1917, can be read the story of exploits which proved disconcerting to our convoys. Furthermore, although the monotony of life on board the larger ships was an unsettling element, such conditions did not prevail in the submarines and destroyers, whose crews were still staunch. And, indeed, in spite of the mutinous tendency which had shown itself, the day of the High Sea Fleet was by no means over.

A Legend Disposed of

The complacent legend that, at the Battle of Jutland, the German Fleet received such a hammering that it never dared put to sea again, still survives. Official histories have long disproved the story; and in Chapter XLIII (Vol. I) of TWENTY YEARS AFTER an account was given—based entirely on official sources—of another venture of the High Sea Fleet but a few weeks after Jutland.

Even that was not the last occasion on which the German ships came out. On 23rd April, 1918—the very day when the *Vindictive* was returning from her Zeebrugge venture—the enemy fleet was putting to sea with the object of acting against the convoys to and from Norway. Apart from the battle-cruisers, light cruisers, and destroyer flotillas, 17 battleships were involved. But the venture led to nothing.

The *Moltke* had the misfortune to lose a propeller, and was caught, limping home, by the submarine *E.42*, which got in with a torpedo and did some damage.

But, though the German effort had been a failure, the fact remains that the High Sea Fleet had again sallied forth, and had got as far as the coast of Norway without being detected, or, more properly, without the knowledge of the British naval commander-in-chief.

This was the last sortie made by the German Navy, and we now pass to the September of that *annus mirabilis*, 1918. One by one, as related in another chapter, the Fatherland's props—Bulgaria, Turkey, and Austria—fell away. The game was now nearly up, and the Government of Germany had been entrusted to the Majority Socialists and Liberals under Prince Max of Baden.

One of the paragraphs in a note from the President of the United States had declared that submarine commanders must be forbidden to torpedo passenger ships. It was realised by the German naval authorities that the execution of this provision would entail the recall of all U boats, for otherwise the fate of the country might depend upon any error made by a submarine commander.

There was nothing for it, however, but to bow to the inevitable, and on October 21st all German underwater craft were ordered by wireless to return

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to Wilhelmshaven and Kiel. The U-boat warfare against the Allied fleets and merchantmen was at an end.

A Last Hazard—and Revolt

But on the same day the Chief of the Naval Staff decided to hazard everything upon a desperate throw. He sent a secret order to the naval commander-in-chief to the effect that "The forces of the High Sea Fleet are to be made ready for attack and battle with the English Fleet." A week later, on October 28th, the vessels received orders to raise steam, and five battle-cruisers and 19 battleships, with their attendant cruisers, assembled at their rendezvous.

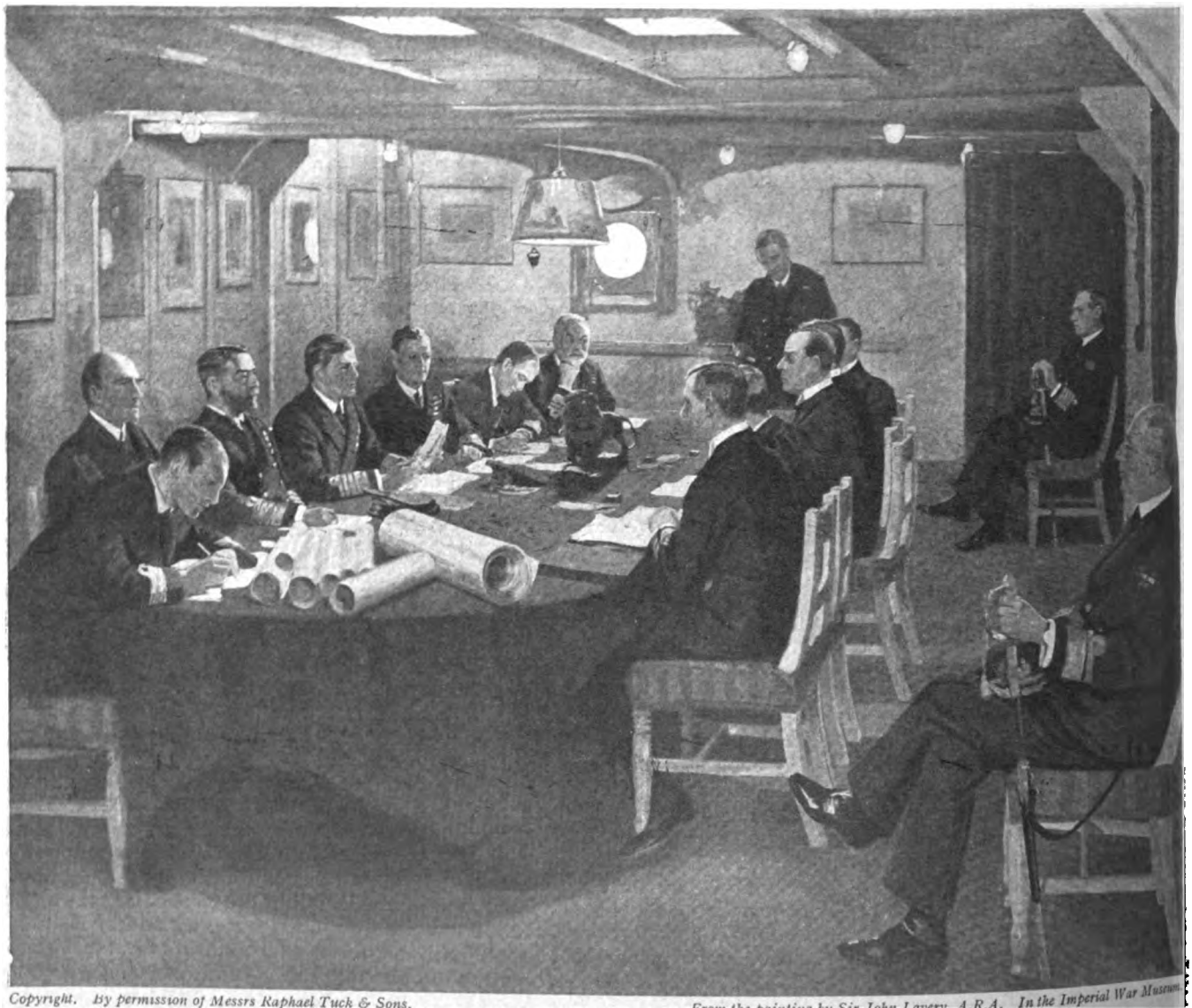
The Fleet was to sail at midnight of the 29th/30th October, to enter the North Sea, and to steam south-westward to the Belgian coast, in order in some way to protect the western flank of the retreating German armies. A screen of submarines and minelayers was to cover the ships; and, should the British break through the screen, action was to be joined, and the High Sea Fleet was to fight to the death.

But it would not do.

A portion of the lower-deck ratings had been permeated with Bolshevism. Rioting began in several of the ships, and there was flat refusal to obey orders. The command to sail was cancelled: there was nothing else that could be done.

The mutinous spirit spread like a forest fire, but the commander-in-chief was able to keep it in check for the moment by dispersing the vessels. The battle-cruisers went to Wilhelmshaven. One squadron went to Brunsbüttel, on the Elbe; another—the least affected—took up watch on the coast; and the remaining squadron went to Kiel, the Navy's favourite port. Here, however, there were thousands of dockyard workers, overworked and underfed, who were tainted with Bolshevism and all that it stood for.

This is not the place to enter, in any detail, into the mournful story of the collapse of Germany.



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From the painting by Sir John Lavery, A.R.A. In the Imperial War Museum

THE SURRENDER OF THE GERMAN NAVY

An artist's version of the historic scene in the fore-cabin of H.M.S. *Queen Elizabeth*, on the morning of November 16th, 1918, when Admiral Beatty was reading out the terms of the surrender to the German delegates. The persons represented are as follows: on the left of the table, from the far end downward—Vice-Admiral Browning, Commander Bellairs, Vice-Admiral Brock, Admiral Beatty, Admiral Madden, Rear-Admiral Tyrwhitt, Paymaster-Commander Spickernell; standing in the background—Commander Bagot (interpreter); seated on the right of the table, beginning at the far end—Leutnant Brauneck, Kapitänleutnant von Freudenreich, Kontre-Admiral Hugo Meurer (the principal German delegate), Korvetten-Kapitän Hintzmann, Kapitänleutnant Saalwächter; in the chairs by the wall—Flag-Captain Chatfield (the further of the two), Commodore Brand.

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There was, for example, a Sailors' and Workers' Soviet. There was the usual Red Monday. Blood flowed. Troops were called in, and then sent away again. Beginning on Red Monday, November 4th, there was a great exodus of sailors from Kiel. On foot, in motor-lorries, in trains which they ran for themselves, the red-badged bluejackets scattered south and west to foment the revolution. Hanover was won over. At Cologne the garrison of 45,000 soldiers laid down its arms to a handful of bluejackets.[1]

Allied Difficulties

Meanwhile, on the side of the Allies there had been some difficulties, connected with the German Fleet, to be smoothed away. Marshal Foch could not quite realise the necessity for insisting upon the surrender of the German warships as an essential article of the Armistice, but in this matter he at last fell into line with the views of the British naval representatives. Lloyd George did not consider it advisable to insist upon the surrender of the ships; and internment in a British port was decided upon.

After the Armistice had been signed, the immediate task before the Allied admirals was to discover whether there was any directing authority in the German Navy, and, if so, what was its constitution and authority.

Admiral Beatty, the British naval commander-in-chief, was therefore instructed to request his German "opposite number" to send a flag-officer to Rosyth to make arrangements for the internment. In response to this request, Admiral Meurer sailed for Rosyth in the light cruiser *Königsberg*. She was sighted at 2 p.m. on November 15th; and, in response to a signal "Follow me" from the *Cardiff*, shortly afterwards arrived at Inch Keith.

At about 7.30 p.m. Meurer and his staff boarded the *Queen Elizabeth*, to be received with courtesy—but with an icy and formal courtesy. They were then

[1] Schubert and Gibson, *The Death of a Fleet*: Chaps. XIX and XX.

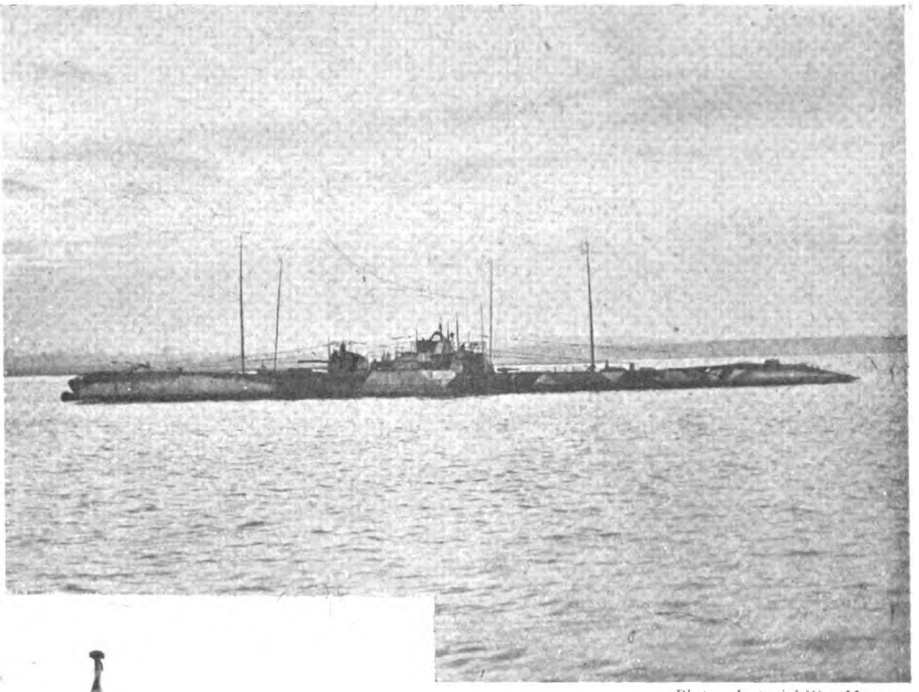

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

SURRENDERED U BOATS

A scene at Harwich, where the surrendered German submarines were interned in November, 1918. The first batch of 20 U boats arrived off the port on the 19th of the month, and was succeeded by others on the 21st, 22nd, 24th and 27th, the final total being 114. One further craft had struck a mine on the way over.

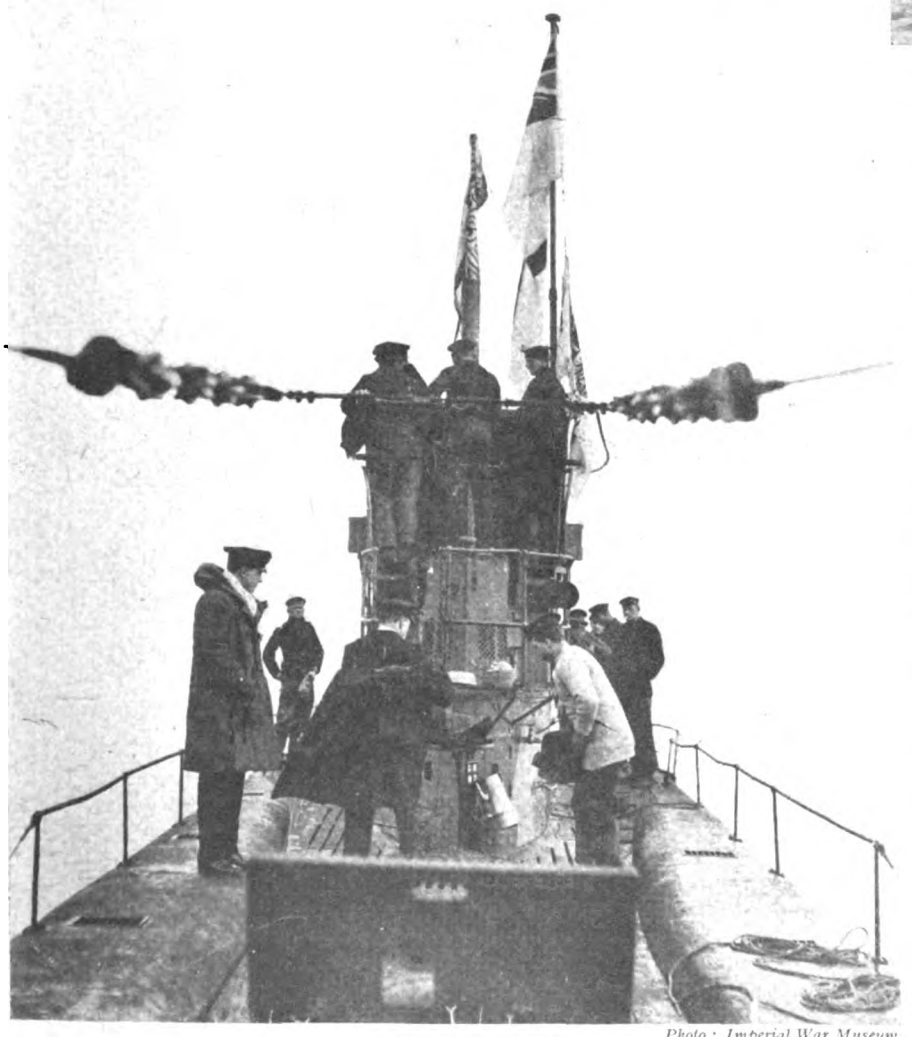

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

CHANGE OF FLAG

In this photograph a British sailor is hoisting the White Ensign over the German flag on board one of the U boats at Harwich. Admiral Beatty's command to the surrendered vessels to haul down their ensigns and not to reholst them without permission drew forth a strong protest from Rear-Admiral von Reuter. Beatty rightly defended his order, however, on technical grounds.

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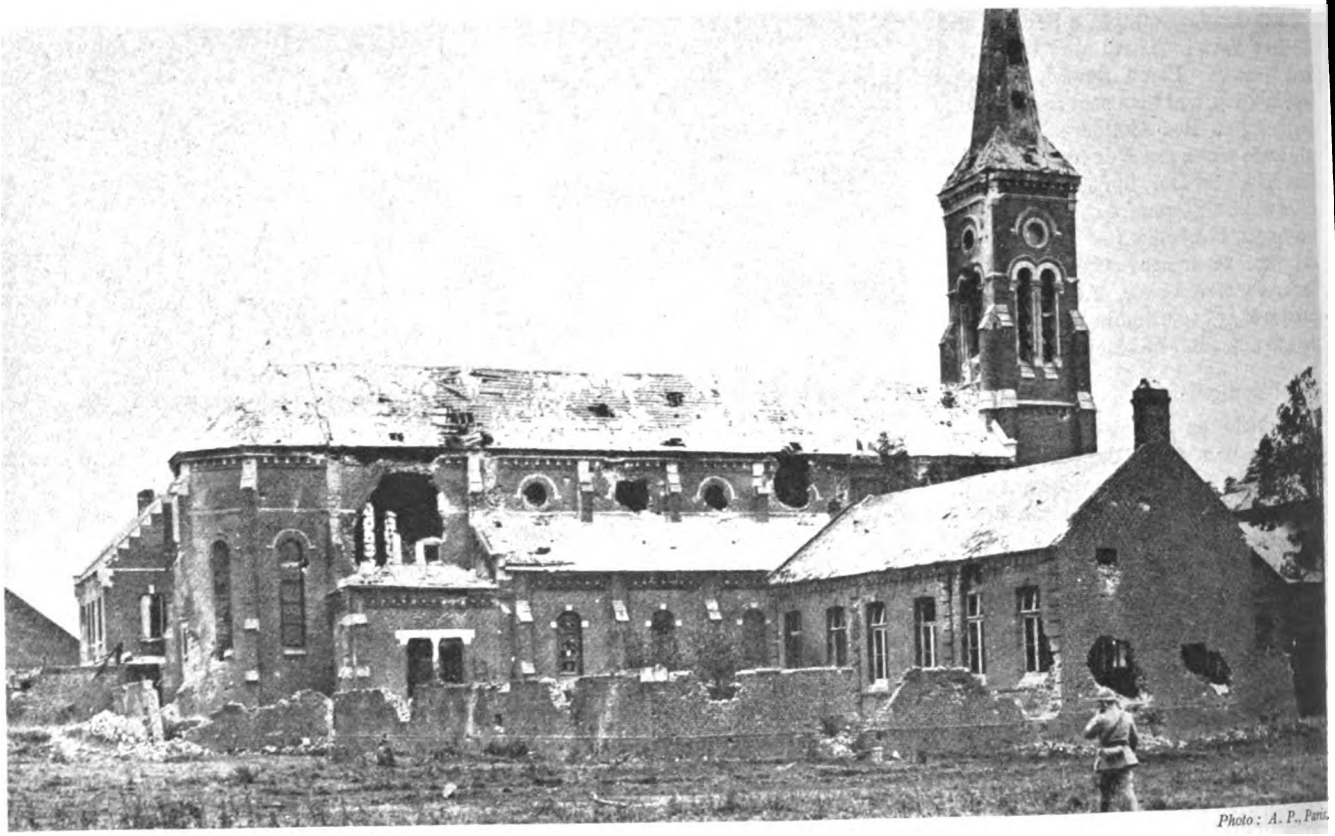

Photo: A. P., Paris.

THE CHURCH OF SAINTE OLLE

Sainte Olle is a very small village, below communal status, which lies astride the Arras—Cambrai road 3 km. west of Cambrai. The Retreat from Mons took the "Old Contemptibles" past the other side of the town, and in the Cambrai battle of 1917 the British did not get as far as St. Olle; so that the village's acquaintance with khaki was not made until the last phase of the War. Above is a photograph taken on October 2nd, 1918.

ushered into Sir David Beatty's fore cabin, where the Admiral's credentials were presented and examined.

The German then explained that plenipotentiaries of the Sailors' and Workers' Soviet were on board the *Königsberg*, and were authorised by the Provisional Government to attend all conferences. Admiral Beatty had not, however, commanded with distinction both a squadron and a Grand Fleet in order to hob-nob with Red envoys, and he expressed his determination not to do so in that breezy and lurid language characteristic of a naval officer of the older school. The interpreter tactfully informed Admiral Meurer that Beatty declined to see any representatives of the Sailors' and Workers' Soviet—at which decision the German seemed greatly relieved.

Confusion in the Fatherland

The Armistice had provided for the *surrender* of all German submarines, and the *internment* of a specified number of German surface-ships of war. Meurer explained to Beatty that in Germany all the old institutions had been overthrown and replaced by democratic committees and by Soldiers' (or Sailors') and Workmen's Councils, and begged him to bear in mind this confusing state of affairs. The British commander-in-chief agreed to accept a substitute for any ship whose delivery was found to be impossible owing to the disorganisation of the German dockyards.

Three more meetings were held on the following day, at which technical matters were discussed, such as the list of ships and submarines which were to be assembled; the points at which they were to be met by the British forces; what supplies of coal and water they were to carry; and so forth. Admiral Meurer acted throughout his painful task with straightforwardness and candour, and departed in the *Königsberg* late on the night of November 16th.

There was now very little for Beatty and his staff to do beyond preparing orders for the forces detailed to escort the German ships.

The submarines were to be received at Harwich; the surface-ships were to come to the Firth of Forth. In order to make the proceedings as impressive as possible, it was arranged that all the available vessels and squadrons of the Grand Fleet should meet the surface-ships; and that the entire Harwich destroyer force should receive the submarines.

Admiral Tyrwhitt issued his orders to the destroyers on November 17th, and Admiral Beatty his to the Grand Fleet three days later.

The first batch of submarines was met at sea by the Harwich force during the afternoon of the 18th November. The British destroyers formed round the U boats, and led them to the anchorage assigned them. Here the submarines were boarded; and, to emphasise the fact that they were surrendered, and not merely interned, British colours were hoisted over every craft.

No Demonstration of Triumph

The German crews were at once taken off, put on board a transport, and sent back to their country. In order that there should be no demonstration savouring in the slightest degree of triumph over a beaten enemy, Admiral Tyrwhitt had ordered his ships to maintain a strict silence when passing, or being passed by, a U boat. These orders were scrupulously obeyed.[1]

1 *Official History*, p. 380.

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In perusing this chapter, the intelligent reader is certain to have asked himself several times already, "Surely the whole German Navy cannot have been disloyal?" His conjecture will have been correct. The personnel of the German Fleet during those closing weeks of hostilities was divided into two camps.

On the one hand were the officers, proud of their ships, jealous of the reputation of the Fatherland's Navy, passionately eager to hazard everything in one last great sortie; and the officers were supported by very many of the petty-officer class and not a few of the lower deck. On the other hand were mobs of men tainted with Bolshevism, tired of the War, hungry, eager to get to peace conditions, and lacking that pride in their calling which is the hall-mark of the real seaman.

But, it may be objected, why did the officers submit to the great humiliation of taking orders from Sailors' and Workers' Councils, and of tamely handing over the ships which had been their pride? In justice to these erstwhile enemies, the reader must put himself in their place. The granting of an armistice was conditional on certain things, one being the handing over of a number of ships of the German Navy.

Had these ships not been handed over—and without the professional assistance of officers they could not have reached the port of internment—the fighting on land would have continued; the German armies in France would have suffered tens of thousands more casualties; and in the end they must have surrendered unconditionally.

If the reader will refresh his memory by a glance at the closing chapters of Volume Two, he will see that for the German armies in France the situation was desperate. By the terms of the Armistice, those armies were to be allowed to quit France and Belgium unharried and unpursued. But such immunity was conditional upon—amongst other things—the handing over of the bulk of the German Navy. To save the Army, the officers of the Navy had to swallow their pride, and to accept a humiliation which was almost unspeakable.

Why the Mutineers Manned their Ships

This accounts for the action of the commissioned ranks. There is, however, another puzzle. How were the mobs of revolutionary sailors induced to man the ships on their last and distressing

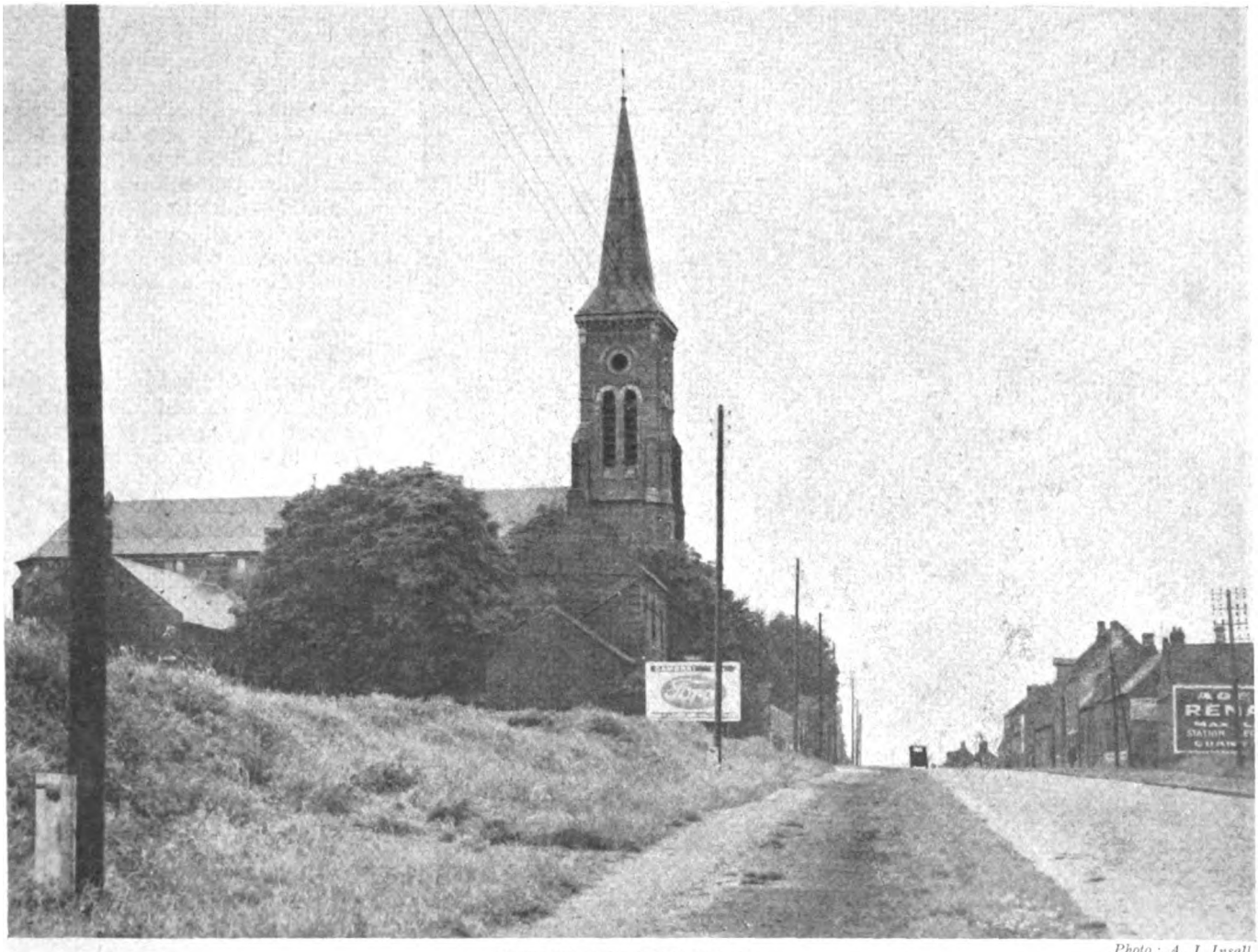

Photo: A. J. Insall.

WASHED AND BRUSHED UP

A little to the south of Sainte Olle lay an expanse known as the Cambrai Drill Ground. Here the Germans had an aerodrome, which the R.A.F. took over during the War's closing months. The village itself was recaptured on September 29th, 1918, by Canadian troops—a feat which is commemorated by the existence of a small Canadian cemetery containing 97 fallen, 73 of them from the 116th Battalion. There are also some British graves in the Communal Cemetery.

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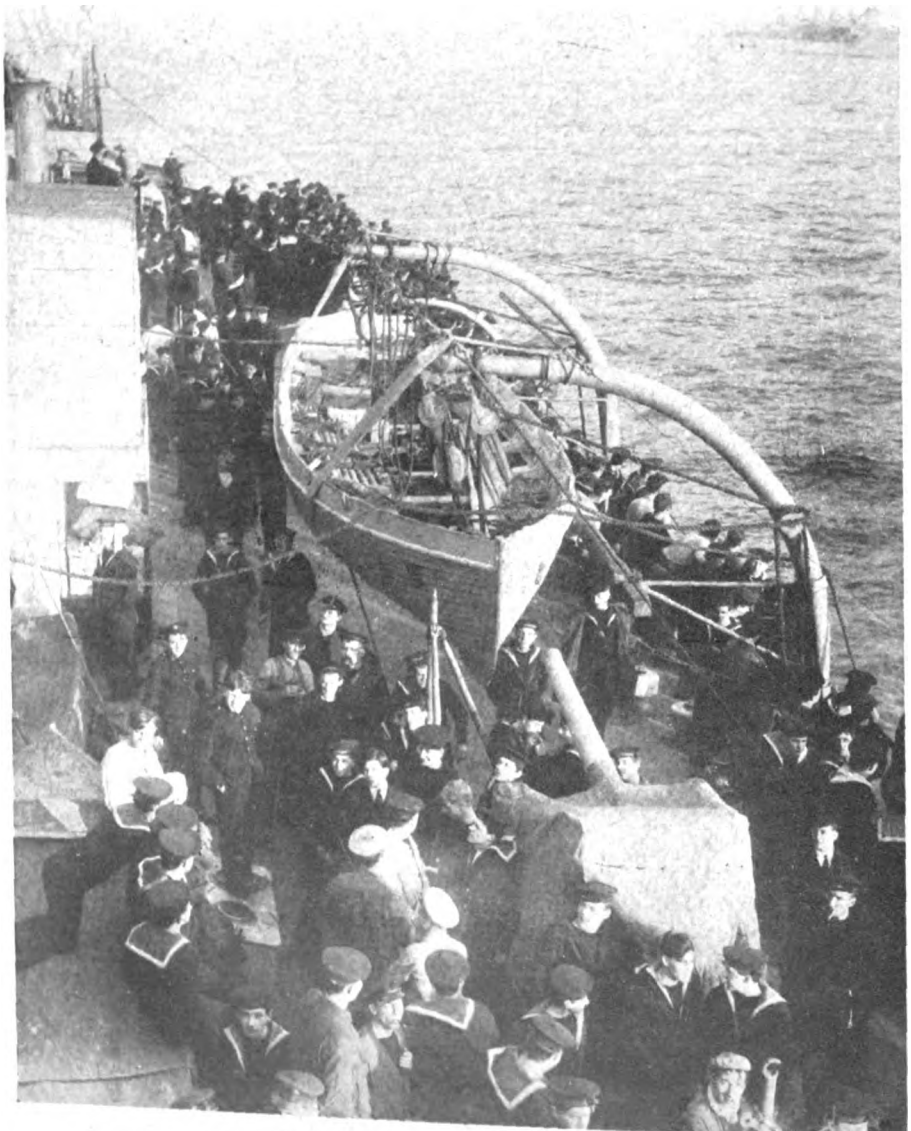
voyage? Here the answer is simple enough. The Soldiers' (and Sailors') and Workers' Councils simply wanted peace at any price, and induced their "comrades" in the Fleet to perform their duties by persuading them—incredible as it may seem—that a similar revolution had broken out in the British Navy; that many of the British ships of war had hoisted the red flag; and that the handing over of the German vessels would be a kind of brotherly piece of internationalism for the purpose of ending militarism altogether!

The *Königsberg*, with Admiral Meurer on board, was delayed by thick fog on her return journey, and had to stop altogether when she approached the German minefields. In these circumstances Admiral von Reuter was selected for the command of the surface-craft to proceed to internment. On the 19th November the vessels were all ready, and a "Supreme Sailors' Soviet" had been formed to take command—the Admiral and his chief of staff being regarded as technical advisers.

The chairman of the Soviet gave orders that the Fleet was to sail under the red flag; but his revolutionary ardour cooled when the chief of staff hinted that a British ship of war might treat any craft flying such colours as a pirate, and take action accordingly. The red flag was hauled down in the flagship, and the Imperial flag hoisted in its stead.[1]

By midnight on the 20th November, Admiral von Reuter in his flagship, the *Friedrich der Grosse*, was some 100 miles from May Island. Of the seventy-one vessels under his command two were now missing, for the cruiser *Köln* had dropped behind with engine trouble, and a destroyer had foundered after striking a mine. The ships were dingy, streaked, and rusted—a mere travesty of what had been a smart and efficient Fleet. The morning watch was nearly spent when a blur upon the port bow resolved itself into a British destroyer approaching at full speed.

The Grand Fleet had left its anchorage at 2.15 a.m., and, after passing into the open water outside the net obstructions, had been formed into two gigantic columns of thirteen squadrons each. Soon after 8 a.m. the German ships were sighted, and silently, like grey ghosts, the fleets met in the mist. With the Grand Fleet were a squadron of the United States Navy and a unit representing the Navy of France. Foremost of all were the British cruisers *Phaeton*, *Castor*, and *Cardiff*, the last-named with a captive balloon flying overhead.



WATCHING FOR THE VANQUISHED *Photo: Imperial War Museum.*

The crew of H.M.S. *Barham*, a battleship of the 5th Battle Squadron, on the watch for the enemy vessels during November 21st, 1918. In order that there should be no appearance of "crowing" over a fallen foe, strict injunctions were issued that no demonstration of any kind was to be made as the German ships passed the British. Altogether 9 battleships, 5 battle-cruisers, 7 light cruisers, and 49 destroyers passed through the Grand Fleet.

The Fleets Unite

On Beatty's flagship, the *Queen Elizabeth*, was hoisted the signal to clear for action—a precautionary measure in case the Germans, in defiance of every code of honour, might yet make a desperate stroke. At about half-past nine the *Cardiff* had led the vanquished columns into the wide lane formed by the Grand Fleet. No signal was exchanged; no flag was dipped. Beatty now turned his ships 16 points to the westward; in other words, the two British columns moved parallel to, and in the same direction as, the German vessels.

In silence the whole armada steamed on towards the Firth of Forth, providing the greatest naval pageant ever witnessed since ships first floated on the sea. Such was the order and professional skill of the officers and other ratings on both sides that, to an observer from Mars, it would have seemed that the manœuvre must have been rehearsed again and again.

Everything worked like clockwork; not a hitch, not an error, not a false

1 Schubert and Gibson, *op. cit.*, pp. 212, 213.

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movement marred the stupendous spectacle. By noon the Germans were at their anchorage. Their battleships, battle-cruisers, and light cruisers were moored in six lines in the middle of the Firth, half-way between Kirkcaldy and Aberlady Bays. The destroyers were moored closer in to the Haddington shore, toward Cockenzie. Including the 49 destroyers, the number of German ships of war now in the Firth amounted to seventy.[1]

Admiral von Reuter and his officers had believed that, as the German ships were interned, and not surrendered, they would continue to fly their colours until their fate was decided by the treaty which would eventually terminate hostilities. But, when the last German ship had anchored, a signal fluttered from Beatty's flagship, "The German flag is to be hauled down at sunset and is not to be rehoisted without permission."

The German admiral protested, when Commodore Hodges came on board the *Friedrich der Grosse* during the afternoon, about this order, but the commodore replied that the matter was outside his province. He added that Admiral Beatty did not wish to receive von Reuter, and that his own visit was concerned with the inspection of the German craft.

[1] *Official History*, p. 381.

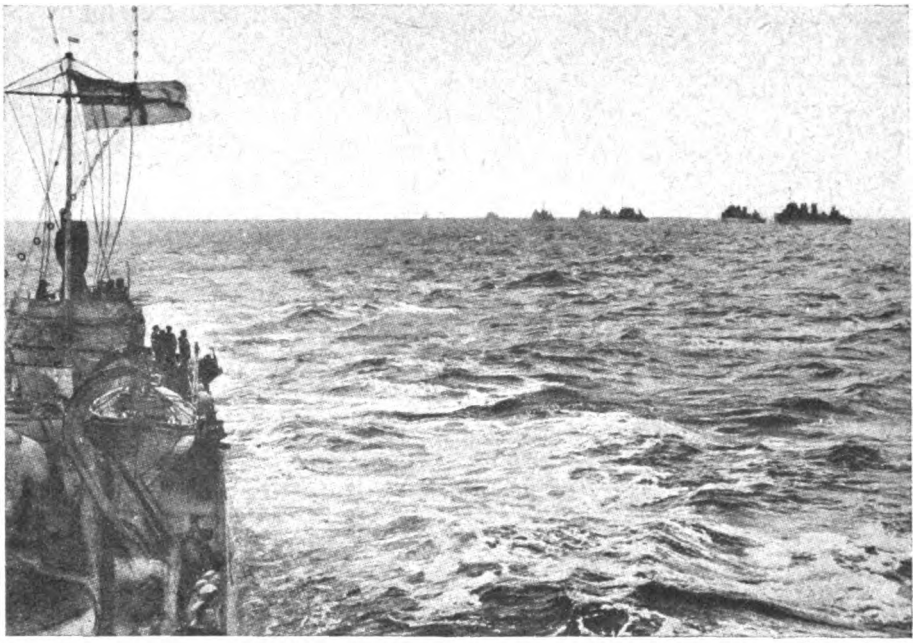

Photo: G.P.U.

THE 49 SURRENDERED DESTROYERS

The odd total of surrendered vessels of this class is explained by the fact that a fiftieth destroyer, *V 39*, had, like one of the submarines, struck a mine during her passage over. Escorted by 150 British T.B.D.'s, the Germans were completely surrounded; yet so numerous was the whole array that it was impossible to see all the ships at once, except from the air.

En Route for Scapa Flow

Should the ships be found to be disarmed, they were to proceed in batches, under escort, to Scapa Flow, where they would be interned. The inspection was duly carried out next day; the ships were found to be completely disarmed, and within twenty-four hours the first contingent—a flotilla of destroyers—was under way for the Orkneys.

By the night of November 27th the bulk of the vessels had found anchorage there. A force of British battleships lay between them and the open sea, and smaller British craft carried out an unceasing patrol. No fraternising of any sort, no exchange of visits, took place. The German ships were as if in quarantine. They were prohibited from lowering a boat. There was no going ashore. All outgoing letters were censored. Food and supplies were to come monthly from Germany in transports. According to the terms of the Armistice, the crews were to be reduced to little more than maintenance parties; and this was carried out, the surplus personnel being sent back to their own country.[1]

While the German ships were thus lying in mournful segregation in the Orkneys, much diplomatic discussion was taking place as to their ultimate fate. Upon this point the Allies were by no means in agreement. England and America advocated their total destruction. On the other hand, France, Italy, Japan, and even the reborn state of Poland would have liked to secure some of such fine fighting ships for their own navies. The only point upon

[1] Schubert and Gibson, *op. cit.*, p. 227.

Photo: Central News.

BEATTY ON THE BRIDGE

Admiral Beatty watches the historic spectacle of the surrender from the bridge of his flagship, H.M.S. *Queen Elizabeth*. The movements of the Germans were directed by a light cruiser, H.M.S. *Cardiff*, of the 6th Light Cruiser Squadron. The British Grand Fleet included Dominion ships, and also representative vessels of the French and United States Navies, under Admirals Grasset and Sims respectively.

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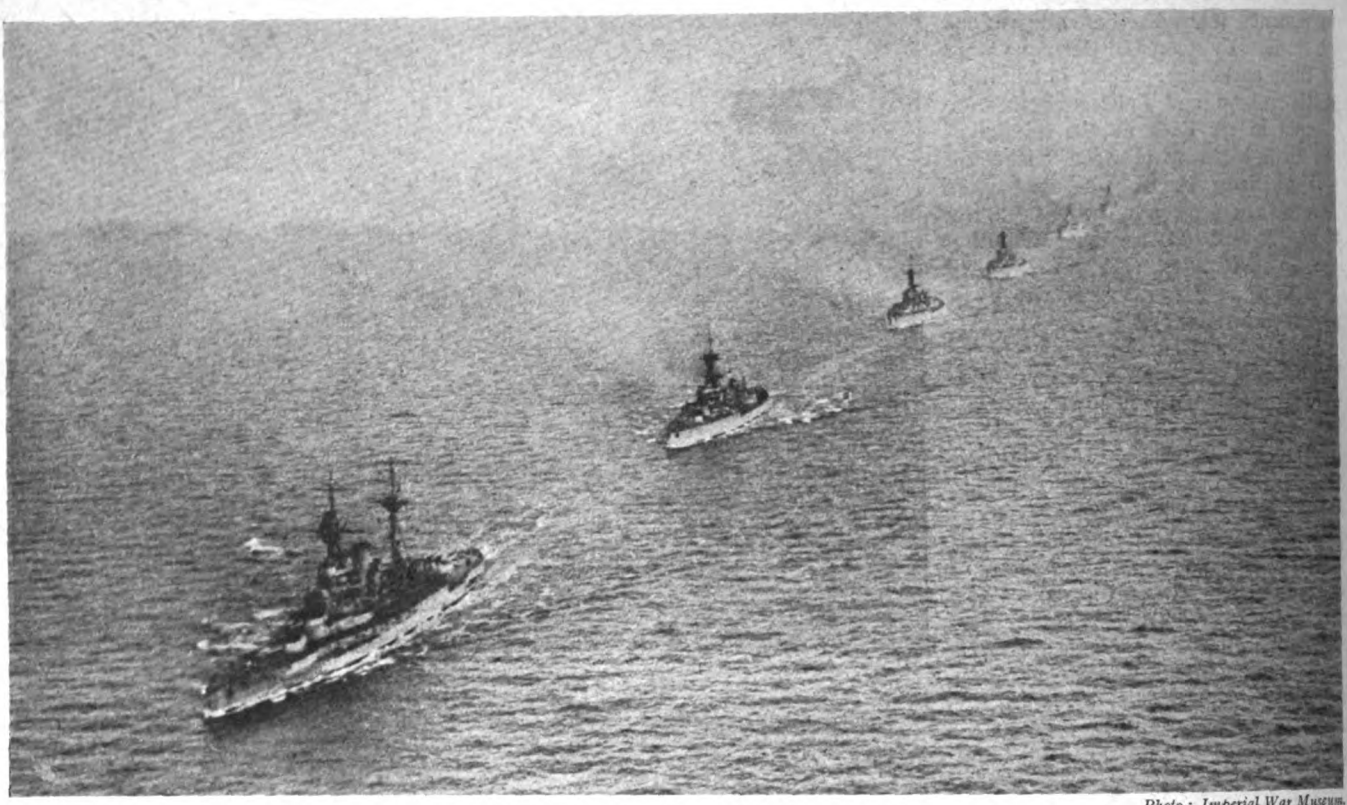

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

THE *QUEEN ELIZABETH* LEADS THE LINE

Beatty's vessel leads the line of British ships escorting the German Fleet into the Firth of Forth. The nine enemy battleships were the *Friedrich der Grosse* (Rear-Admiral von Reuter's flagship), *Bayern*, *Grosser Kurfürst*, *Kronprinz*, *Markgraf*, *Kaiser*, *Kaiserin*, *König Albert*, and *Prinzregent Luitpold*.

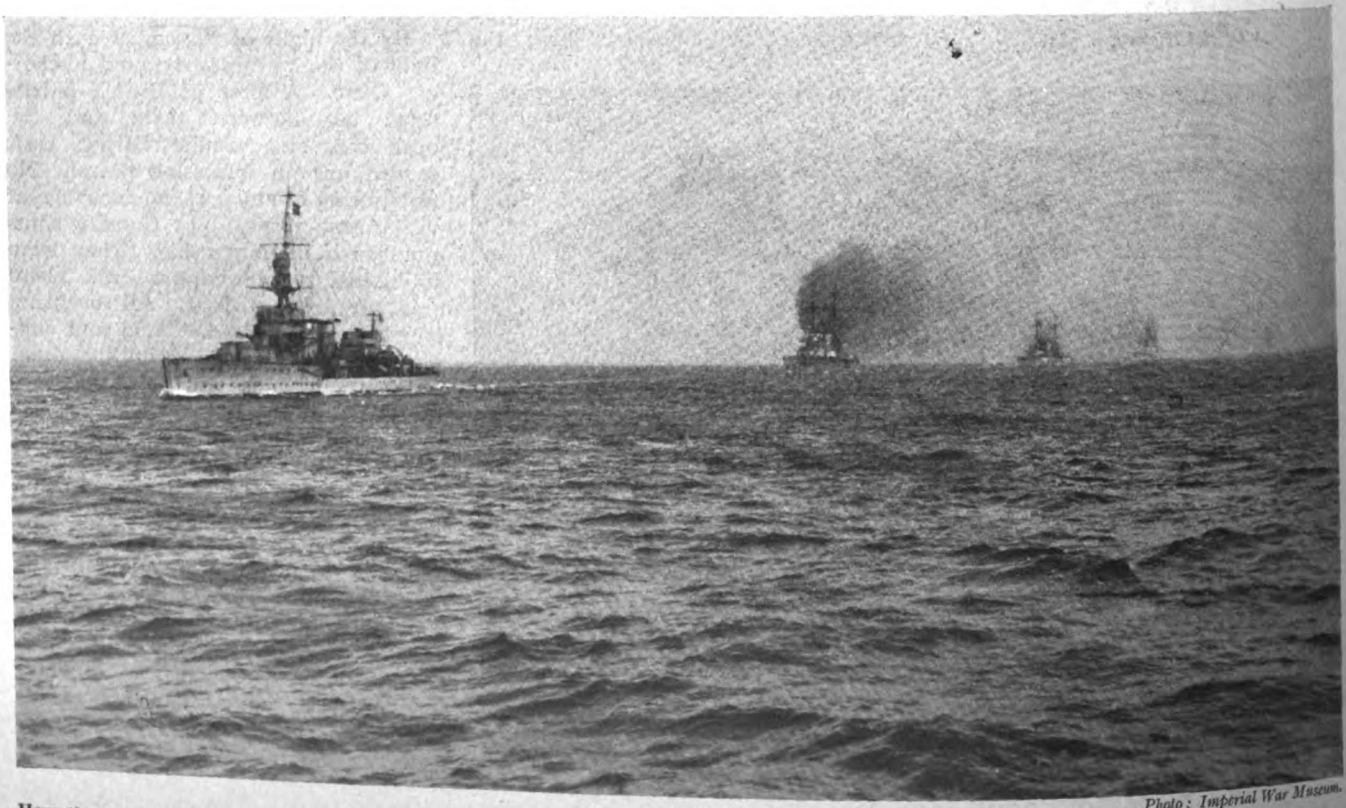

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

BRITISH AND GERMAN

Here the British light cruiser *Cardiff* is seen, in her capacity of pilot, leading the German battle-cruisers into the Firth of Forth. These five vessels were the *Seydlitz* (under Flag-Commander Taegert), *Moltke*, *Derfflinger*, *Hindenburg*, and *Von der Tann*. All but the *Hindenburg*, which was launched on August 1st, 1915, were pre-war veterans which had bombarded our east-coast towns on December 16th, 1914.

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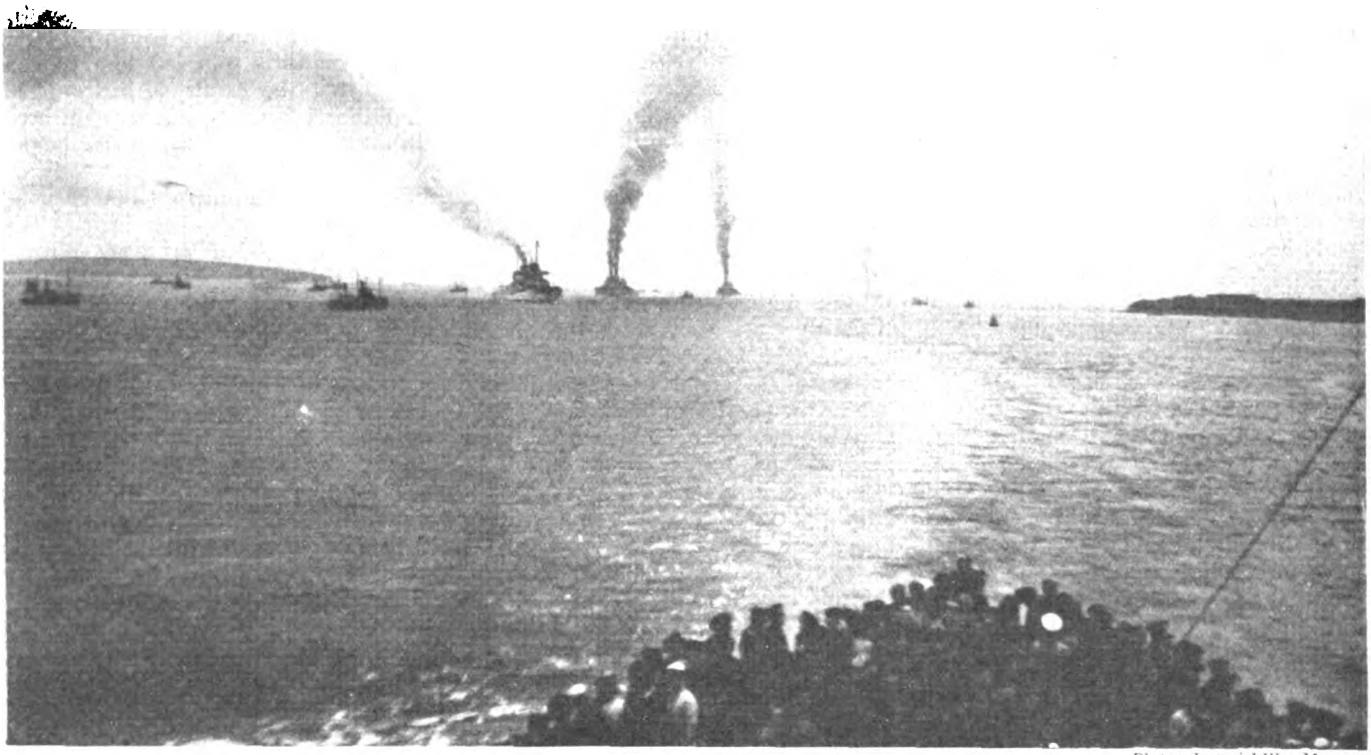

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

ARRIVING AT SCAPA FLOW

The German battle-cruisers arrive at Scapa Flow, whither all the enemy vessels, except the submarines, were sent for internment. The U boats, being definitely surrendered, were kept at Harwich. On December 4th, 1918, the battleship *König*, the light-cruiser *Dresden II*, and one destroyer, also arrived at Scapa to make up deficiencies.

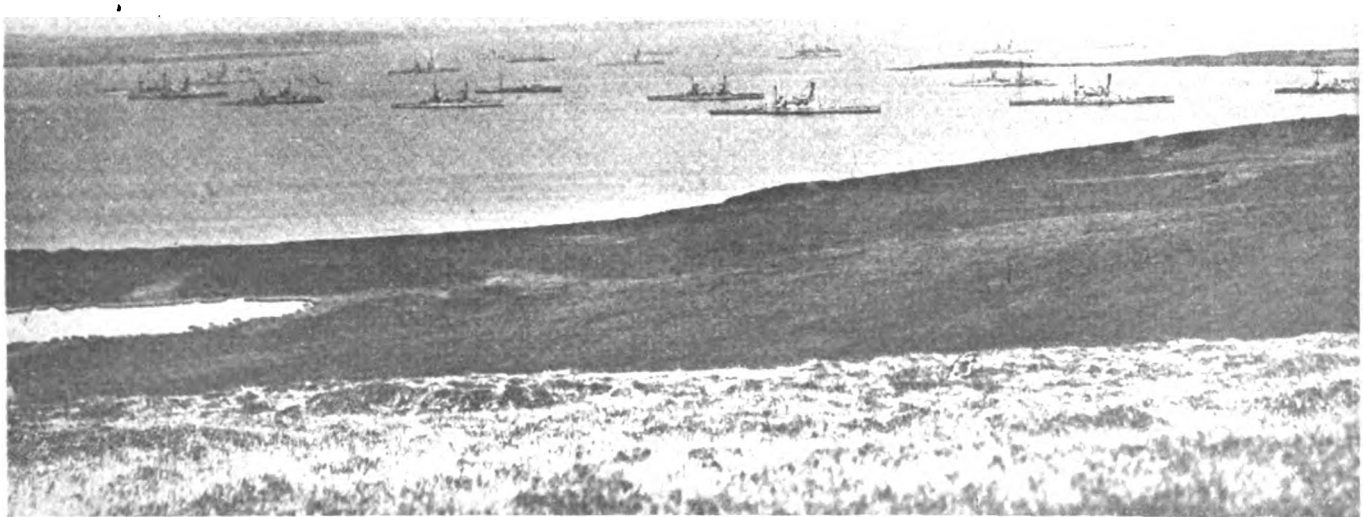

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

AT SCAPA - BEFORE BEING SCUTTLED

The scuttling of the High Sea Fleet was in reality an ironical event. Von Reuter's purpose was to sink the defenceless craft, rather than let them fall into enemy hands, should hostilities recommence; and on June 21st, 1919, information seems to have come to him that the Armistice had expired. He therefore issued his orders, only to find that, when they were carried out, he had "done" the Allies even more effectively than he had intended.

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which agreement was reached was that the High Sea Fleet must never be returned to Germany.

Even in the terms of the Peace Treaty the question had not reached a final solution. The relevant clause was that all the German warships then interned were to be *surrendered*. As for their ultimate fate, "Great Britain was to receive the custody of the ships in trust for the Allies." Meanwhile, in Scapa Flow, Admiral von Reuter remained in ignorance of the attitude of his own Government upon this question.

Peace Not Yet Declared

The reader must bear in mind that, although no fighting was taking place, peace had not yet been declared. The cessation of hostilities was merely an armistice, and it could not be taken as a foregone conclusion that Germany would accept the peace terms drawn up by the victorious Allies. The country still had millions of men under arms, and might yet decide upon a further heroic—if useless and passive—resistance.

Von Reuter's view seems to have been that, should hostilities be renewed, it would be his duty to sink the defenceless craft rather than let them fall into the hands of the enemy; and preparations for such an eventuality were duly made.

A combination of circumstances worked for this end. It so happened that, on June 21st, 1919, the British warships at Scapa Flow had put out to sea for tactical exercises, leaving behind merely the routine patrol-vessels. On that day some London newspapers reached von Reuter, from which he learned that on that very date the Armistice would expire, unless Germany accepted an ultimatum from the Allies rejecting some counter-proposals she had made.

The Admiral consequently witnessed with alarm the putting to sea of the British craft; and it seems that this action on their part led him to conclude that the Armistice had expired, and that hostilities had recommenced. In these circumstances he made the prearranged signal to his ships. Only the officers and the more loyal elements now remained on board; and the former now raced furiously through empty decks, opening sea-cocks and smashing valve-wheels with heavy sledges. Of the seventy ships, not one failed to obey the signal.

The British patrol-vessels were helpless at the sinking of a navy. When Admiral Freemantle—hurriedly summoned by wireless—got back with his fighting ships, the Flow looked strangely deserted. Of seventy ships, fifty had gone to the bottom. The High Sea Fleet was dead, and the German Navy had ceased to exist.

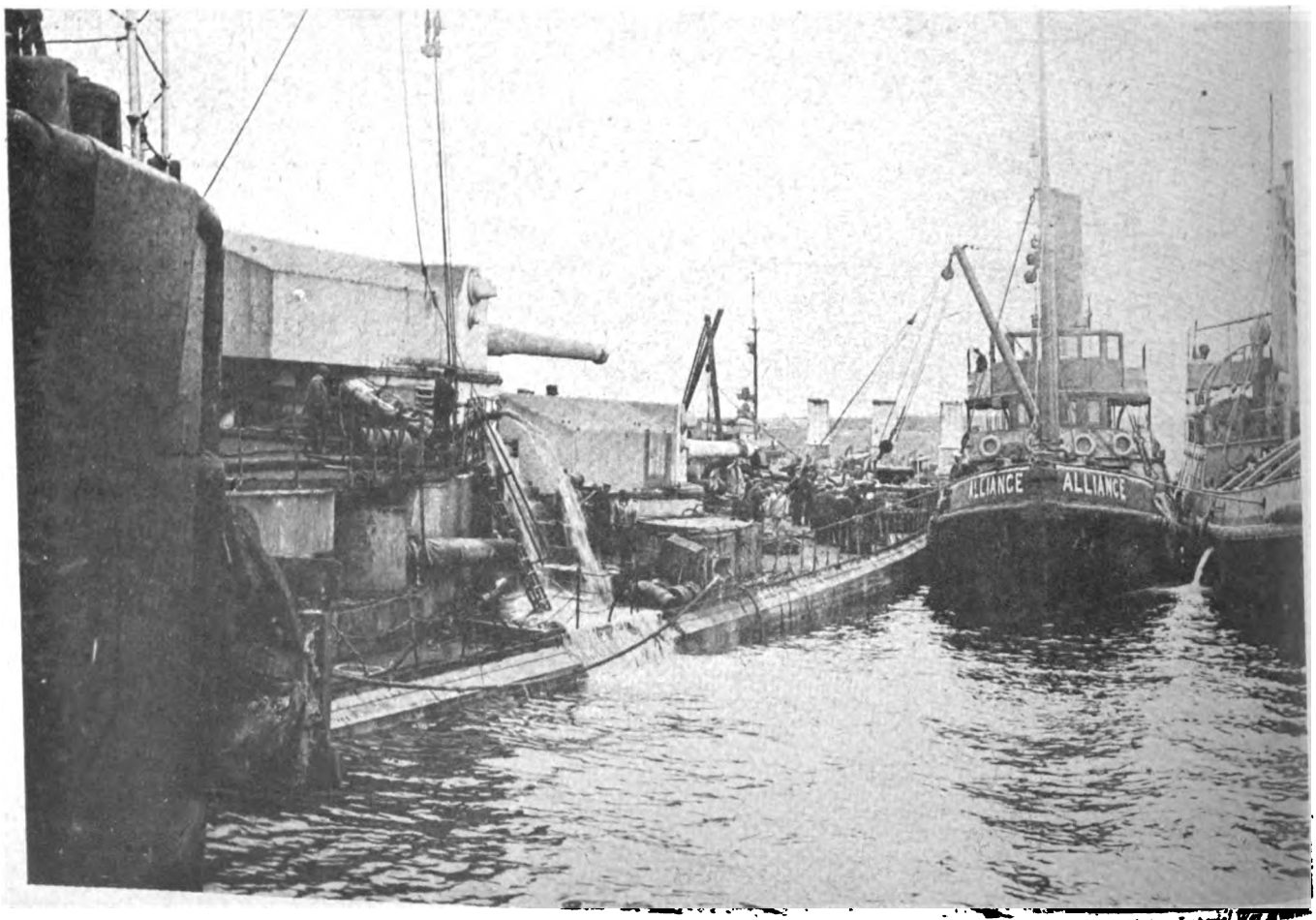

Photo: Imperial War

SALVAGING THE *BAYERN*

Whatever the ethics involved—and ethics in war are so few that there is really little cause to upbraid a belligerent for disregarding them altogether—the sinking of the German Navy was a brilliant piece of audacity which cannot but evoke a measure of reluctant admiration. Whether or not von Reuter's explanation was genuine, his Government was bound to applaud so magnificent an eleventh-hour gesture for the Fatherland—one which robbed the Allies of some of the most valuable spoils of victory, and proved to despondent Germany, in words of Admiral von Scheer's spoken shortly afterwards, that "the spirit of the Fleet was not dead." Nevertheless, it must be admitted that this "cleansing of the naval escutcheon" was hardly likely to exercise a salutary effect on the Allies' peace terms.

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CHAPTER XL

MEMORIES X.—RAMBLING REMINISCENCES

The title given to this chapter might have been applied to many of the accounts which, from time to time, have been included in the "Memories" series. Like so many of these chapters, it is written to no set plan; rather does it resemble the war-time tales that one may hear wherever a few ex-Servicemen are gathered together. In every case throughout the pages of this work, "Memories" chapters have been entrusted only to those who are in a position to write of their own personal experiences. In the majority of cases the writers have been able to set down on paper words that recall the far-off days, and in the reminiscences that follow, rambling though they may be, there is evidence in plenty that the author is one of the vast company who served.

It's quite impossible to revisit the battlefields of France without taking notice of the roads. Where so much has changed, straight, seemingly endless National Highways lined with trees instantly recall the tramp of marching men, that strange procession known as the transport, and the long lines of mechanical vehicles with their wake of choking dust in summer, and foul offensive spoutings of mud when the sun had ceased to shine.

The Unchanging Roads

There were, too, the lesser roads, which often cut suddenly through the downs, producing in their depths illusive sanctuaries; for these sunken lanes were often death-traps, "taped" to an inch by enemy artillery and machine guns. To-day the roads are as they were, and are a fair guide to the location of a former favoured dug-out or vividly-remembered battlefield.

The transport drivers seldom got their due, for they lived in some kind of comfort behind the lines. But that is only half the story. Night after night it was their lot to drive often refractory trains of mules and horses over shell-pitted roads and trackless, treacherous wastes, bringing up rations, ammunition, and the miscellaneous needs of the front lines and batteries.

When roads and tracks were shelled, there was no turning aside. No halt was possible. No driver could leave his charges and seek the friendly shelter of a ditch or hole. It's one thing to go up to the support and reserve lines, and find a safe dug-out as shelter from shell-fire, rain, sleet, snow, and biting winds. It's quite another to have to return through a barrage, with wheels clogged and terrified draught-animals shuddering and jibbing at the terrors of the night.

In billets, too, while others were playing football or lounging in estaminets, animals had to be watered and fed, and waggons and limbers had to go in quest of food and fodder to the divisional train, often miles away. Was not the strange, so richly adjectival, vocabulary of drivers justified?

There is another form of locomotion not likely to be forgotten. Politely and officially it was termed the Décauville Track, but it had other names. This phenomenon, with its miniature engine and peculiar linked trucks, organised by the R.E., was a source of both pride and joy in back areas: pride for the Sappers, and joy for company runners, messmen, Tommies going on leave, and whoever else appreciated a joy-ride.

When, however, the track approached the trenches, it was quite a different story. Engines just disappeared. From there on, the trucks were "man-handled"—that is to say, shoved by sweating soldiers over a track of twisted iron lost somewhere below the slush—while, seemingly attracted by the noise, shells, "flying pigs," and other missiles in their myriads sought to still the earnest labour.

A Smart Sector

The Décauville did not often come far forward, but at Festubert and Cuinchy it was quite one of the sights; and that's saying a good deal, for the trenches thereabouts had almost a drawing-room appearance, with their polished gas gongs, bomb boxes built in pyramids, and natty little bags for rubbish hanging on the parados. At almost any time, soldiers could be found sweeping and polishing like housemaids; and, in this haven of spit and polish, the trench railway ran with the ease of a tram—sometimes.

It sounds simple enough to push a truck along a tramway; but it can be a highly complex business on a dark or dirty night. One must be adroit in stepping on the metal sleepers and so avoiding the slushy chasms between. Barked shins, or a bootful of icy slime, are the reward of those who forget to tread more delicately than Agag—who was never subjected to the trials of trench warfare.

There was always the strong probability of a sudden visitation from "flying pigs" and "five-nines," upon which potential calamity the patient trolley-pusher might be pensively brooding, when his trolley would, as likely as not, disappear into a huge hole ahead, scattering its cargo. Indescribable labour and language would accompany the feat of restoring the load to its waggon, in the midst of which irate figures would loom through the darkness, hurrying as men did in well-marked communication trenches, with the remark that a relieving battalion was coming along behind.

However deep the waters underfoot, or more properly under belly, it was no use ejaculating, "Make room for a naval officer!"—a sometimes effective cry in crowded trenches, and one whose origin I never learned. There would be men coming the other way off working parties, and, as often as not, people frantically pushing rival trucks down the track.

Eventually one reached a kind of terminus, fair game for German gunners, where unloading and ration parties, which had too long weathered the storm of crumping, or gloomed in fearful anticipation of it, would hurl abuse because one was an hour or so late. It was a lovely war, with so many novelties and surprises with which to while away the hours of boredom!

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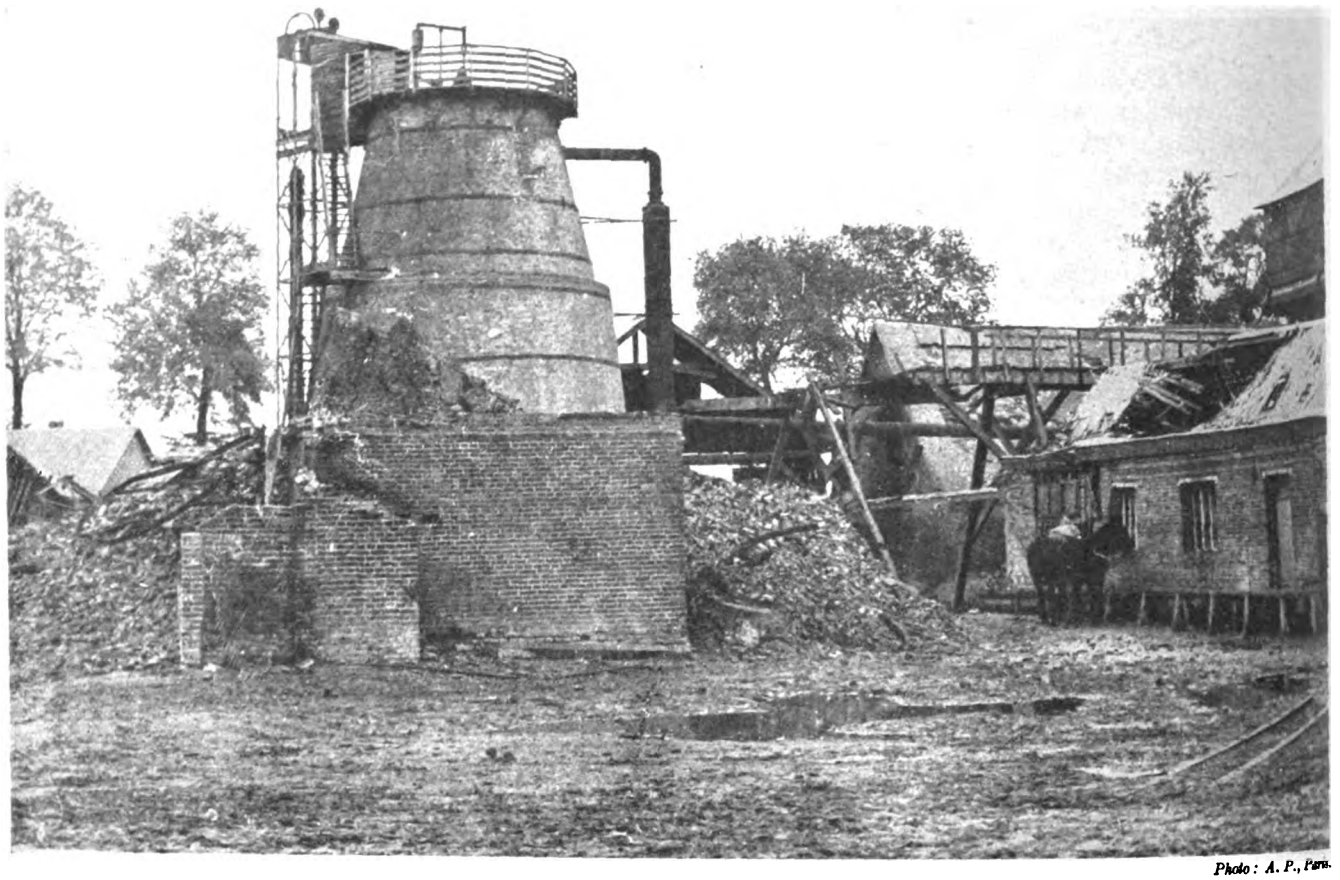

Photo: A. P., Paris.

PROYART: THE *SUCRERIE*

Proyart is another village in that land of the beet-sugar industry, Santerre. The place lies on the Bray-sur-Somme—Rosières road, about 1 km. north of the Amiens—St. Quentin road, and 5 km. south of the Somme at Froissy. The *sucrerie* stands in the south-western angle formed by the intersection of the two highways, and is therefore at a little distance from the houses. The above photograph dates from September 20th, 1916, Proyart having been well behind the French lines from the commencement of stabilised warfare. The railway track seen in the foreground of the modern view opposite is part of the light line running from Albert through Bray to Rosières, where it joins the main line from Amiens. There is a station at Proyart village.

The Brickstacks Near La Bassée

Hunting about Cuinchy and Givenchy, Annequin and La Bassée, after a recent night in Béthune—which no man remembers without a smile of friendly recognition—I came to where the Brickstacks had loomed over the war of mine and counter-mine, with its extraordinary technique of crater-fighting. The stacks, a score in number, used to rise squat and huge from the flat wilderness.

Before these solid fortresses were shared between friend and enemy, with a No Man's Land consisting of linked mine craters, they had formed the scene of desperate encounters between French and Germans. We always spoke in awe of the Brickstacks, for these much abused masses of red brick covered a multitude of persons and paraphernalia. Each was accorded a number, but one adjective did duty for all. Within, stifling "creep-holes" twisted up to look-outs and machine guns; while below, grimy staircases led down to the caverns occupied by infantry and tunnellers. Underground warfare, in the spring of 1916, chose this spot for the experiments whose like were to be conducted upon an even greater scale on July 1st.

No one who saw the enormous mine-craters at La Boisselle and Beaumont-Hamel, and the "Cough-drop" at High Wood, will ever forget their wonder. The huge hole at La Boisselle was 320 yards round the top, its deep sides so steep that one could not climb down them. The miners had burrowed for hundreds and hundreds of yards, deep down in the belly of the earth, with Hell going on overhead—had burrowed and listened until they got right under the German trenches. . . . When the mess had been cleared away, the human remains were buried in a little mound in the centre of the bottom of the great chasm, and one skull was placed on top of it as a monument to the work of Man.

To return to the Brickstacks. From the dug-outs there led forward a series of galleries almost choked with crumbling grey chalk, propped with timbers, and tangled with signallers' wires. The front line was a mere ditch, with saps thrown forward to the lips of the craters; and in these perilous observation-posts sentries shivered as German missiles showered into the great cavities.

A Very Clever Surgeon

I recollect how, after the Germans had got in first with a fearful explosion,

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Photo: A. J. Insall.

SCENE OF A THRILLING EXPLOIT

On March 25th, 1918, it was decided that, should further retreat become imperative on the 26th, the XIX Corps would retire to a line Rouvroy—Proyart—Froissy; and the 15th, 20th, and 22nd Entrenching Battalions were ordered to begin work on the new positions. Early on the 26th, following heavy attacks in the 24th and 39th Division sectors, this retirement was begun, and was completed during the afternoon. The 47th Brigade, 16th (Irish) Division, took over Proyart, and held it until driven out by an enemy flanking movement about 10 a.m. on the 27th. The loss of the village was then considered so serious that General Watts ordered the 8th Division to make a counter-attack; and this, carried out by the 2nd Devonshires, 22nd Durham L.I. (Pioneers), and the engineers and details of the 151st Brigade (50th Division), proved so successful that the gallant and oddly assorted little band actually recaptured for a time the cross-roads at which stands the *sucrerie*, and took many prisoners.

wrecking part of our galleries and entombing the miners, one of the stacks seemed to leap into the air, and then settled down again, solid and monstrous, more or less as before. But a man had been trapped by the leg in the masonry, which was perilously set over the "creep-hole" where he lay. With selfless heroism, coolness, and skill, the Battalion Medical Officer performed a successful amputation in the face of almost insuperable difficulties, and saved the victim's life.

"Minnie," the fat lady of the air, who went off with such a boisterous noise, was fond of the Brickstacks. We used—metaphorically speaking—to sweat blood as we watched her wobbling over and over in the air like a circus tumbler, dodging this way and that as she plunged downward to bestow her bloody embrace; and then, after the ear-splitting noise and vast upheaval of mud and brick-dust had subsided, we would clear up the mess. Some idiot of the time, in one of those silly articles calculated to keep our spirits up, described this fearsome business, so horrible in its results, as "trench-mortar tennis."

The best-known crater at La Bassée was called "Jerusalem"; and, simultaneously with the mining activity in this region, there was crater-fighting also at Vimy, where "Broadmarsh Crater," of sinister memory, was the scene of raid and counter-raid during the spring of 1916. It was here, too, that the most celebrated of those "majors" nicknamed mad for their daring, used to fly up and down the German trenches hosing the defenders with a machine gun.

The day of the synchronised front gun had not yet arrived early in 1916, and this particular "mad major" operated a Lewis gun from the pilot's seat, a feat of skill and daring at his necessarily low altitude which was amazing to behold—though not much fun for Jerry! Nevertheless, the Hun always had a more than sneaking regard for our airmen; and there was a chivalry of the air seldom seen in the bitterness of land battle.

At Hamelincourt, after we had pushed back the enemy in 1918, I came upon carved wooden crosses erected above the graves of three of our airmen who had been shot down in a combat; and not crosses only, but ribboned wreaths were there, deposited by the German squadron which had encompassed the *Engländers'* downfall.

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German Chivalry

Instances of chivalry, on both sides, however, did sometimes occur, even in the land-fighting. Following the appalling yet heroic failure of two battalions of Staffordshires and two of Sherwood Foresters in front of Gommecourt Wood on July 1st, 1916, when the divisional losses reached the figure of 2,700 men, the Germans permitted stretcher-bearers to move with freedom among the wounded.

At Beaumont-Hamel, in the same battle, the dawn of July 2nd found a lad tending a stricken comrade close to the enemy's line. The mist which had shielded them suddenly lifted, and showed the German trench only a few yards away. The Boches reached for their rifles, but were checked by an officer, who stood up and shouted in English:

"You must not stop there with that man. If you want to come in, come along; or else go back to your own trenches."

The lad answered, "I'll go back to my own trenches, sir," and trudged back unhurt. Two stretcher-bearers then went out and brought the wounded man back to the British lines.

There is great pathos in the story related to me by a German officer since the War. During an attack by the Canadians near Péronne, the captain commanding fell mortally wounded in the German line. Before he died, he handed his wallet, containing mementoes of sentimental interest, to an enemy officer, requesting that the wallet be sent to his wife in Canada.

Shortly afterwards, a new assault by Canadian reinforcements overwhelmed the hostile defences, and the German officer was himself wounded, and subsequently captured. But prior to his capture, fearful of being found with the wallet upon him, and believing that his story would not be credited, he threw it away. For years after the Armistice, he endeavoured to trace the name of the Canadian from available archives in Germany and Canada, until at last he was rewarded with success, and could inform the widow of her husband's wish and words.

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

ECCLESIASTICAL RUBBISH-HEAP

The church of which this photograph shows the thoroughly disintegrated remains belongs to Hamelincourt, a village 10 km. north-north-west of Bapaume, just off the Arras road. The village itself was illustrated on pages 442 and 443 of this volume.

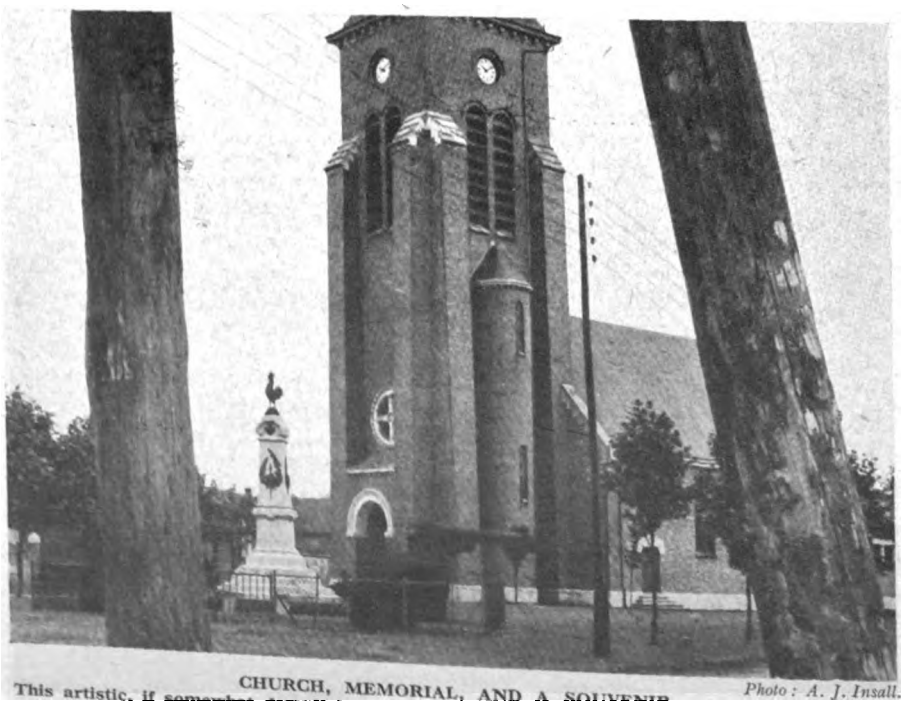

Photo: A. J. Insall.

CHURCH, MEMORIAL, AND A SOUVENIR

This artistic, if somewhat decapitated, presentation of the new church at Hamelincourt shows the building to have been erected on unassuming but nevertheless modern lines, in keeping with a village of which every brick has had to be laid anew since the Armistice. The poles in the foreground are not trees, but part of the telegraph system.

Lillers and Marquay

When one is revisiting the Western Front, the drama of the battlefields overshadows those pleasant places behind the lines where we billeted, sometimes (with luck) as one of the family, more often rudely among the straw of a rat-ridden barn. Behind Merville, Lillers, and Marquay—sleepy villages of Artois until April, 1918, when Merville was overwhelmed—were billets of much comfort, with their shops and estaminets. The former did a roaring trade in cards upon which, in coloured wool, were worked regimental crests; while the latter poured out "red ink" and much-diluted beer in gallons. Near the village of Pénin, close to St. Pol, I remember an old farmer showing me an astonishing letter. It had been written to the old man's great-grandfather in 1815 by a British battalion-commander, apologising for some misconduct of his men after Waterloo.

Much earlier yet, King Henry V (as

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Photo: A. P., Paris.

A ROOF WITHOUT WALLS

Taken on September 22nd, 1916, this photograph shows the Mairie of Maricourt, a village chiefly notable in that year as being the point of junction between the British and French Armies. It was in the front line at the outset of the Somme battle.

Shakespeare records) had been uncommonly chivalrous toward the people whose rulers he was fighting in Picardy in 1415; and I was gladdened to learn that in 1815 British soldiers were true to their courteous reputation; but I regret to recall that in 1915 apologies were deemed insufficient. Red Tape had come to rule! Commanding officers were called upon to pay from their private pockets for the little indiscretions of their men; and when, in their unappeasable hunger, rapacious mules gnawed the bark from trees, one sometimes thought that the Allied cause, behind the lines, had been hopelessly wrecked.

Before going east, where our steps must inevitably take us if we are to follow Haig's great drive across the old Somme battlefields of 1918, let us rest a moment at Picquigny, a charming village, the haunt of painters and fishermen. Here thousands of young soldiers swam and plunged in the river, while generals and more sophisticated persons would steal away to some remote reach and cast a fly upon the waters.

It was here—as mentioned beneath the photograph of the village on a recent page[1]—that in 1475 Edward IV met Louis XI of France to make peace, and to discuss the marriage of his daughter with the Dauphin. In May, 1922, another king—George V—also came to Picquigny. King George was received by the Bishop of Amiens, who referred to the last visit of an English monarch to the village, and the precautions taken for his safety. He said that a British king might now trust himself among the people of Picardy with no guard other than their respect and affection for him and for his Army.

[1] Supplementary volume, p. 207.

On the Amiens—Abbeville Road

The long Amiens—Abbeville road, with its pleasant billeting villages, St. Pierre-à-Gouy, Condé-Folies, Longpré, must be well remembered. We might linger for a day or two in Amiens, and revisualise the tremendous fighting which began close by, after a lull, in July, 1918. As we then moved forward, how chilling were the scenes even to those who knew they were passing through to victory and pursuit—landscapes whose skies were always so Corotesque, but whose ground was an inferno studded with bleaching wooden crosses!

The modern traveller must go far if he would keep pace with the advance to the great Hindenburg Line, for, with mighty bounds, division leaping over division, the Allies swept on to the east. Between the 21st and 31st August, 1918, the armies of Byng and Rawlinson had recaptured the whole of the Somme battlefield, and had moved ten miles to the east of the Flers Ridge. Péronne had fallen; Bapaume had heard the blare of British bands.

But the Germans entrenched themselves in front of Cambrai and the Canal de St. Quentin, their defences focussed upon Epéhy, where was marshalled the redoubtable *Alpine Corps*, still fresh, despite its hammering at Bailleul and Kemmel, from unbroken victory further east. Epéhy, Gouzeaucourt, Villers-Guislain, and Quéant on the fringe of the

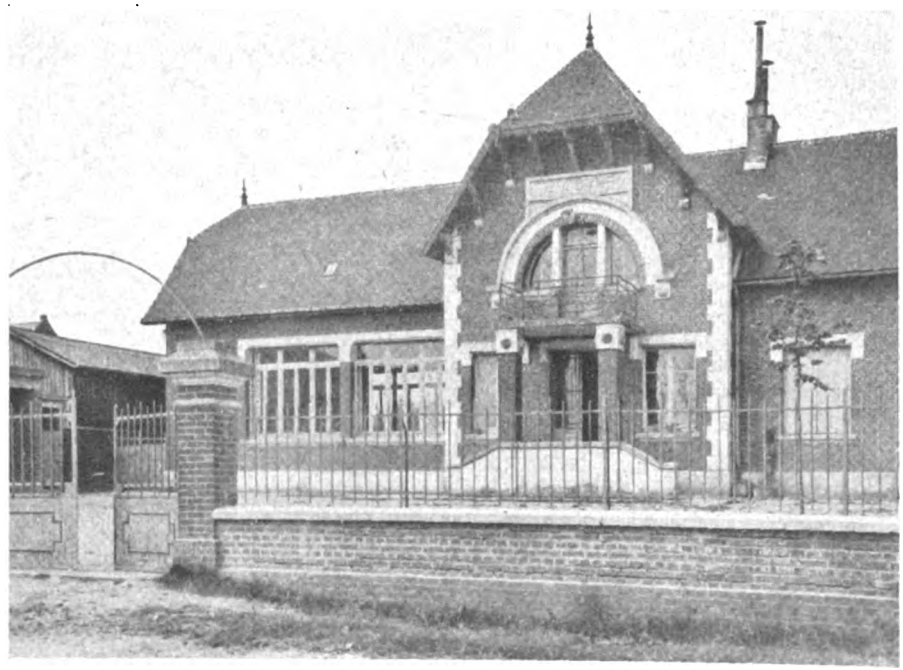

Photo: A. J. Insall.

THE MODERN MAIRIE

On July 1st, 1916, our 30th Division (XIII Corps) attacked northward from Maricourt, and the French 39th Division (XX Corps) eastward. Both attacks were successful. A battalion of "Hunt's Force," the 203rd Field Company R.E., and the 35th Brigade (12th Division), operating under the orders of the 35th Division, defended the village on March 25th, 1918.

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Arras battlefield, here mark the course of the Hindenburg Line—the last entrenched German stronghold west of the Rhine.

I walked along the Line as far as Fontaine-lez-Croisilles, where it crossed the Sensée River. Part of the ground, so pitted and torn, so mangled with barbed wire, remains exactly as it was; and I found out in the chalk, the self-same emplacement into which I had thrust forward a machine gun when the 1st Queens and 93rd Highlanders were cut off from all support, with scarcely any ammunition left, bombed and machine-gunned from the flanks, assailed from the front, harassed by a withering cross-fire to their rear. I even found, in the emplacement, bullets, remains of equipment, and a broken ammunition box.

A Photographer Who Gave His Life

I remembered how an official cinema operator had run forward to photograph the counter-attack by the Cameronians, and how things had become too hot for photography, and the poor fellow had been killed—his camera being salved, I was told, to record the shell-burst which had killed its operator. I could readily repicture, also, the figure of a rider, bowed over his charger's withers as he raced down the valley through mist, dust, and battle-smoke, with a message to the general.

As the drive of 1918 went forward, the villages of Gouzeaucourt, Hermies, Heudicourt, Epéhy, and Hargicourt were scenes of the bitterest fighting. No matter that the political structure behind the German armies was crumbling with disillusion, that the armies themselves were on short rations—at every point the Germans fought with unsurpassed gallantry.

The Hindenburg Line cracked, and then was broken. September 29th is the date upon which the British Armies began their great drive toward the east. But the attack of that day had a grim and a most bloody prologue. The Canal de St. Quentin disappears underground at the village of Vend'huile, and for a distance of 600 yards south of there it flows in a subterranean gallery, 50 feet below the ground and 70 feet wide. This tunnel dates from the First Empire, and upon the arches bears the "N" of the first Napoleon.

German ingenuity had converted the place into a military work of extraordinary strength, with numerous bolt-holes to front and rear, their mouths, being connected so as to form a network of machine-gun nests. The waterway was occupied by barges into which a complete division could be placed, wholly immune from the heaviest bombardment. Immediately to the west lay the strongest part of the Hindenburg Line.

The Napoleonic "N" recalls an amusing incident. After a severe fight, I was "warned"—the military word was

Photo: Imperial War Museum

CANADIAN SCOTTISH

On September 27th, 1918, the Canadian Scottish troops shown here moved forward into position near Inchy, preparatory to the attack on Canibrai which was to result in its eventual capture by Canadian and other troops on October 9th. The attack of the First and Third Armies on September 27th brought their forces to the outskirts of the city two days later.

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Photo: Imperial War Museum.

DURING THE BATTLE OF THE CANAL DU NORD

Taken near Mœuvres on the same date as the picture opposite, this photograph shows horses pulling an 18-pounder up the slope of a cutting improvised in the canal-banks in default of a bridge. The gun-teams had recently been reduced from six to four horses, in order that animals might be supplied to the Americans.

frequently significant!—that a very distinguished commander would visit my headquarters for dinner. We had almost forgotten that such a ceremony as dinner existed, but were accustomed to improvisation.

Any Port in a Storm

A glass of port was an essential part of the festive ritual. There remained some empty bottles bearing the famous "N" of the old Café Royal cellars, a gift from a friend. We proceeded, therefore, to manufacture. *Vin rouge*, brandy, sugar, and other ingredients were generously mixed and tasted, until a connoisseur pronounced a satisfactory verdict on the result.

The dinner went off with smiling success. The mess corporal then entered for the ritual, brandishing the first bottle, his face a mask, while keen eyes spotted the famous label. The man omnipotent raised his glass and went through the motions. "A good colour!" "Fine body!" He sniffed. "What a bouquet!" He sipped, and nodded his approval.

The stuff was a red-hot cocktail. No matter. The magic "N" had done the trick! As the great man, profuse with thanks, left my ramshackle billet, an A.D.C. touched my elbow. "Would you have a dozen of that port sent down?" We sent them. Decorations for gallantry in action have been earned more cheaply!

Before the general advance of 1918 could begin, it was imperative to stifle the hornets' nest beneath the Napoleonic sign. This difficult task was entrusted to the Australians and a new American division, trained under British tutelage. The detailed story of the routing-out of the enemy from this labyrinth with gas and bombs is an epic.

Along the whole front the Germans clung tenaciously to their machine guns. In the Targelle Ravine, for example, and half-a-mile south in Pigeon Ravine, platoon after platoon of British was wrecked by machine-gun fire, and fell, facing the enemy, young officers at the head. Rows and rows of men lay stretched in these quiet valleys; while on the highest point between the dips, at Meath Post, the dead were scattered thickly round the spot now marked by a cemetery.

The 29th September witnessed the first real break in the enemy's stubborn resistance. Across the bodies of its fallen comrades the advancing host swept on, smothering resistance wherever it was found. Beyond the Canal lay the open country, and within view from Meath Post were villages untouched by shell-fire, church spires, and copses and woods, golden and russet, decked in autumn foliage. Verily a sight for tired eyes!

Four Years in a Wardrobe

Troops, though wearied beyond belief, stormed doggedly on, with the vision, at last, of the break-through. No leash would hold them; they experienced the sense, tingling and triumphant, of victory. As they entered the villages, hardy peasants who had withstood the bitterness of four years' occupation acclaimed the victors almost as the enemy departed from the gates. In

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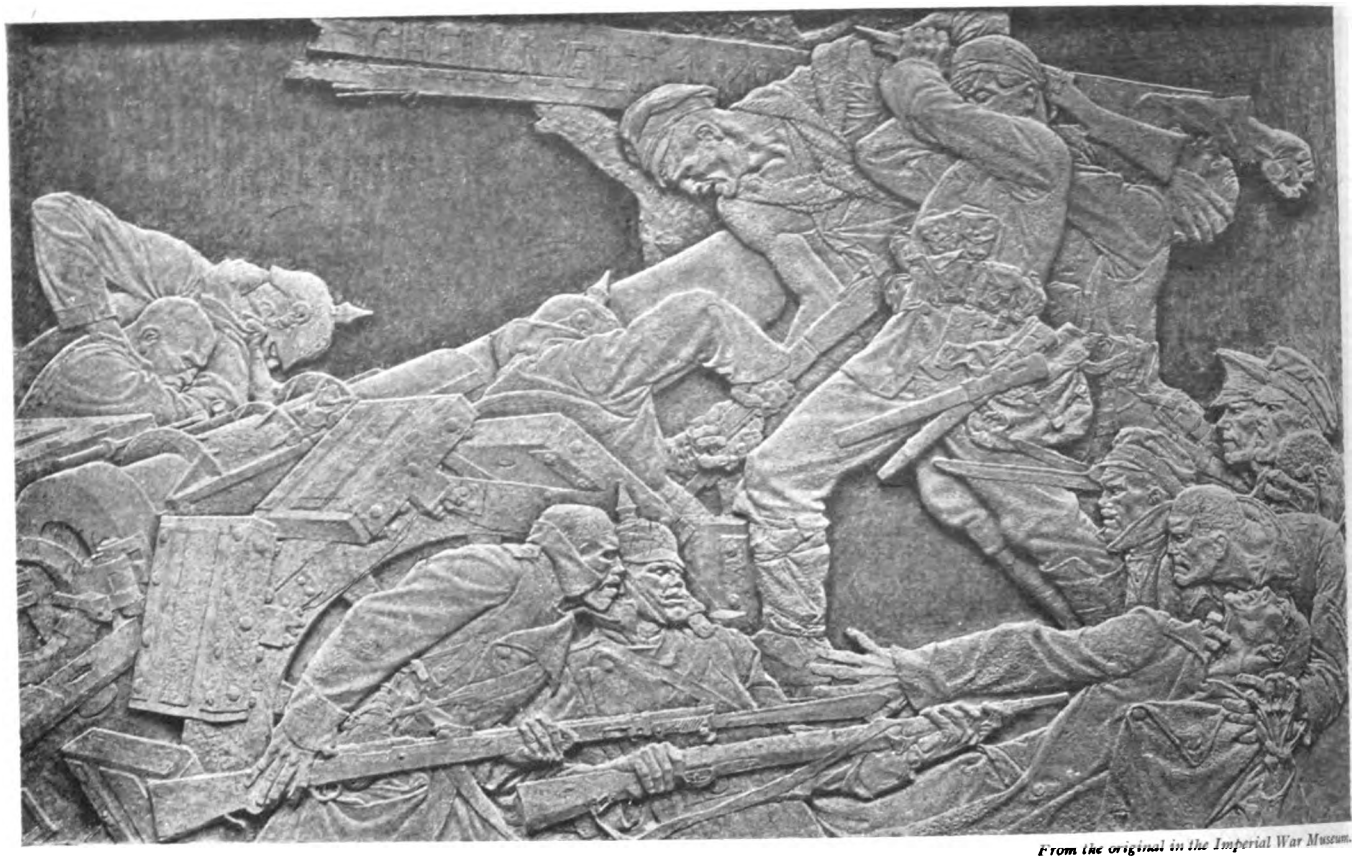

From the original in the Imperial War Museum.

"THE BATTLE OF YPRES, 1914"

This bas-relief by Charles S. Jagger shows the Worcesters at Gheluvelt. The Battle of Gheluvelt is the name given in the *Official History* to the whole of that great attempt to break through south of Ypres, which was launched by Fabeck's *Army Group* on October 29th, 1914, and continued by that force until the 4th or 5th of November. In the nomenclature assigned to the various Great War engagements by a committee set up for the purpose, this struggle covers part of the Battle of Armentières, all the Battle of Messines, and all the Battle of Gheluvelt proper.

Clary, by some miracle, French flags were produced, and a gramophone wheezed the *Marseillaise* as Scottish Territorials marched in. King George V visited Clary after the Armistice, and those who had captured the village—the 5th Scottish Rifles—formed his guard of honour. The square in front of the Mairie was renamed the "Place des Écossais"; and you may be sure that a Scottish visitor is always welcomed in this little commune.

It was from a cottage at Bertry, close to Clary, that a British trooper emerged after four years' imprisonment therein. He had been saved from capture by the enemy through the singular devotion of a peasant woman, who, although German soldiers were billeted in her house, hid the Englishman in a wardrobe at moments of danger and thus kept him alive and well until the British advance freed him to return to the ranks of his own regiment. No tale better illustrates the patience and fortitude of the Tommy.

Cambrai, remembered for the "Battle of the Tanks" in 1917, fell between the 8th and 10th October, 1918. To the east, in that month, Solesmes and Le Cateau marked the frontier. At Le Cateau is the Memorial to the 19th Infantry Brigade, whose Highland officers, claymore in hand, advanced to meet the grey hordes of the enemy in 1914. Four years later the young men, repeating history, stormed again across the graves in which slept Scots, Welsh, and Cockneys.

Death of a Bavarian

The battle moved on towards Malplaquet, beside the Forêt de Mormal. Marlborough in 1709 was "generous towards the wounded of the enemy after the Battle of Malplaquet"; and we in October, 1918, were, I think, no less solicitous for their welfare. Slightly wounded, I lay in a dressing-station. Beside me was a young Bavarian. His face was pale and his eyes were very bright. Orderlies looked at him every now and again to see how he fared. And while others groaned, and some shrieked with agony, he never uttered a sound. Only when night fell and the lamps were lighted did he begin to whimper quietly.

His hand lay stretched out over the coverlet. I sometimes glanced at the lad. He was crying like a child, so I touched his hand, and he held on. I think that made his passage easier, for he sighed and smiled at me, and a little later he slept. Then they took the body away.

Some writers have said that war brutalises men; I cannot believe it. If fighting made us contemptuous of danger and no less of silly conventions, it softened the heart to suffering and established a new, indestructable comradeship. There was more of kindness and chivalry, of mutual help and tolerance, in war than I have ever seen amid the grasp and grab and selfishness of peace.

I cannot stand upon the battlefields of Mons and Le Cateau without emotion. At Maubeuge, Landrecies, Maroilles, Le Cateau, we began the War; and here the bugles sounded the Armistice. The word "retreat" is a hard one in a soldier's ears. It implies a necessity far more humiliating in its consequences than does a rearguard action, or even a retirement. It means defeat.

If General French was to extricate his Army, it meant that men must march and march and march, day and night.

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AROUND CHAULNES
Then and Now

Photo: A. P., Paris

THE HAND OF WAR

The large village of Chaulnes, here illustrated in a French photograph of June 16th, 1917, stands 6 km. due west of Rosières, and is an important centre of both roads and railways. The former diverge severally to Lihons, Vermandovillers, Pressoir, Marchélepot, Omiécourt, Puzeaux, and Hallu—and, of course, to places beyond these. Just south of Chaulnes is the rail junction where the Péronne–Roye line crosses the Amiens–Nesle, and is also joined by the light track from Harbonnières.

Photo: A. J. Insall

THE PLACIDITY OF PEACE-TIME

This photograph shows the little pleasure-garden which is one of the leading features of modern Chaulnes, while in the foreground is the north-west–south-east main road. The château, of which pictures will be found overleaf, lies to the left and in rear of the camera as set to take the present view. To-day containing some 1,600 inhabitants, Chaulnes was one of the places where in March, 1917, the enemy covered his withdrawal by offering some resistance with infantry detachments and machine guns.

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Photo: A. P., Paris

LAST DAYS OF THE CHÂTEAU DE CHAULNES

The old château, as can be seen, lay in the midst of Chaulnes Wood, a small belt of trees enclosing the north-western and northern sides of the village. On March 26th, 1918, Chaulnes was defended by the 17th Brigade, 24th Division, which held off enemy attacks until its companion brigades were well on their way back to the Rouvroy–Froissy line, whither it began to follow them about 11 a.m. The graves (right and left) in the above view are those of German officers.

ENTRANCE TO A CH

The church belongs to Marchélepot village si
Chaulnes, at the point where the main there t
crosses the Péronne–Roye highway. Marchélepot
in 1917 and the British in 1918, it was event

RESURRECTI

March 25th, 1918, was the date which the C
withdrawing from the Somme, the 24th Brigad
battalions of the 151st Brigade defended the railw
behind the village during the morning and aft
about 8 p.m. The 1/8th Durham Light Infantry a
the fighting

Photo: A. J. Insall

CHÂTEAU GATES

Although Chaulnes was not captured until the British entered it on March 17th, 1917, Chaulnes Wood had been the scene of bitter French fighting during the First Battle of the Somme. Part of it was taken by our Allies on September 4th (1916), a further section on October 10th, and then much of the same area again on the 21st, after the Germans had recovered their lost ground. In the final advance of 1918, wood and village were both just outside the British sector, the French recapturing them on August 28th.

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A CHURCH
lage situated 5 km. east-north-east of
there to the Somme bridge at St. Christ
élepot was abandoned by the Germans
s eventually secured by the French.

Photo: Imperial War Museum

CTED
ne Germans regain Marchélepot. After
rigade (8th Division) and two attached
railway (*i.e.* the Péronne–Chaulnes line)
l afternoon, but were ordered to retire
ng as rearguard, then bore the brunt of
ting.

Photo: G. T. Watson

Photo: A. P., Paris

BESIDE THE ROAD TO LIHONS

Lihons lies on the side of Chaulnes opposite to Marchélepot, being situated 3 km. west of the former, near the bifurcation of the roads to Rosières and Amiens. Other ways lead to Vermandovillers, Méharicourt, and Chilly. The above picture of the Tour Carrée, as it is called—the Square Tower—shows the condition of the much-bombarded main road on September 1st, 1916. Until the beginning of the Somme battle Lihons had been almost in the French front line.

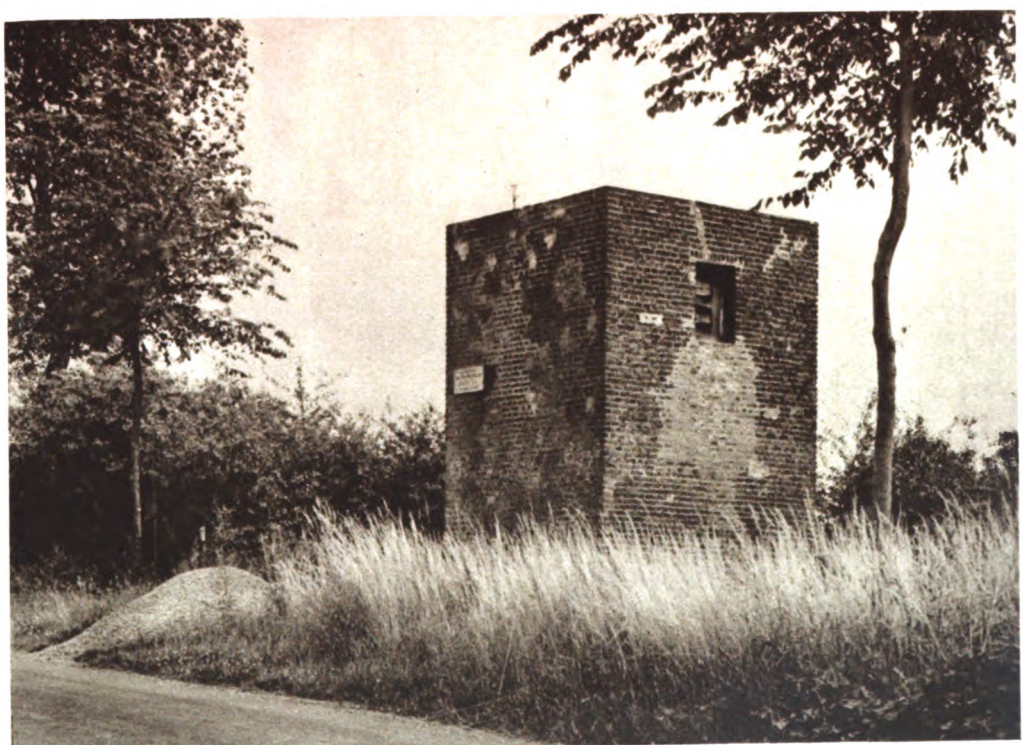

Photo: A. J. Insall

CAREFULLY PRESERVED

It is evident from the careful patching of bullet- and shrapnel-holes that the Tour Carrée is regarded to-day as something of a monument. Its use, either pre-war or post-war, our photographer was unable to ascertain; but it is probably connected with a sand-pit close by, to which the small notice-board prohibits entry. During the War, almost needless to remark, the tower proved an admirable O.P. for French and Germans in turn. Two photographs of Lihons village, appear on the next page.

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Photo: A. P., Paris

THE HOUSES OF LIHONS

Lihons first became the scene of fighting on December 19th, 1914, when General de Castelnau, on whom, together with General Manoury, devolved the task of protecting the " hinge " of the Allied left wing, engaged German columns in the vicinity. The enemy were heavily defeated, suffering severely from the French artillery and machine guns. In 1916, the village formed the base for the French operations in the Bois de Chaulnes, whose nearest part is less than 2 km. distant. The photograph is dated June 24th, 1916.

Photo: A. J. Insall

THE EXACT SITE

Lihons was abandoned on March 26th, 1918, in the same retirement (*i.e.* that of the XIX Corps to the Rouvroy–Froissy line) as involved the evacuation of Chaulnes. The 23rd and 24th Brigades of the 8th Division, after being attacked at the moment of withdrawal and repulsing the enemy with heavy loss, made their way westward before noon, and had passed through Lihons by 2 p.m. The recapture was effected by the British on August 9th, after which there was serious fighting when German counter-attacks were met and held on the 11th.

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Many marched while they slept. August 24th, 1914, was a blazing hot day, the sun poised in a cloudless sky. The troops were scarcely able to drag their feet over the scorching roads. They had had nothing to eat, and scarcely a moment in which they dared stand on one side and sip water from a well-head. General von Kluck, the German Commander, forged on, victory within his grasp.

The "Old Army" of 1914

But there is a limit to the endurance of the British soldier, and when he reaches it he takes his stand and fights to the end. The "Contemptible Little Army," exhausted beyond measure, its men famished with hunger and thirst, their feet swathed in bandages, many of them wounded, their numbers reduced to but a skeleton of those who had paraded at Aldershot, stood firm.

The Contemptibles lacerated the attacking Germans with lead, stretching thousands prone on the fields. Among flaming villages British soldiers charged with the bayonet. Gunners fought their pieces at point-blank range, until the oncoming enemy perished in the smoke before the muzzle mouths.

Exactly a week after the first engagement—at 4 p.m. on Sunday, August 30th—what remained of the British Army was concentrated north of St. Quentin, at the village of Estrées. Here were witnessed the most extraordinary scenes. The remnants of battalions and cavalry squadrons were inextricably mixed with stragglers, lorries, transport waggons, guns, refugees, and wounded.

Two or three miles away were the German armies. Had a battery been brought into action before the Little Army had had time to shake itself out into some kind of formation, it is probable that it would have been wiped out. Even so, as things were, it is something of a miracle that the Old Contemptibles' Association remains so numerous a body to testify to those days.

It was impossible to remain at Estrées. Orders were issued to retreat, retreat . . . keep moving. The wounded had been gathered in St. Quentin. Now, such cases as were movable were again placed in ambulances and upon any kind of vehicle available, and the dreadful procession of wearied, drooping soldiers, with here and there a ghost swathed in bloody bandages, moved on. The retreat continued day after day without sleep, without rest. Men turned and fought, and then plodded on to save themselves, to save the Army.

An Amazing R.H.A. Feat

Beside Compiègne, on the 1st September, the action of "L" Battery of the Royal Horse Artillery constituted an epic in the history of the Royal Regiment of Artillery. The battery was fought literally to the last man and the last round of ammunition, after which the wounded—and some of them were mortally so—brought six guns out of action in the face of terrific fire.

No story in the military history of the British people is more thickly sown with individual acts of conspicuous gallantry and noble self-sacrifice than is the Retreat from Mons.

As I stood again upon the battlefield of Le Cateau, whose panorama I had twice studied before, I wondered if ever those who follow after can possibly understand what their fathers and uncles and elder brothers endured twenty years ago. I prayed also that the younger generation, in peace or possibly in war, might in their day prove worthy.

Photo: G. T. Watson.

A HISTORIC ROAD

The long coast-road between Dunkirk and Ostend is historic for two reasons. In the first place, it was well known to the three British divisions—the Royal Naval, 7th, and 3rd Cavalry—concerned in the Antwerp operations of October, 1914. Secondly, it crossed the sector taken over from the French XXXVI Corps in June, 1917, by our XV Corps, and grew familiar to the many British divisions which came and went between that date and our return of the Nieuport area to the French in November.

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CHAPTER XLI

REVIEW OF AN EMPIRE IN ARMS

A subject of outstanding interest to all who served in the Great War relates to the composition of the divisions which were raised during those memorable years. When the following chapter was projected, it was the intention that it should be, in a sense, a comprehensive order of battle. But while in the case of the Regular and Territorial Divisions this would not have been an unduly difficult task to essay, it was found that the details of the New Army Divisions are not yet available. The brief records contained in the following pages should not, however, be without interest, as they provide convincing evidence of the magnitude of the Empire's effort during the War years.

In the earlier years of the War the average soldier concerned himself little with the claims on him of any formation higher than the battalion in which he was serving, and the regiment whose badges he wore and whose traditions he had learnt to regard as being, for the nonce, in his and his comrades' keeping. The divisional organisation in peace-time was quite a recent innovation in the British Army—dating from the Haldane reforms carried out after the South African War.

Division *versus* Regiment

The oldest regiments of the British Army can show a continuous history dating back to the Restoration of Charles II in 1660, and their colours bear the battle honours of the wars of three centuries. It was thus not altogether surprising that our divisions, the oldest of which dated from 1906—and the majority from after the outbreak of the War—and none of which had seen a shot fired before then, had little hold on men's imaginations.

The main idea behind what we call a division is that it should be a formed body of troops consisting of all arms, and provided with the means of subsisting, marching, and fighting independently of any other formation. The idea is an old one; the Roman legions fulfilled all these requirements. But it was not until the French Revolutionary wars that the idea was taken up in the armies of modern Europe. Wellington followed the lead given by the French, and welded the heterogeneous collection of battalions of which his Peninsular army was originally composed into the Light Division and various others, numbered from one to seven, which were constituted very much like those of to-day.

The Crimean and South African Wars also saw British divisions in the field. But, each time, they were broken up as soon as peace came. The Regular and Territorial divisions of to-day still carry on the unbroken traditions of the Great War.

On the outbreak of war in 1914, there were six Regular divisions, and the fourteen divisions of the Territorial Army at home. It was calculated that the latter would require six months' intensive training to enable them to take their place in the field beside their Regular comrades, an estimate which subsequently proved to have been about correct. In addition to these, there were nine British-Indian divisions serving in India.

The remainder of the Regular Army was scattered in small garrisons all over the world. The various Dominions maintained their own armed forces, consisting of a few permanent units and a number of non-permanent corps, akin to our Territorials, distributed across their respective territories. There were no formed brigades in the Dominions, let alone divisions.

Dominion and Colonial Forces

Further, there were various corps in the Colonies, such as the King's African Rifles, the West India Regiment, and so on, whose chief functions were local defence and the maintenance of order in their own territories.

In the course of the War, the British Empire mobilised a total of 75 British, 17 Indian, 5 Canadian, 5 Australian, and 1 New Zealand infantry divisions, 3 British and 3 Indian cavalry divisions, and a number of Yeomanry and Dominion mounted divisions. Their composition varied from time to time, as units were withdrawn after heavy casualties and replaced by others; but there always remained a nucleus to carry on the traditions that had been formed.

Many, particularly of the infantry divisions, fought on the same front throughout the War, and earned their right to a place in history beside Cæsar's Tenth Legion, Napoleon's Old Guard, or Wellington's Light Division. Every old soldier will have his own idea of the order in which they should be placed in the roll of fame. I fought in three different divisions at one time or another during the War, and each occupied the first place in my pride and affections whilst I was serving with it.

A number of excellent divisional histories have been written, but these cover only a small part of the ground, and the stories of the majority of divisions are still only to be found scattered through the pages of the *Official History* and other works on the War. The Historial Section of the Committee of Imperial Defence, the body charged with the task of writing the official history of the War on all fronts, has found a need for collecting in one place all the information available about the various divisions, and is busy compiling a series of books on the subject. The first two parts have already appeared, and deal with the Regular and First Line Territorial divisions,[1] but the amount of work involved is immense and it may be some years before the remaining volumes are completed.

In any case, the most that considerations of space will allow here is for us to give some idea of the composition of the divisions, together with the changes that this underwent in the course of the War, and then to run summarily through the list. For the story of their battles the reader must be referred to the chapters of TWENTY YEARS AFTER that have gone before.

The 1st (Regular) Division

Let us take the 1st Division, a Regular formation that was quartered at Aldershot on the outbreak of War, and which formed part of the original B.E.F., fighting throughout the campaign on the Western Front. The initial composition of its three infantry brigades was:

[1] *Order of Battle of Divisions*, Parts 1 and 2a, published by H.M. Stationery Office.

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1st (Guards) Brigade : 1st Coldstream, 1st Scots Guards, 1st Black Watch, 2nd Royal Munster Fusiliers.

2nd Brigade : 2nd Royal Sussex, 1st Loyal North Lancs, 1st Northamptonshire, 2nd King's Royal Rifle Corps.

3rd Brigade : 1st Queen's, 1st South Wales Borderers, 1st Gloucestershire, 2nd Welsh.

The Guards battalions of the 1st Brigade were posted to the Guards Division on its formation in July, 1915. Various other battalions were changed in the course of the War. In 1916 each infantry brigade was strengthened by the addition of a machine-gun company and a trench-mortar battery, and in 1918 the number of battalions in each brigade were reduced from four to three.

In 1914 the divisional mounted troops consisted of "C" Squadron, 15th Hussars, and the 1st Cyclist Co. In 1915 the 15th Hussars were withdrawn and transferred to the 9th Cavalry Brigade, recently formed. Their place was taken by "B" Squadron, 1st Northumberland Hussars—a Yeomanry unit. By 1916, mounted troops had been withdrawn from all the divisions on the Western Front.

The divisional artillery went through a number of modifications. It originally comprised the 25th, 26th, and 39th Brigades R.F.A., each of three 6-gun 18-pounder batteries, and the 43rd Brigade R.F.A., of three 6-gun 4·5-inch howitzer batteries. There was also the 26th Battery R.G.A., armed with the 60-pounder gun. The "heavies" were withdrawn in 1915 into Army Reserve. Two field-artillery batteries were withdrawn in 1915 to serve as the nucleus for new formations. In 1916 the howitzer brigade was broken up, and one battery posted to each of the 18-pounder brigades, which henceforth comprised three 18-pounder and one howitzer batteries. In 1917, the 26th Brigade R.F.A was withdrawn and became an Army Field Artillery Brigade.

Machine Gunners Added

Three medium and one heavy trench-mortar batteries were added to the division in 1916, and the 216th Machine-gun Company in 1917. In 1918 this extra machine-gun company was expanded into a battalion of the newly-formed Machine Gun Corps.

The division originally had two Regular field companies—the 23rd and 26th Field Companies R.E. A third was added in 1915—the 1st Lowland Field Coy. R.E., a Territorial unit.

Photo : Imperial War Museum.

TO THE ROYAL FUSILIERS

The above memorial to the Royal Fusiliers (City of London Regiment) must be familiar to many Londoners and visitors to the metropolis, for it stands in the centre of High Holborn near to Holborn Bars, the famous row of old Tudor houses. The inscription reads : "To the glorious memory of the 22,000 Royal Fusiliers who fell in the Great War. 1914-1919."

A pioneer battalion was added in 1916—the 6th Welsh (Pioneers). The remaining units—Signal Company, Field Ambulances, Veterinary Section, and Divisional Train, showed fewer changes. A Divisional Employment Company was added in 1917.

The example of the 1st Division is fairly typical of the changes undergone by divisions serving on the Western Front, and shows how the infantry was gradually reduced in proportion to the number of trench-mortar and machine-gun units. The artillery actually belonging to the division was reduced, but this was made up for by the greater number of guns, both field and heavy, in army reserve, that could be allotted to a division for any operation.

Now let us take the case of the 53rd

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(Welsh) Division, one of the pre-war Territorial formations, which fought in Gallipoli, Egypt, and Palestine. Its original infantry brigades were composed as follows :

158*th* (*North Wales*) *Brigade :* 5th Royal Welch Fusiliers, 6th Royal Welch Fusiliers, 7th Royal Welch Fusiliers, 1st Hereford.

159th (*Cheshire*) *Brigade :* 4th Cheshire, 7th Cheshire, 4th Welsh, 5th Welsh.

160*th* (*Welsh Border*) *Brigade :* 2/4th Queen's, 4th Royal Sussex, 2/4th Royal West Kent, 2/10th Middlesex.

We see that the 160th Brigade had been reconstituted from 2nd Line English Territorial battalions before the division had even left England. But there were even greater surprises in store for these Welshmen.

Changes in 1918

After the withdrawal from Gallipoli, the division was on the Suez Canal, where the infantry brigades each received a machine-gun company. Later on, in Palestine, they also acquired a trench-mortar battery. But in 1918, before Allenby's final offensive in the Holy Land, there came a call for British troops to be sent to France. A number of battalions were combed out, and their places taken by newly-raised and reconstituted Indian battalions. The Order of Battle of the infantry brigades for July, 1918, shows them in process of changing over from the British to the Indian establishment :

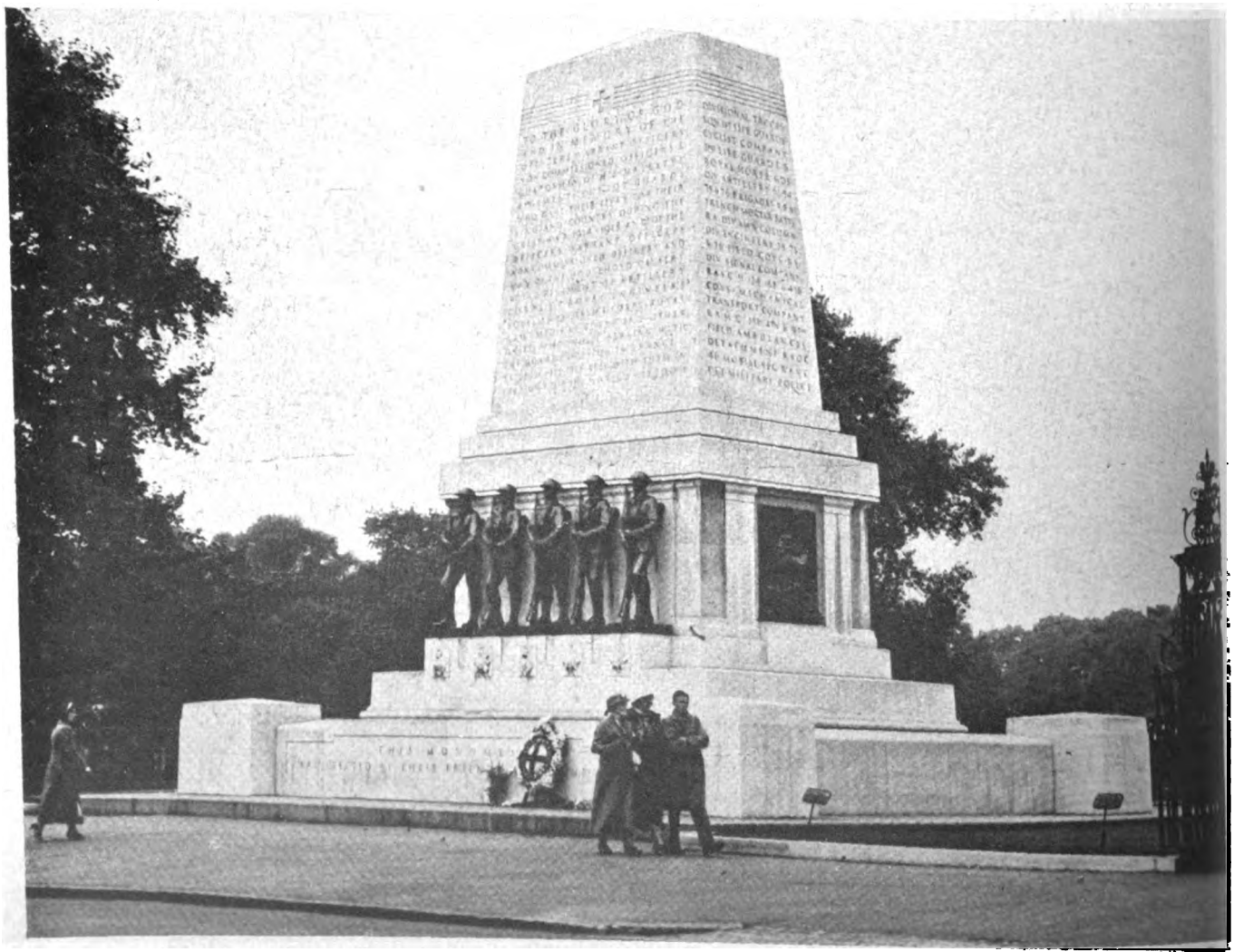
158*th Infantry Brigade :* 5th Royal Welch Fusiliers, 6th Royal Welch Fusiliers, 7th Royal Welch Fusiliers, 4/11th Gurkhas, 3/153rd Infantry, 158th Trench Mortar Battery.

159*th Infantry Brigade :* 4th Welsh, 5th Welsh, 3/152nd Infantry, 2/153rd Infantry, 159th Trench Mortar Battery.

160*th Infantry Brigade :* 2/4th Royal West Kent, 2/10th Middlesex, 21st Punjabis, 110th Mahratta Light Infantry, 160th Trench Mortar Battery.

Note also that the brigades have lost their machine-gun company. Two months later they were reduced to the normal Indian establishment of 1 British and 3 Indian battalions.

In this case we will not follow the changes in the other arms, except to note that the final constitution of a field-artillery brigade on the E.E.F. establishment was three 4-gun batteries, two being 18-pounders and the other two 4·5-inch howitzers. The artillery of the two Indian divisions—3rd (Lahore) and 7th (Meerut)—however, which were transferred from Mesopo-



THE GUARDS MEMORIAL, WHITEHALL

This memorial, too, must be known to a great many people ; for it stands at the eastern edge of St. James's Park, facing the Horse Guards Parade. There are four long inscriptions, and the general design of the monument is more than usually imposing. The Guards Division, formed in September, 1915, was composed of the 1st, 2nd, 3rd, and 4th Grenadiers, the 1st, 2nd, and 3rd Coldstreams, the 1st and 2nd Irish, the 1st and 2nd Scots, and the 1st Welsh Guards. It fought throughout on the Western Front, and marched to Cologne after the Armistice. There is a memorial to the division between Givenchy and Lesbœufs.

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tamia to Palestine before Allenby's final offensive, was allowed to remain on the 6-gun battery organisation.

The divisional artillery probably underwent more changes in the course of the War than any other arm. Owing to the shortage of guns in peace-time, many divisions took the field with a strange assortment of weapons—many of them obsolete. The 15-pounder quick-firer, the 5-inch howitzer, and the 10-pounder mountain gun, were only a few of them.

The Roll of Divisions

Now let us glance through the roll of divisions, reversing the order of precedence in the Army List, and taking the infantry first as they bore the greater part of the heat and burden of the day.

The Guards Division was formed in France from units already serving with the B.E.F., and from others from home. As its name implies, the infantry was made up entirely of Guards battalions. The artillery, engineers, and other units were mostly newly formed. The division served throughout the War on the Western Front. After the Armistice it took part in the march to the Rhine, and was subsequently broken up there.

The 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th, 5th, and 6th Divisions were all pre-war regular divisions serving in various home stations. They crossed to France in August and September, 1914, and, with one exception, remained on the Western Front throughout the War. The exception was the 5th Division, which was transferred to the Italian Front after the Caporetto disaster, and served there between December, 1917, and April, 1918. In the spring of the latter year it was brought back to France to help stem the German offensive, and remained there until the Armistice. All these divisions were broken up after the War, and the first five have since been reconstituted in the various home commands.

The 7th Division was formed after the outbreak of War from unallotted Regular units serving at home, together with some of the first to return from the Overseas garrisons. It landed at Zeebrugge in November, 1914, and helped to cover the retreat of the Belgian Army from Antwerp. Its first battle in France was "First Ypres." It remained on the Western Front until November, 1917, when it also was transferred to the Italian Front, remaining there until the end of the War.

Photo: Central Press.

TO THE 49TH (WEST RIDING) DIVISION AT ESSEX FARM

Essex Farm lies about 2 km. north of Ypres, where the main road to Boesinghe runs close to the Yperlee Canal. Some concrete dugouts, used as a dressing-station between 1915 and August or September, 1917, are still to be seen just north of the British Cemetery. Here many casualties of the 38th (Welsh) and 51st (Highland) Divisions were treated during the early days of "Third Ypres." In the cemetery lie 1,088 United Kingdom, 9 Canadian, 1 German, and 83 unidentified fallen. The 49th Division's memorial stands behind the graves, on the canal-bank. The above is a photograph taken in 1924, since when there have been substantial alterations.

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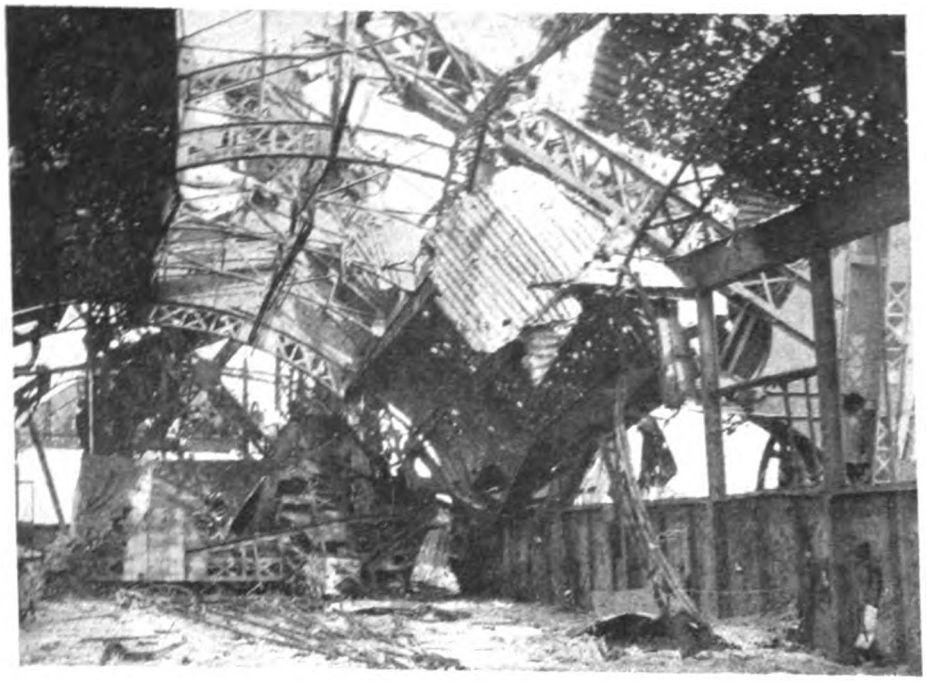

Photo: A. P., Paris.

NEAR BULLY-GRENAY

Here we show the damaged pithead-gear of yet another mine in this oft-illustrated region, every corner of which holds its memories for one man or another who fought in the Loos—Lens sector. The pit is Fosse 11 de Béthune, situated about one mile due east of Bully-Grenay, between the railway and Le Maroc.

The 8th Division was formed at Winchester, after the outbreak of war, from units drawn from Overseas garrisons. It crossed to France early in November, 1914, and fought there for the rest of the conflict.

There were three more Regular infantry divisions formed, after the commencement of hostilities, from units withdrawn from Overseas garrisons—the 27th, 28th, and 29th. But next in numerical order come eighteen New Army divisions—the first instalment of Kitchener's Army.

Photo: A. J. Insall.

INDUSTRY AND AGRICULTURE

Fosse 11 as it appears to-day. Our photographer was lucky in being able to identify it, for such is the maze of mines hereabouts that even the local inhabitants are sometimes uncertain of the correct designations. At the outset of the Loos battle this pit appears to have been exactly on the Franco-British boundary, which was later shifted north.

The "First Hundred Thousand"

The formation of the 9th (Scottish), 10th (Irish), 11th, 12th, and 13th Divisions—the immortal First Hundred Thousand—was authorised in September, 1914. The Regular and Territorial divisions had already been mobilised, and available stocks of uniform, arms, and equipment all but exhausted. The volunteers were thus put to every imaginable shift to carry out their training.

First of Kitchener's Army to proceed on active service was the 9th Division, which embarked for France—appropriately enough—on the 9th May, 1915. It fought on the Western Front throughout the War.

The 10th Division embarked in July, 1915, and saw its first active service in Gallipoli. It was withdrawn from the Peninsula in November of the same year, and sent to Salonica. In August, 1917, it was withdrawn from the Salonica Force and transferred to Egypt and Palestine, where for the rest of the War it formed part of Allenby's army. In March, 1918, it was reconstituted as an Indian division, three battalions being withdrawn from each infantry brigade and replaced by Indian units.

The 11th Division also served in Gallipoli, from July, 1915, to January, 1916. After the evacuation it went to Egypt, and remained there until June, 1916, when it once more embarked, this time for the Western Front. Once arrived in France, it fought there for the rest of the War.

The 12th Division went to France at the end of May, 1915, and fought on the Western Front throughout the War.

The 13th Division landed on Gallipoli at the beginning of July, 1915, and fought there until the evacuation in January, 1916. After spending one month in Egypt, it was ordered to embark for Mesopotamia, where Townshend had been shut up in Kut and the relief force was hard put to it to hold its own. Landing at Basra on the 28th February, 1916, the division was destined to remain on the Mesopotamian front until the Armistice, forming part of an army otherwise composed entirely of Indian divisions.

Scots, Irish, and Others

The formation of the next seven Kitchener divisions, numbered from 14 to 20, was authorised on the 11th September, 1914.

The 14th (Light) Division landed in

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France in May, 1915, and fought on the Western Front throughout the War. In April, 1918, after suffering severe losses, it was reduced to cadre, and reconstituted with fresh battalions two months later.

The 15th (Scottish) Division landed in France in July, 1915, and fought on the Western Front until the end.

The 16th (Irish) Division landed in France in December, 1915, and fought on the Western Front throughout the War. In April, 1918, it also was reduced to cadre, and similarly reconstituted with fresh battalions two months later.

The 17th, 18th, 19th and 20th (Light) Divisions landed in France on various dates during July, 1915, and all fought on the Western Front throughout the War.

The remaining five Kitchener divisions, numbered from 21 to 26, were formed only two days later than their predecessors—on the 13th September, 1914.

The 21st Division landed in France in September, 1915, and fought on the Western Front throughout.

The 22nd Division also landed in France in September, 1915, but remained only two months on the Western Front. In November, 1915, it sailed for Salonica, and fought on that front for the remainder of the War.

The 23rd Division landed in France at the beginning of August, 1915, and fought on the Western Front until November, 1917, when it was despatched to Italy. It remained on the Italian Front until the end.

The 24th Division landed in France at the end of August, 1915, and fought on the Western Front throughout the War.

The 25th Division landed in France at the end of September, 1915, and also fought there for the remainder of the War. In June, 1918, it was reduced to cadre, but three months later it was once more in the line, having been reconstituted with fresh battalions.

The 26th Division fought in France from September, 1915, to January, 1916, when it embarked for Salonica. It fought on that front for the remainder of hostilities.

The Last of the Regulars

We now come to the last three Regular infantry divisions, formed from troops withdrawn from Overseas garrisons.

The 27th Division was constituted in October, 1914, and landed in France two months later. It fought on the Western Front until the end of November, 1915, when it was transferred to Salonica. There it stayed until the Armistice, when it was withdrawn from Macedonia to Constantinople. December, 1918, found the division once more on the move, and by January, 1919, all the units had arrived at Batum, on the Black Sea. They remained there until the withdrawal of the last British troops from Transcaucasia in August, 1919, when the division was disbanded.

Photo: A. P., Paris.

DEMISE OF A MINE

The pithead-gear lying in this embarrassingly recumbent position belongs to the large mine just south of Courrières, a village situated 9 km. east-north-east of Lens, and in enemy hands from the early part of October, 1914, until the 13th of the same month four years later. The photograph was taken on November 14th, 1918.

Photo: A. J. Insall.

AT WORK AGAIN

The Courrières mine is situated on the eastern side of the main road, which is that connecting Lille with Arras *via* Hénin-Liétard. To-day this is a region once more throbbing with industry, the population of Courrières alone being well above 5,000. There are a few British graves in the Communal Cemetery.

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The 28th Division crossed to France in January, 1915, three months after it had been formed. It fought on the Western Front until the end of October, 1915, when it was transferred to Egypt. A month later it once more embarked, this time for Salonica, where it fought for the rest of the War. By the 30th September, 1918, the date of the Armistice with Bulgaria, the division had reached Trnovo. It was withdrawn in October, and sent to occupy the Dardanelles forts. With many changes in its composition, it remained in and around Constantinople until the end of the Chanak crisis, nor was it finally disbanded until 2nd October, 1923, when the last British transport sailed for home after the signing of peace with Turkey. The 28th Division had maintained its identity through nine years of war and rumours of war.

The 29th Division was formed a few weeks later than the 28th. It sailed from England in March, 1915, and, after a short stay in Egypt, went to the Dardanelles, where it won imperishable fame in the first landing. Following the evacuation of the Peninsula, it went on, after another short stay in Egypt, to France, and fought on the Western Front for the rest of the War. In May, 1918, it was reduced to cadre, and reconstituted with fresh battalions a month later.

"Fred Karno's" Final Batch

We now come to a group of twelve more New Army divisions, numbered from 30 to 41. These were the final batch of "Kitchener" divisions, the grand total of which amounted to no less than thirty.

The 30th, 31st, 32nd, 33rd, 34th, 35th, and 36th Divisions were formed at the beginning of November, 1914. All except the 36th (Ulster)—the nucleus of which consisted of Carson's volunteers—were broken up into independent brigades whilst still undergoing their training at home in the fourth month of their existence, and reconstituted, with the same numbers, a little less than a month later. They embarked on various dates between October, 1915, and January, 1916. The 31st Division spent two months in Egypt at the commencement of its career; but, with this exception, all fought on the Western Front throughout the War. In May, 1918, the 30th and 34th Divisions were reduced to cadre after suffering severe casualties, and reconstituted with fresh battalions.

The remaining five New Army divisions were formed in December, 1914. These were the 37th, 38th (Welsh), 39th, 40th, and 41st Divisions. They also underwent various changes whilst still under training at home. The 37th landed in France in July, 1915; the 38th (Welsh) in December, 1915; the

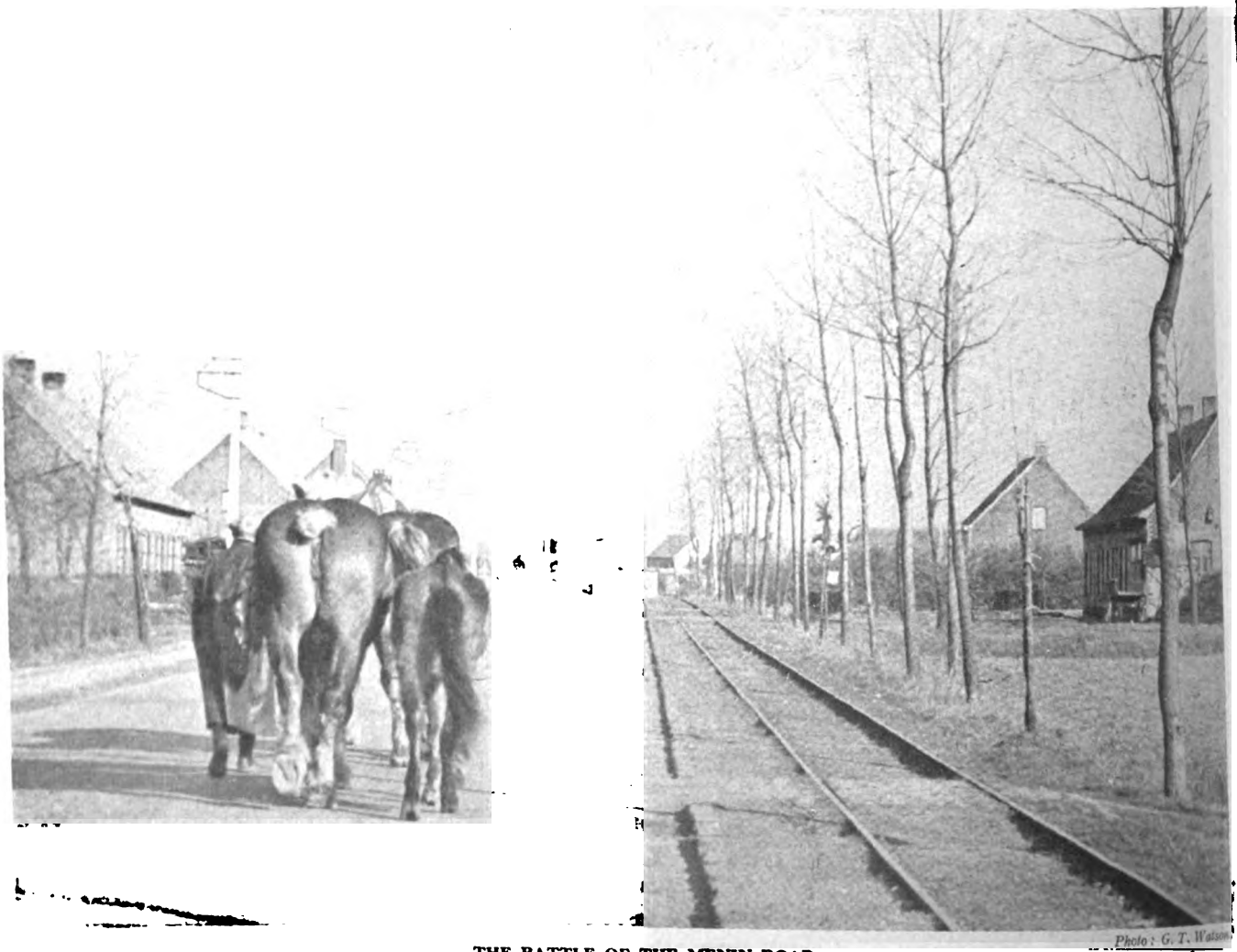

Photo: G. T. Watson

THE BATTLE OF THE MENIN ROAD

This modern photograph of the "road of roads," taken within a few hundred yards of Glencorse Wood and even nearer to Inverness Copse, shows the locality in which the Battle of the Menin Road, or Menin Road Ridge, was fought between September 20th and 25th, 1917. The houses are part of the hamlet of Veldhoek, midway between Gheluvelt and Hooge.

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39th in March, 1916; the 40th in June, 1916; and the 41st in May, 1915.

All five fought throughout the War on the Western Front, with the exception of the 41st, which was in Italy for three months from November, 1917. The 39th and 40th were both reduced to cadre in May, 1918, but their remnants remained in France. The remains of the 40th were employed on garrison duty behind the lines until the end of the War.

We now come to the divisions of the Territorial Army, of which there were fourteen in existence in pre-war days. Their men had enlisted only for home service. But, when called upon, on the outbreak of war, to volunteer for foreign service, there were very few who held back.

The 42nd (East Lancashire) Division had the proud distinction of being the first complete Territorial division to embark for foreign service. It sailed for Egypt in September, 1914, and completed its training in that country. At the end of April, 1915, it had its first taste of active service in Gallipoli. Returning to Egypt in January, 1916, it fought at the battle of Romani in August, 1916. In February, 1917, the division embarked for France, and fought through the remainder of the War on the Western Front.

Indian Garrison Divisions

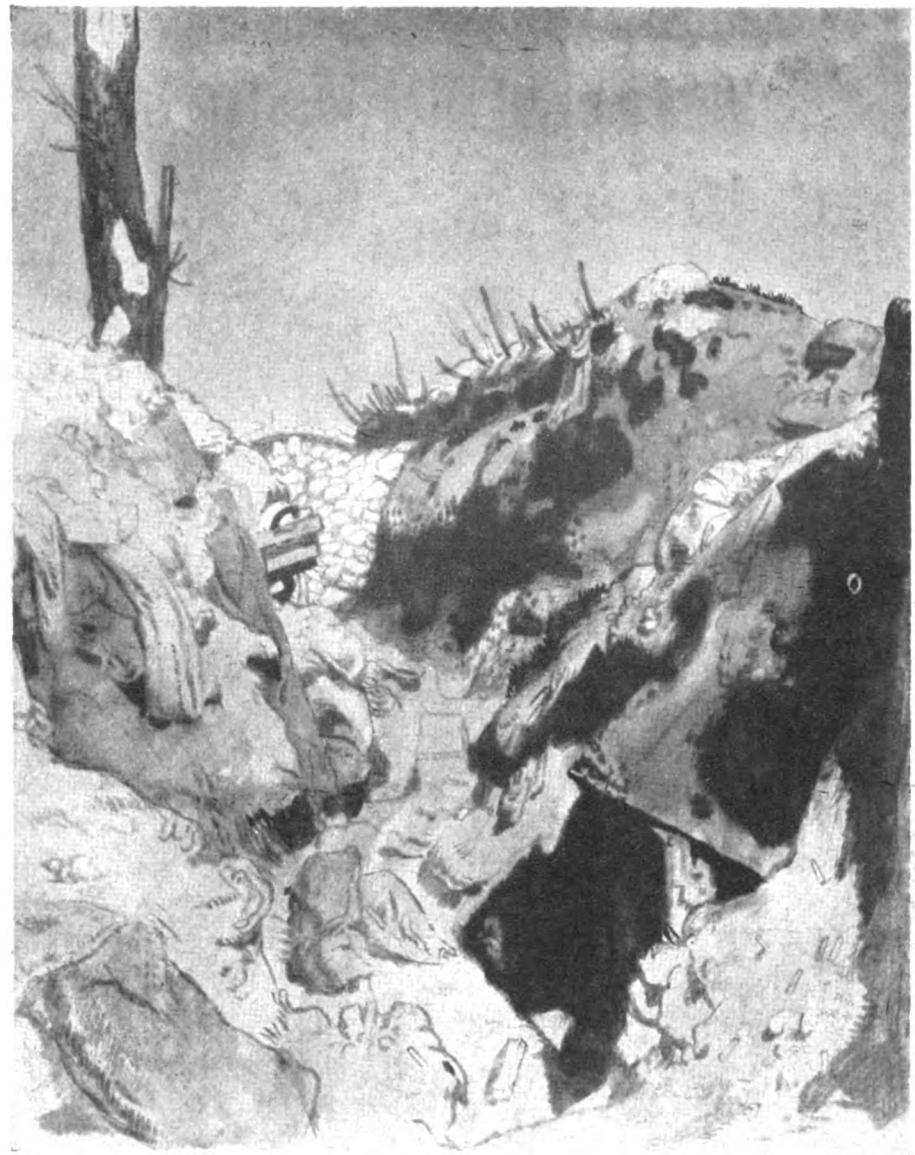
The 43rd (Wessex) and 44th (Home Counties) Divisions mobilised in August, 1914, and also undertook the foreign service obligation. Together with the 45th (2/Wessex) Division—the 2nd Line of the 43rd, formed in October, 1914—they both embarked before the end of 1914. None of them, however, was destined to see active service as a division. They went straight to Indian and other Overseas garrisons, to take over from the Regular units which were sent home to form the 27th, 28th, and 29th Divisions.

After completing their training, complete units—battalions and artillery brigades—were sent to Mesopotamia, Egypt, Aden, and elsewhere to join Indian brigades and divisions, while their best officers and men were used for supplying drafts to fill the gaps caused by casualties in other and more united divisions on the various fronts. These three fine Territorial divisions performed an essential service, if not a spectacular one.

The 46th (North Midland), 47th (2nd London), 48th (South Midland), 49th (West Riding), 50th (Northumbrian), and 51st (Highland) Divisions—all pre-war first-line Territorial divisions—went out to France in the spring of 1915, after completing their training at home. Like all the T.F. divisions, they were known at first by their Territorial designations, and were only later allotted divisional numbers for the sake of convenience.

These six divisions fought on the Western Front throughout the War, with two small exceptions. The 46th Division was withdrawn from the line and despatched to Egypt in January, 1916, but was recalled to France after having been there a month. The 48th Division was sent from France to Italy in November, 1917, and fought on that front for the remainder of the War. The 50th Division was reduced to cadre in July, 1918, and reconstituted with fresh battalions.

The 52nd (Lowland), 53rd (Welsh), and 54th (East Anglian) Divisions had a more varied career. The 52nd (Lowland) went out in May, 1915, to Gallipoli, and fought on that front until the evacuation in January, 1916. It then fought through all the operations in Egypt and Palestine until April, 1918, when it was withdrawn from Allenby's



From the original in the Imperial War Museum.

"THE ENTRANCE TO A DUG-OUT, BEAUMONT-HAMEL"

One of Sir William Orpen's paintings, of which we reproduced three other examples in the first two volumes of *Twenty Years After*. The heroism and misfortunes of the Newfoundlanders at Beaumont-Hamel, the subsequent capture of the village by the 51st Division, and indeed all the tragic history of the place in 1916, are well known and well remembered. But it must be recollected that in March, 1918, also, there was a "mill" here to be gone through; and the stubborn defence put up by the 2nd Division and the New Zealanders on the 26th of that month was fully in the tradition of the earlier displays of valour.

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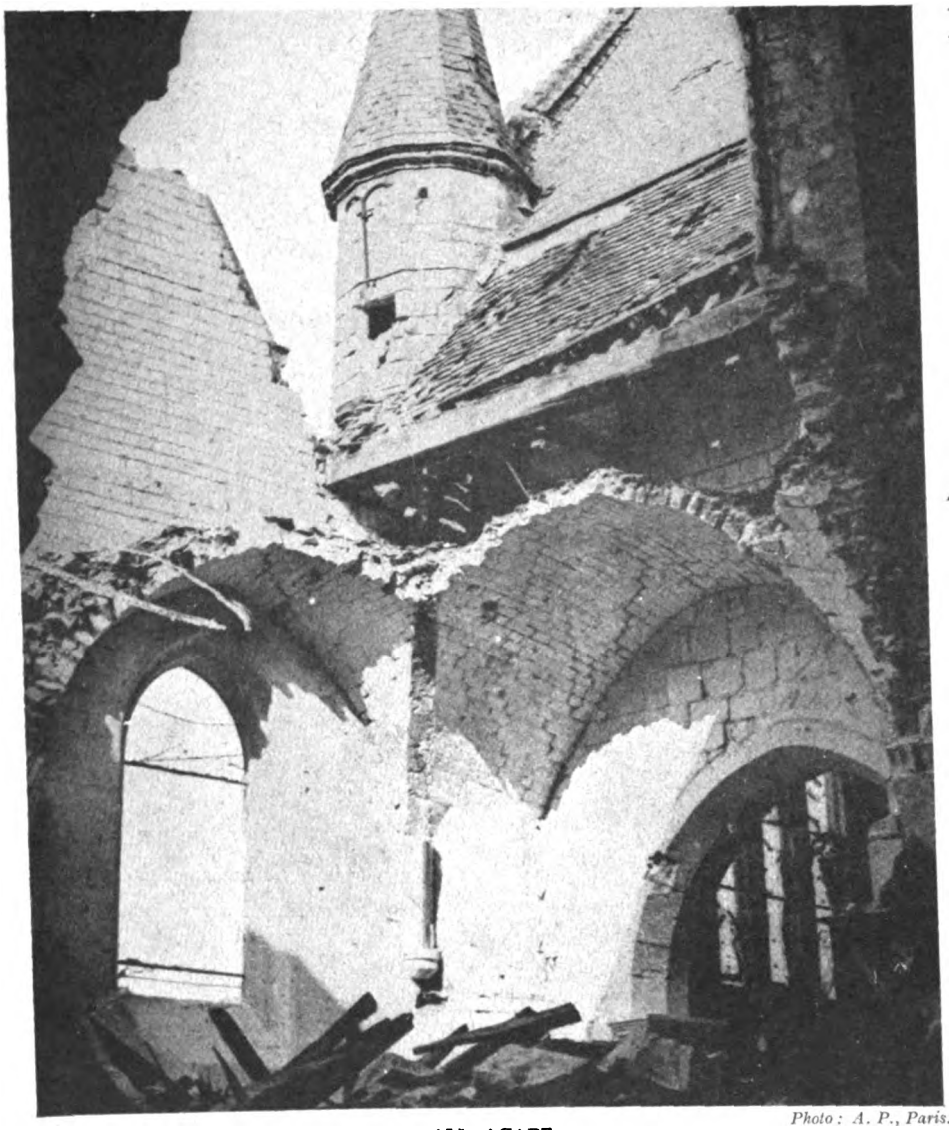

Photo: A. P., Paris.

ALL AGAPE

The peculiar view which has here been obtained by the camera shows a corner of the church of Mézières, of which another aspect appeared recently on page 534. The present photograph was taken on the same date as the earlier picture—namely, August 13th, 1918, immediately following the Allied recapture. In the final advance the Franco-British boundary ran past the northern outskirts of the village, which therefore fell into French hands.

command and sent to France. Through the last months of the War it fought on the Western Front.

The 53rd (Welsh) Division also saw its first fighting in Gallipoli. After the evacuation, it returned to Egypt and fought through the remainder of the War there and in Palestine. In March, 1918, nine of its British battalions were withdrawn, and their places taken by Indian units. The 54th (East Anglian) Division also had its baptism of fire on the Gallipoli Pensinula, and saw out the War in Palestine.

Last of the Pre-war Territorials

The last of the fourteen pre-war Territorial formations—the 55th (West Lancashire) and 56th (1st London) Divisions—went out to France at the beginning of 1916, and fought on the Western Front for the remainder of the War.

The next batch of divisions—numbered from 57 to 62—were second-line Territorial formations, constituted after the outbreak of War. The 57th (2/West Lancashire), 58th (2/1st London), and 59th (2/North Midland) Divisions all went to France in January and February, 1917, and fought on the Western Front for the remainder of the War. The 59th was reduced to cadre in May, 1918, and its remains were afterwards employed on garrison duty behind the lines.

The 60th (2/2nd London) Division went to France in June, 1916, and fought there until January, 1917. It then went to Salonica, and later on to Egypt and Palestine, where it stayed until the end. Nine battalions were withdrawn in March, 1918, and the division was reconstituted with Indian units.

The 61st (2/South Midland) Division went to France in May, 1916, and the 62nd (2/West Riding) Division in January, 1917. Both saw the War out on the Western Front.

We next come to the 63rd (2/Northumbrian) Division. It was formed at the same time as the other second-line Territorial Divisions, and continued in existence at home until August, 1916, when it was broken up. The number 63 then disappeared from the divisional roll; its place was, however, taken by the Royal Naval Division, the representatives of the Senior Service on land.

This formation was descended from the brigades of Royal Marines and R.N.V.R. ratings which were hastily despatched by Winston Churchill to Antwerp in October, 1914. Having received their baptism of fire, they were withdrawn on the evacuation of Antwerp by the Belgian Army, and returned home to complete their training. March, 1915, saw them once more on their own element, on the way to Gallipoli, where they fought throughout the campaign, returning after the evacuation to France. The division then fought up to the end on the Western Front.

Second-line Formations

We now come to six more Territorial second-line formations: the 64th (2/Highland), 65th (2/Lowland), 66th (2/East Lancashire), 67th (2/Home Counties), 68th (2/Welsh), and 69th (2/East Anglian) Divisions. Like their predecessors, the 47th and the 57th to 62nd, they were formed at the commencement of September, 1914, and their original functions were likewise home defence and draft-finding for their sister-divisions of the Territorial first line. But, unlike their forerunners, this group was kept for its proper job.

The only one that saw active service was the 66th Division, which landed in France in February, 1917, and fought throughout the rest of the War on the Western Front. It was reduced to cadre in April, 1918, and reconstituted with fresh battalions two months later.

The 64th, 67th, 68th, and 69th Divisions were all reconstituted in April, 1918, as purely training-formations. The 65th Division was broken up on the same date.

For some reason the number 70 was

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never allotted to any division. Three more formations—the 71st, 72nd, and 73rd Divisions—were formed at home in November, 1917. None of them saw any active service, and they were broken up at the beginning of January, 1918.

There were two more British infantry divisions—the 74th and 75th. Both were formed in Egypt in March, 1917, the first-named from dismounted Yeomanry regiments, and both spent their whole career on active service. The 74th Division fought in Palestine up to the end of April, 1918, when it was sent to France and saw the War out on the Western Front. The 75th Division remained in Palestine, and was reconstituted in March, 1918.

This brings us to the end of the infantry divisions of the Home Country; but before going on to look at the cavalry and mounted divisions, we will take a glance through the list of Dominion and Indian infantry divisions.

Canadians, Australians, and New Zealanders

The 1st Canadian Division was the only one to be formed in the Dominion, the remainder all being formed overseas. It embarked on October 3rd, 1914, and after spending a few months in England, crossed to France. It fought on the Western Front throughout the War.

The 2nd Canadian Division was formed in England in April, 1915, and went to France in October of the same year. The 3rd and 4th Canadian Divisions were formed respectively in December, 1915, and August, 1916, in France. All four fought throughout the War on the Western Front. The 5th Canadian Division was formed in England in January, 1917. It remained at home, and was used as a training and draft-finding formation until it was broken up in February, 1918.

The 1st Australian Division was formed in Australia in August, 1914. It sailed for Egypt in November of that year, and on arrival underwent four months' training in that country. From April to December, 1915, the division was fighting in Gallipoli. After the evacuation it spent three months in Egypt before being transferred to France. It fought throughout the rest of the War on the Western Front.

The 2nd Australian Division was formed in Egypt in August, 1915, and went on to Gallipoli before it was a month old. After four-and-a-half months on the Peninsula, it returned to Egypt, and then went on to France with the 1st Australian Division.

The 3rd Australian Division was formed in Australia in January, 1916. When it was four months old, it sailed for England, to complete its training. It landed in France in November, 1916, and fought on the Western Front for the rest of the War.

The 4th and 5th Australian Divisions were formed in Egypt in February, 1916, and, after three months' training in that country, went on to France. They fought there until the end of the War.

There were two more infantry divisions from the Antipodes. In January, 1915, there was formed in Egypt the New Zealand and Australian Division. This went to Gallipoli in April, 1915, and fought there throughout the campaign. After the evacuation it was broken up; the Australian units were transferred to form the nucleus of the new 4th Australian Division, and the New Zealand components became the nucleus of the New Zealand Division. This went to France in April, 1916, and fought throughout the rest of the War on the Western Front.

The Indian Divisions

On the outbreak of War there were nine Indian divisions. The 1st and 2nd

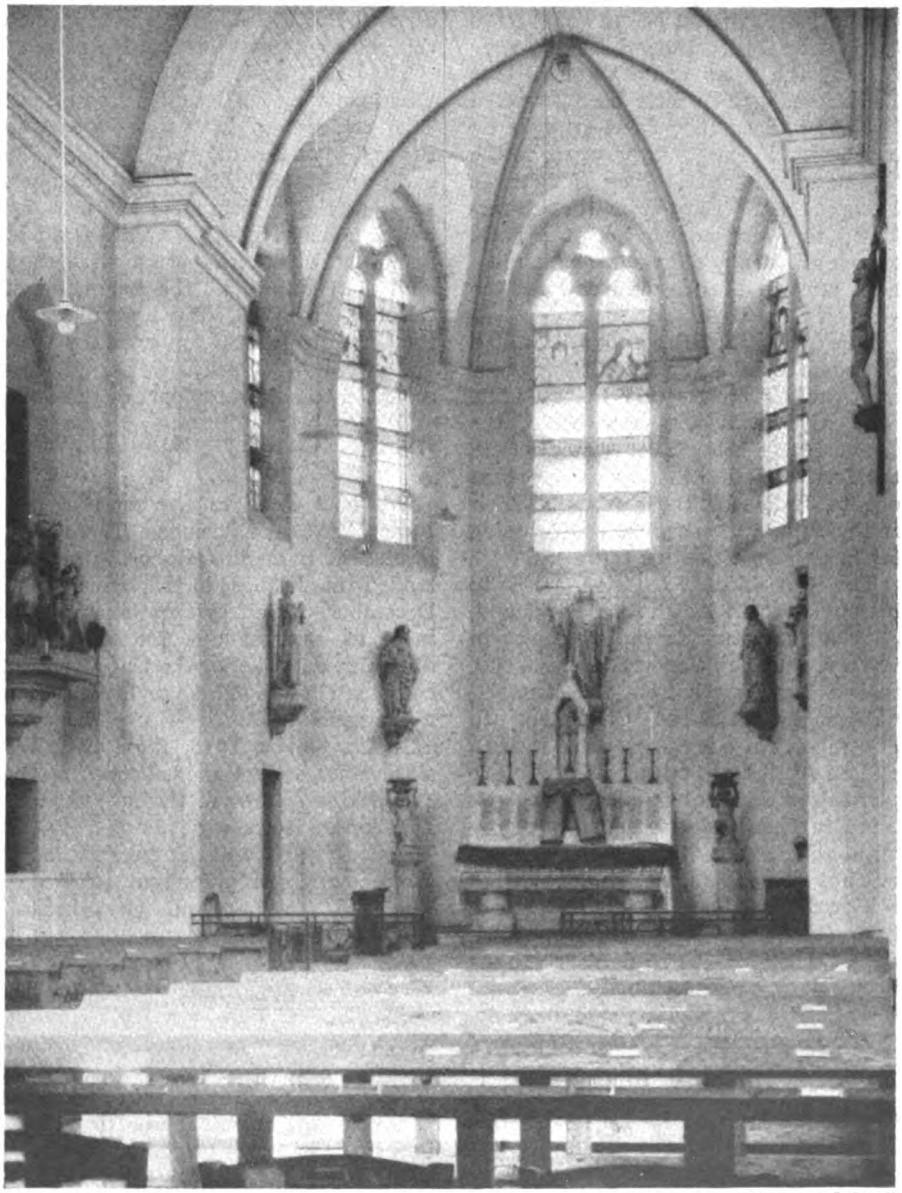

Photo: A. J. Insall.

THE INTERIOR RESTORED

The small available supply of information concerning Mézières during the Four Years has almost all been expended in our earlier captions. Since the British *Official History* is incomplete, the French is not very detailed, and almost every other work deals with the War—naturally enough—from the standpoint of men rather than of places, it is frequently impossible to discover as much concerning one particular and perhaps insignificant spot as those who knew it would like to read.

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Indian Divisions were stationed in peace-time on the North-West Frontier. A European war did not absolve us from the necessity of guarding this frontier, and none but trained troops could be used for the job. These two fine divisions therefore remained on the frontier throughout the War.

Let us take next the 3rd and 7th Indian Divisions, which fought together as a corps throughout the War. They landed in France in September and October, 1914, and fought on the Western Front until the end of 1915, when they were transferred to Mesopotamia.

It had been intended that they should land in Egypt to refit before going on to the Persian Gulf. But, whilst they were at sea, the news came through that Townshend's force had been invested in Kut; and so they went straight on to Basra. From January, 1916, to the beginning of 1918, they fought in Mesopotamia. They were then transferred to Palestine, to take the place of two of Allenby's divisions which had been sent to France, and saw out the War on that front.

The 4th, 5th, 8th, and 9th Indian Divisions remained in India throughout the War. Their Regular British units were withdrawn and sent home, the vacant places being taken by units from the Territorial divisions which were sent out to India for the purpose. Their Indian units were used for draft-finding for battalions on active service.

The 6th Indian Division went to Mesopotamia in November, 1914, and, after a year's uninterrupted career of victory, under General Townshend, took a hard knock from the strongly-reinforced Turks at Ctesiphon. In December, 1915, it was invested in Kut, and on April 29th, 1915, was obliged to surrender. Most of the battalions captured in Kut were subsequently reconstituted, but the 6th Division as such was not reformed until after the War.

The 10th and 11th Indian Divisions were formed in Egypt in December, 1914. They saw some fighting on the Suez Canal, and remained there until early in 1916, when they were broken up.

The 12th Indian Division was formed in Mesopotamia in March, 1915. It fought on that front until April, 1916, when it was broken up. A number of its battalions were with Townshend in Kut.

The number 13 was not taken up by any Indian division. The 14th and 15th Indian Divisions were both formed in Mesopotamia in May, 1916, and fought throughout the rest of the War on that front—the 14th on the Tigris, and the 15th on the Euphrates.

The 16th Indian Division was formed in India in March, 1916, but never left that country. The 17th and 18th Indian Divisions were formed in Mesopotamia at the end of 1917 from units sent out from India. Both formations fought in Mesopotamia until the end of the War.

Cavalry Formations

We now come to the cavalry and mounted divisions. Before the War there were no cavalry formations in existence in our Army, either at home or in India, larger than the brigade. A cavalry division was formed on mobilisation, and went to France with the original B.E.F. As others were formed this became the 1st Cavalry Division.

The 1st, 2nd, and 3rd Cavalry Divisions were all Regular formations. The 1st, as we have said, went to France with the original B.E.F. The 2nd was formed in France in September, 1914, at the beginning of the advance to the Aisne. The 3rd was formed at home, at about the same time, and landed in France at the beginning of October, 1914. All three remained on the Western Front throughout the War, and were frequently employed dismounted to hold some part of the line.

Indian Cavalry and Mounted Divisions

We now come to the 1st and 2nd Indian Cavalry Divisions. These were formed in India in October, 1914, and landed in France in November and December. Their composition was the same as that of the British cavalry divisions, except that the brigades were composed of one British and two Indian regiments.

In November, 1916, these two divisions were renumbered, becoming the 4th (Indian) and 5th (Indian) Cavalry Divisions. Both were broken up in February, 1918, and the greater part of their component units sent to Egypt. The 4th (Indian) and 5th (Indian) Cavalry Divisions came to life again in Palestine in August, 1918, and saw the War out on that front.

Another Indian cavalry division, which was never numbered, was formed in Mesopotamia in December, 1916. It remained in existence on that front until October, 1918, when it was broken up into its constituent brigades.

The 1st Mounted Division, composed of Yeomanry regiments, was formed at home in September, 1914. It continued in existence at home until August, 1916, when its horses were withdrawn and it was turned into the 1st Cyclist Division. It was finally broken up in December, 1916.

The 2nd Mounted Division was formed at home in September, 1914. In April, 1915, it was sent to Egypt, and in August, 1915, leaving its horses behind, went on to the Dardanelles. There it fought dismounted until the beginning of December, 1915, when it was withdrawn to Egypt and broken up a month later.

The 2/2nd Mounted Division was formed at home as a second-line formation in March, 1915. A year later it was renumbered the 3rd Mounted Division, and in August, 1916, changing its title once more, took over the designation of the 1st Mounted Division—which, as we have seen, had been turned into a cyclist division. In June, 1917, it, too, lost its horses, and became The Cyclist Division, the other two cyclist formations having by then been broken up.

The 4th Mounted Division was formed at home in March, 1916. By August it had lost its horses and become the 2nd Cyclist Division. It was broken up in November, 1916, at the same time as the 1st Cyclist Division.

A Multi-named Formation

In June, 1917, a Yeomanry Mounted Division was formed in Egypt. It fought on the Palestine front for the remainder of the War, undergoing various changes of name. In April, 1918, it was amalgamated with some of the Indian units of the former 4th (Indian) Cavalry Division, and renamed the 1st Mounted Division—the old formation of that name serving at home having, as we have said, become the Cyclist Division.

In August, 1918, it was renamed once more, this time taking up the designation of the deceased 4th (Indian) Cavalry Division. These many changes of title did not affect its fighting capacity.

We next come to the Imperial Mounted Division, which was formed in Egypt in February, 1917, out of Yeomanry and Australian units. Four months later its Yeomanry units were withdrawn, and it changed its name to The Australian Mounted Division. Under this title it fought through the rest of the Palestine campaign.

The Australian and New Zealand Mounted Division, with which we bring our catalogue of the divisions of the Great War to a close, was formed in Egypt in March, 1916, and without changing its designation, fought to the end on the Palestine front.

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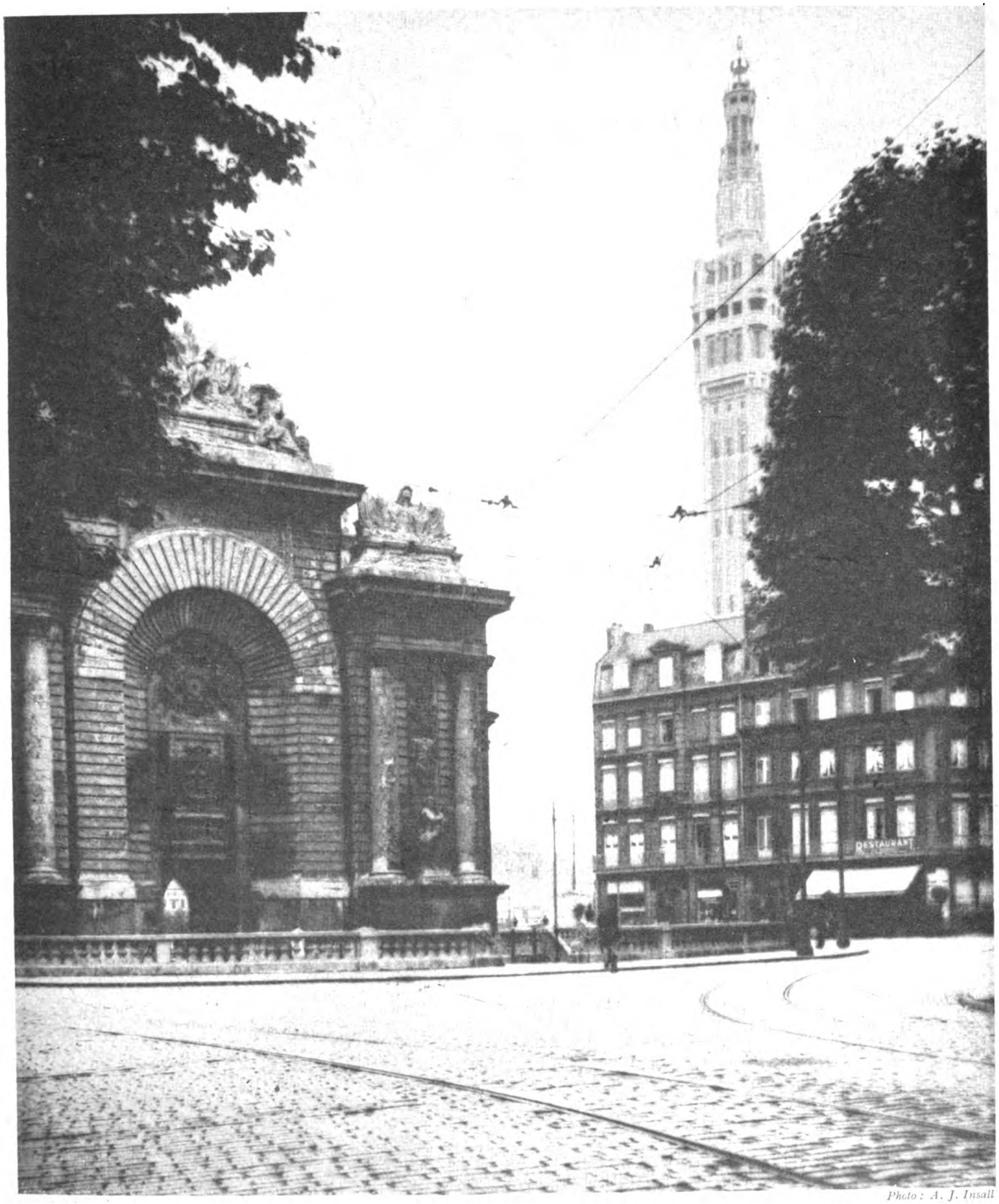

Photo: A. J. Insall

THE PORTE DE PARIS, LILLE

A well-known view of this great industrial town, including a glimpse of the Belfry on the right. German cavalry entered Lille on August 26th, 1914, and its defenders abandoned it the following day. Bombarded twice in October, it then settled down to an uneventful history until April, 1916, when a forcible impressment of workers was inaugurated, batches of 1,400—men and women in equal proportion—being deported daily. The town was not released from bondage until October 17th, 1918, when the Fifth Army entered it in triumph. To-day, with a population of 201,000, it is the sixth-largest city of France.

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CHAPTER XLII

RUSSIA: THE BALTIC PROVINCES

This, the concluding chapter concerned with Great Britain and her Russian adventures, covers the period during which a situation of extreme delicacy prevailed in those provinces of the old Russian Empire which lie nearest to Germany. In some respects the narrative is of a more interesting character than those that have gone before, in that to a considerable extent it deals with the experiences of the writer, who was concerned with the events described. As has already been emphasised, the labour-pains undergone by Russia at the birth of the new régime were severe. The growth and development of this sturdy youngster continues to attract the attention of an uneasy world, and it is therefore not unimportant that the perplexities of these difficult early years should be fully understood.

WHEN the Crusaders were driven out of Acre, the Teutonic Knights—the third of the three great Christian orders of knighthood—changed their headquarters, first to Venice, and then to Marienburg on the Vistula. From that point they proceeded by invitation to conquer, occupy, and christianise East Prussia. Later, they absorbed the Brotherhood of the Sword, an order of knighthood occupying the eastern shores of the Baltic. Consequently, by the end of the thirteenth century, their domains stretched from the Oder to the Gulf of Finland.

Lithuania the Pagan

Only Lithuania refused to be conquered either by sword or creed, and remained stoutly independent and pagan. In 1386, the Grand Duke Stanislas Jagellon of Lithuania married the fair Hedwig of Poland, and the two realms, normally at war, became one. Together, they fell upon the Teutonic Knights, and completely defeated them—the field of Tannenberg, rendered famous again by Hindenburg 500 years later, being the scene of their exploits.

The effects of this victory were far-reaching. Prussia was secularised, and, until three centuries ago, remained a fief of Poland. The great Order itself never recovered. The Knights discarded their monastic vows, married, and became hereditary nobles; and their descendants up to the Great War formed the land-owning class in the Baltic Provinces. They furnished Russia with some of her soundest statesmen and soldiers, but they retained their family connection with Germany and with the language and culture of that country—ties which placed a considerable strain upon their loyalty in 1914.

For a spell the Swedes ruled the Baltic. With them served many Scotsmen and a few Irish, whose traces are to be found along the coast in such names as Melville, Balfour, and O'Reilly. During the sway of the Swedes, the peasantry, until then treated as serfs, were given an uplift, and, for the succeeding two centuries, steadily fought for position. At the outbreak of the Great War, their top layer had emerged as an educated middle class, conscious of nationalities and ambitious of power.

The Baltic Provinces proper were Esthonia, lying to the west of Petrograd and looking on its northern flank over the Gulf of Finland; Latvia (or Lettland), built out of the former provinces of Livonia and Courland, and containing the great port of Riga and the naval base of Libau; and Lithuania, whose southern borders marched with those of East Prussia.

The War had treated these States very hardly, especially Lithuania, which lay nearest to the principal battlefields. The monstrous Russian Army had swept over the Lithuanian lands. Ill-administered, and short of all necessities, it had devoured Lithuanian produce and appropriated Lithuanian horses. Retiring, it had thought fit to lay a desert in front of the advancing foe, even sweeping up the inhabitants as Wellington had done when falling back before Massena on Torres Vedras. Incompetent in battle, it displayed a mastery in the art of destruction. The fine harbour works and storehouses of Riga were rendered useless, and a similar fate befell those at Windau.

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

AMID THE FORESTS OF FINLAND

With this chapter on the happenings along Russia's north-western frontier, and the early fortunes of the four new-born states of Poland, Lithuania, Latvia, and Esthonia, we complete the geographical circle which we began to trace at Murmansk. Above we see gun crews and riflemen aboard an armoured train in Finland, the connecting-link, as it were, between the Murmansk and Baltic operations.

German Aspirations

The pursuing Germans, as they won their way to the Gulf of Finland, took

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Photo: Imperial War Museum.

IN THE STREETS OF HELSINKI

A ceremonial march in May, 1918, of the Finnish White Guard through the streets of Finland's capital, Helsinki—better known to the British under its old name of Helsingfors. Finland proclaimed its independence of Russia in 1917, following the Revolution; but order was not properly restored, nor relations between the two countries finally adjusted, until the Treaty of Dorpat in 1920. Under the old régime Finland had been an autonomous grand duchy in the Russian empire.

what was left. Then, looking to the future, they began to reorganise and develop the three countries. At the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk, they sliced them from Russia, with a view to renewing Teutonic rule over them.

The states rejoiced at first in freedom from the thraldom of Russia. Esthonia proclaimed her independence in November, 1917, Latvia and Lithuania theirs early in 1918. The Germans encouraged these nationalist aspirations, but at the same time instilled a fear of Bolshevik invasion, to be countered only by German arms. They definitely discouraged the creation of national armies, and the only Lettish formation allowed was the Baltic Landeswehr, which consisted mainly of Balts (Letts of German origin) trained and partly officered by Germans.

They had no intention of permitting aspirations to pass from the ideal to the real; for they meant their occupation to be permanent, and many of their chiefs had already selected the estates they would appropriate after the War. The inhabitants soon realised that the Russian yoke was merely to be exchanged for a German one, and that true independence was as far distant as ever.

To the north, Finland, imbued like its neighbours with a passion for independence, was invaded by the Bolsheviks in January, 1918. The dregs of the populace rose and sided with the invaders. A Red Terror, gruesome beyond description, followed. Then von der Goltz, with a German division, landed, quickly threw out the Communists, and conquered the country. A White Terror of revenge, not much less gruesome than the Red, ensued; and then Finland settled down under Generals Mannerheim and von der Goltz until the Armistice, when the Germans withdrew. The part played by von der Goltz and the White Finns in threatening Murmansk has already been described; and the connection indicates that the reader has completed the circle in his study of post-war Russian operations.

The unexpected defeat of the Central Powers opened prospects of real independence to the States in the eastern Baltic. The victory of the democratic nations, and the stress laid upon self-determination, seemed to justify the highest hopes in that direction. But a long and painful period was yet to lapse before their realisation.

Trotsky Succeeds in his Aim

Trotsky, who was no mean strategist, proposed to take every advantage of the situation created by the Armistice, in order to gain for the new Soviet Republic the ancient boundaries of Russia. While maintaining an active defence against Maynard and Ironside, he hoped to interpose a wedge between

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Photo: E.N.A.

A VIEW OF RIGA

The city of Riga, generally associated in the Anglo-Saxon mind with a certain young lady who went for a ride on a tiger, is the capital of the post-war Republic of Latvia. Formerly the centre of north-west Russia's export trade, it suffered heavily in the collapse of 1917-20, and has not fully recovered even yet. It is a historic and comely place, preserving many buildings from the period when it was a great Hanseatic town: a preservation somewhat remarkable, considering that it was an object of strife between Russia, Poland, and Sweden for several hundred years, and that in the Great War it became the scene of heavy fighting. The Germans took it in 1917; in 1918 it was proclaimed the new state's capital; in 1919 it fell to the Bolsheviks; and it was recaptured by the Whites the same year. The present view shows a panorama of the city with the River Dwina in the background. This river debouches into the Gulf of Riga, a great inlet of the Baltic nearly 100 miles long and 60 miles broad at its widest.

the retiring Germans and the Allies, who might be expected to move their forces eastward from the Baltic; and he succeeded in his purpose. The German troops, now themselves infected with Bolshevism, fell back toward their own borders, handing over in their retreat a large part of their equipment to their pursuers.

Once again "Baltenland" suffered a succession of depredations. In January, 1919, the Bolsheviks captured Riga, and later Dvinsk, Vilna, and Minsk. As usual, the dregs of the populace greeted them, and revolting atrocities were perpetrated.

The German authorities regarded the advance of the Red Army as a gift from the Gods.[1] It forced the Lettish Governmen to ask their help, and thus gave them the opportunity to impose conditions, the most important of which was that any German fighting for Latvia against the Bolsheviks for a period of not less than four weeks would be entitled to Lettish citizenship—a condition enlarged later to include a guarantee of settlement on the land.

It was hoped that this would induce large numbers of Germans to volunteer and that the German hold on the country would be much strengthened thereby. Winnig—the German Minister to the Baltic Provinces—discussing with four friends the dreadful burden imposed on his country by the Versailles Treaty, asked them: "What remains for us?" Four voices replied: "The East. We must hang on to that firmly."[1] What Winnig and his friends failed to understand was that whatever promises the Lettish Government might make, the Allies were not likely to allow their late enemies to colonise Russia.

The Lettish Government were not alone in fearing the Red advance. Versailles became equally anxious about it, and was afraid of a union between the Bolsheviks and the German Spartacists. Clemenceau therefore suggested, and Lloyd George agreed, that a cordon of small States should be created, whose national armies might serve to insulate Europe from Bolshevism.

Germans Bidden to Remain

Orders were accordingly issued from Versailles suspending the German evacuation in order that the Red Army might be stopped long enough to admit of the formation of national armies.

[1] August Winnig, *Heimkehr*, p. 59.

[1] *Ibid.*, p. 49.

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Actually, that would not have been possible, had it not been for the determination of Winnig and others to hold the country, not for the benefit of the Allies, but for that of Germany. Soldiers' Councils were in charge, and were allowing a disorderly retreat to Germany. The old Army staffs managed, however, to keep a tiny rearguard, which, supported by the Baltic Landeswehr and by such volunteers as had been recruited, was able to slow down the unenterprising advance of the Red Army.

In the meantime the Esthonians, who had been supplied with arms by the British squadron and were assisted by a White Russian army (the North-West Army) under Rodzianko, threw the Bolsheviks out of Esthonia, and even occupied a considerable tract of enemy country. The Esthonians and the White Russians were, however, continually at loggerheads, because their aims were mutually incompatible—the one being complete independence, and the other a united Russia.

The situation in the north was at this time particularly favourable to the anti-Red forces. The Finnish outposts were within twenty miles of Petrograd, and Finland was now largely under Allied influence. A Finnish advance would threaten not only Petrograd, but also the rear of the forces opposing Maynard and Ironside. A combined operation by Finns, Esthonians, and the N.W. Army, supported in the Gulf of Finland by the British squadron, might have had far-reaching results. The occasion was, however, allowed to pass.

The success of the Esthonians helped to hold up the Red advance through Latvia. Moreover, von der Goltz, the German commander, had taken the measure of the Soldiers' Councils, and volunteers were pouring into the country to form the Iron Brigade (later the Iron Division). The military balance in Latvia was therefore being weighed down in favour of the Germans. In April, 1919, through the agency of the Baltic Landeswehr, they deposed the Ulmanis (Socialist) Government and installed a Conservative Government, including Balts. On May 22nd they advanced on Riga and captured it.

Depressed by their Own Success

So easy was their success, and so hurried the departure of the Reds, that some of the Germans became anxious as to their future. "Good Heavens!" cried the commander of the Iron Division; "we have done ourselves down completely by this victory"[1]; and, fearing that the flight of the Bolos would deprive him and his men of their excuse for remaining in the country, he tried to persuade von der Goltz not to pursue the Bolsheviks, but rather to induce them to re-establish their front solidly.

1 Bischoff, *Die Letzte Front*, p. 123.

Photo: E.N.A.

THE PRINCIPAL STREET, LIBAU

Libau, nowadays properly called Liepaja, stands on a sandy strip of land between Lake Liepaja and the Baltic, and is one of Latvia's chief seaports. During the War it was the scene of many happenings. Three times heavily bombarded by the Germans, between August 2nd, 1914, and March 31st, 1915, it was occupied by them on May 7th in the latter year, and was later visited by Admiral von Tirpitz. The British naval force which, as related in the accompanying pages, was sent to Libau after the Armistice, arrived on December 3rd, 1918, and left on the 7th.

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Photo: E.N.A.

ON THE LIBAU CANAL

On May 8th, 1915, while fighting was still in progress on the Libau—Vilna railway, a German destroyer was mined just outside the port. Actually there are four harbours, all well provided with quays and storehouses. Libau or Liepaja is of particular interest to these pages, as the author of the present chapter, a former member of the British Mission, was at one time Military Governor of the port.

His view was not accepted. The Baltic Landeswehr, strengthened while in Riga by a big infusion of German combat-groups, took up the pursuit. Instead of meeting the Bolsheviks, however, they ran into a Lettish force, which was being organised with a view to reinstating Ulmanis in power.

Civil war ensued. The Balts drove the Letts out of Wenden. Then Esthonian troops came up in support of the Letts, and a more serious battle seemed imminent. An American representative of the Entente intervened, however, and ordered the Esthonians back. The situation then became for the moment static.

Early in June, the British Government, which, on behalf of the Allies, was extending its political influence over the Baltic States, as France had been doing over Poland, decided to send a military mission there. Sir Hubert Gough, who was placed in charge of it, was given the task of equipping and training the forces of the three States to enable them to stand for themselves against both the Bolshevik and the German. He had at his disposal sufficient staff officers, together with office staffs, to form branch missions in each State.

Gough's first action was to deal with the situation at Wenden. As the Entente intended to support Ulmanis, he ordered the Balts back to Riga. They refused to obey; and then with the concurrence and support of von der Goltz, they planned and executed an operation on a large scale against their opponents. While they attacked in front, the Iron Division, brought up for the purpose, attempted to turn the hostile right flank.

The attack failed disastrously. There was a fear that fresh Lettish troops would issue from Riga and fall upon the Balts' rear. The Landeswehr thereupon surrendered and placed themselves entirely in Gough's hands.

Photo: E.N.A.

VILNA—CITY OF SORROWING

Tragic Vilna, now Wilno, is among the modern "danger spots" of Europe. Captured from the Russians by the Germans in September, 1915, it fell successively into Lithuanian, Red Russian, and Polish hands in 1918, and in January, 1919, was captured from the Poles by the Reds. The latter handed it over to the Lithuanians, and the Poles recognised Lithuanian ownership. But in 1920 a Polish general, acting without Government orders, seized it; and in 1921, by a strange piece of injustice, the Treaty of Riga, which ended the Russo-Polish war, fixed it as Polish. To-day the Lithuanians still regard the historic and beautiful city as their capital; and at every sunset a military ceremony of "mourning" is held on their own side of the frontier.

A Masterly Young Captain

Gough assembled their leaders in their own habitation, the Hall of the Knights at Riga, and, having insisted on the elimination of all German elements from the Landeswehr, gave them the choice of two courses, either to be disarmed and interned, or, under the command of a British officer, to take over a section of the Lettish anti-Red front. They chose the latter alternative, upon which Gough selected the Hon. H. R. L. Alexander,[1] a young captain in the Irish Guards, as their commander.

This officer could speak no word of Russian or German. He was allowed no staff of any kind. Yet he managed to keep his 6,000 men, cavalry, infantry, gunners, and airmen, all strongly anti-British and anti-Lett, at their allotted

[1] Promoted Major-General in a recent Gazette.

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task during the year they were required on the Bolshevik frontier, although they knew that the Socialist Government in their rear was dividing up their properties and ruining their prospects.

Alexander started well by donning the blue-and-white Balt cap and flying the Balt pennant on his car; and, among a hard-bitten lot who had every reason, except a personal one, to wish him ill, he won lasting respect and affection. It was a fine performance, and probably unique.

Gough's next action was to reinstate the Government of Ulmanis. Under cover of the British squadron, the Lettish Minister was landed at Libau, where he and the British Mission received a great ovation. A branch of the Mission was left in Libau to control the situation there, and to train Lettish troops. The remainder proceeded to Riga.

The position in Libau was somewhat involved. There were some seven parties concerned: Lettish nationalists, whose recruits were training in the harbour barracks outside the town; 1,000 White Russians under a Colonel Kapitch; 400 Balts who had not participated in the Esthonian affair; a body of German soldiers who had been turned out of the German Army for various crimes, and who were known to the British as Yellow Jacks on account of their bright yellow uniforms; Communists anxious to bring in the Bolsheviks; Jews of doubtful sympathies; and, finally, about ten miles inland, a strong German force of uncertain intentions. These parties were nearly all bitterly hostile to one another, though they might coalesce into particular groups to achieve particular ends. They kept the town in turmoil and the inhabitants in panic by their constant scrapping.

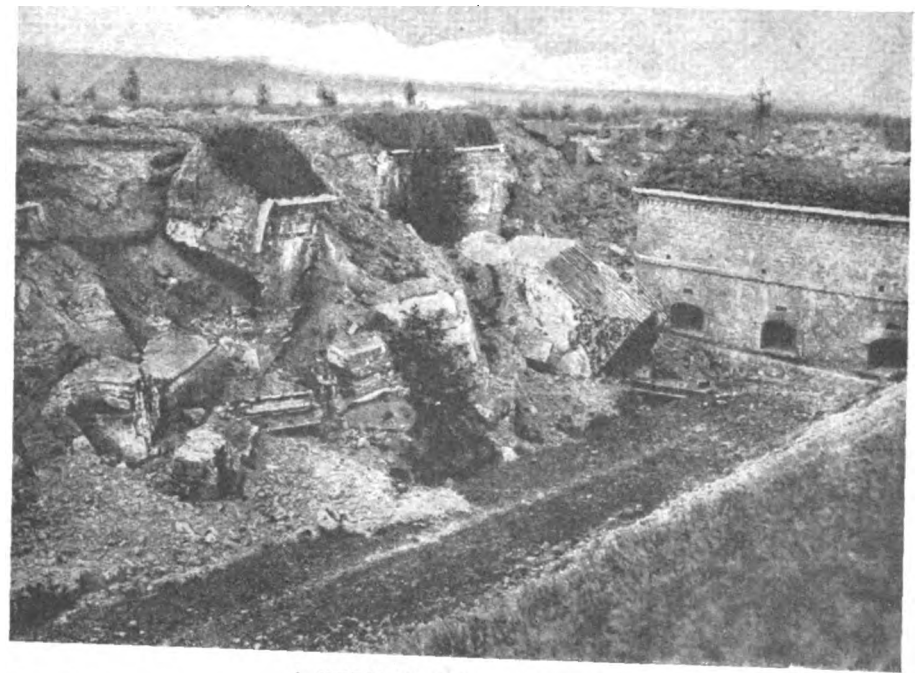
Proclaimed by Sandwichmen

To restore order, the present writer, who was the local representative of the British Mission, proclaimed himself Military Governor, sending round sandwich-men with large notices to that effect. He selected officers (where they existed) from each of the warring parties, and rode with them—a motley troop—round the barracks and posts and then along the outpost-line set against the Germans. He flew both Russian and Lettish flags from his balcony, and, one way or another, managed to keep the factions from each others' throats. The occasional appearance in the harbour of Commodore Duff and his British squadron was perhaps the most potent factor toward peace.

THE "TEMPORARY CAPITAL" OF LITHUANIA *Photo: E.N.A.*

In default of Vilna, the Lithuanians have made Kovno, which in their own tongue is called Kaunas, their capital—or "temporary capital," as they are careful to name it. Kovno stands 60 miles from Vilna on the River Niemen, which is seen above, together with a bridge burnt by the Russians. The city was captured by the Germans, at the second attempt, in August, 1915, and lost nearly all its old buildings in 1918.

Now that there was someone, in the shape of an Allied representative, to whom to complain, bitter complaints began to come in from Windau, which lay about 70 miles to the north of Libau, of the exactions of the German troops



A WRECKED FORT AT KOVNO *Photo: E.N.A.*

This photograph, like that above, shows effects of the "war after the War"—the struggle between Poles, Bolsheviks, White Russians, Germans, and the peoples (often themselves split into factions) of the four new States—Finland, Esthonia, Latvia, and Lithuania. The last named proclaimed her independence in 1918, but it was not recognised by Russia until the Peace Treaty of 1920, nor by the Great Powers until 1922; and even to-day the frontiers are not finally settled, Vilna and Memel being only two of the areas in dispute. Modern Kovno is chiefly characterised by new Government and industrial buildings, though its ancient cathedral has survived. The Niemen is navigable for nine months of the year.

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in garrison there. They were apparently living on the people as freebooters, taking the pick of everything.

I borrowed a destroyer from the Commodore and went to see what could be done. Soon after we had tied up to the quay, two German destroyers tied up close by. The crews had gone Bolshevik, and they and their ships presented a disgusting spectacle. The men appeared not to have washed or shaved for weeks. The decks on which they slouched were thick in coal dust, and the steel was everywhere rusting. As might be expected in the British Navy, our destroyer presented a striking contrast—spick and span, brasses and steel shining brightly in the sun, decks spotless, men smart as paint and clad in the whitest of white duck!

I met the leading citizens and heard their many grievances. I then went to see the German commander—von Cameron, we may call him, as he was a naval captain of Scottish ancestry—to tell him to mend his ways. He was quite polite, acknowledged that he and his men were taking the best of everything, and added that they intended to go on doing so. They knew that they were well off, and that people in Germany were starving.

Last-minute Success

I adopted a moral tone. This was pure robbery. It was, he agreed, pure, pleasant, and profitable robbery, and he and his liked it well. I threatened. I mentioned my destroyer. He capped me with his two destroyers. I hinted at the strength of our Baltic squadron. He said—and it was unfortunately true, though how he knew it I know not—that the British Navy had strict orders not to interfere in affairs on shore.

I withdrew defeated, and made but a poor face to the enquiring townspeople, who looked to me to cure their woes at once. I stayed on searching for a key to the puzzle; but von Cameron had a counter to every one of my thrusts. At the end of a week I could wait no longer, and arranged to embark. On the way to the quay, I went to see him, and drew a bow at a venture. I was sailing for Libau. Thence I would proceed straight to Mitau and report his conduct to the commander there, who had high standards as regarded behaviour in the German Army.

Von Cameron laughed. Von der Goltz was an old friend of his, and knew all about the doings in Windau. But I had seen just the slightest flicker of his eyelids, and I knew that I had won the match. Within five minutes he was cancelling the various obnoxious orders by telephone. A little later he was confirming the cancellation in writing. I left a staff officer behind to ensure that the new instructions were executed, and took my departure.

I paid only one other visit to Windau.

Photo: A. P., Paris.

CROSS-ROADS NEAR ROSIÈRES

A view, taken in September, 1917, of a French O.P. among some shattered houses at a cross-roads on the route from Rosières-en-Santerre to Fouquescourt. This, as its appearance implies, is not one of the numerous main roads serving Rosières, but a by-road leading through Méharicourt. Rosières lies 8 km. west of Chaulnes and 14 km. south of Bray-sur-Somme, and is on the Amiens—Laon railway. It was several kilometres behind the French line even before the First Battle of the Somme.

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IN ROSIÈRES ITSELF *Photo: A. J. Insall.*

Nowadays there are no buildings at the cross-roads where the War view was taken; and as there was nothing to be seen there but dense undergrowth, our photographer took instead a picture of the entry into Rosières, with the Fouquescourt road seen branching off to the left. The now thriving village (it has more than 2,000 inhabitants) was entered for the first and last time by the enemy on March 28th, 1918, when the troops of the 8th Division "were hustled back in some confusion" from positions just in front of it to others just behind (*Official History*). It was recaptured by the British on August 9th.

The Civil Governor of Libau, Behrsin, reported to me that Bolshevism was rampant some 30 miles inland, and begged me to put a stop to it. I had no British officer with me at the time, and dared not leave Libau without one for fear of a renewal of chaos. Behrsin then suggested that I should send my batman, on the grounds that the sight of a British uniform would be sufficient to restore order.

Now Private W—— was an excellent batman, and he and I were very good friends. But, like many another good man, he did enjoy his glass. To send him alone into the blue, where gallons of vodka would be presented to him on bended knee, would almost certainly entail his early decease. The matter was settled by the return of one of my staff, which enabled me to get away.

They Wanted British Rule

I borrowed a picquet-boat from the Navy and ran up the Windau river to the disturbed area. The sight of the British sailors, of the trim craft, and of the White Ensign, was quite sufficient. Crowds lined the banks to welcome us, and to implore us to take over the governance of their benighted land.

Curiously enough, all over the Baltic Provinces this request was commonly made. I had constantly to explain that we were fully occupied with our own share of the Earth, that we had no wish to expand further, and that we were in the Baltic only with a view to assisting the races there to rule their own territories.

On June 1st, Versailles had ordered the Germans to evacuate the Baltic Provinces. Von der Goltz agreed to obey, but soon showed that he had no intention of departing. He claimed that the promise of Ulmanis to the German volunteers had been broken. This was true, and gave the Germans a just grievance, which they exploited to the utmost. The Allies had, however, no intention of allowing the Germans to remain, whatever Ulmanis had promised.

So Gough was ordered to press evacuation. The Germans, for their part, tried every kind of device to avoid it. Staged mutinies took place in the Iron Division and in other volunteer corps. The soldiers refused to move. Then, when the Allies brought pressure on the German Government, the latter pretended that it could not influence the mutineers. The Allies countered by insisting that all pay should be stopped. The Government complied, but apparently made an advance of three months' pay just before declaring the stoppage. And so the struggle continued.

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Photo: Imperial War Museum.

HISTORIC GROUND
Some of the terrain near Moreuil, over which French troops and British tanks counter-attacked early in August, 1918, before the general Allied advance. Moreuil lies on the Avre, 19 km. south-east of Amiens, at the intersection of the Amiens–Montdidier and Roye–Ailly roads. The present photograph was taken in 1919.

It is interesting to note that post-War German books are very frank on this subject. "The Government must deny connection with us. Cunning demands that. But they must not let us down. . . . They must provide us with equipment and volunteers."[1]

As the summer wore on, it became clear that the German intention to remain in the Baltic was part of a larger scheme, heavily backed. A new realm was to be built—Baltenland. It was to contain East Prussia (east of the Polish Corridor), Lithuania, Latvia, and perhaps Esthonia. The new State would be completely separate from the old Germany, and would accept none of the punishments and limitations imposed on the latter by the Treaty of Versailles.

Mighty German Ambitions

It would, however, become a training-ground for German youth, and a factory for German munitions. In 25 years, when a new generation would be ready for the cauldron, Germany and Baltenland would unite. Together they would wipe out France, and would renew the struggle with Britain and America.

[1] Winnig, *op. cit.*, pp. 199 and 211.

The plot was camouflaged as a White Russian, anti-Bolshevik movement. A Western Russian Government and Army were formed, with headquarters at Mitau, where they were completely under the control of von der Goltz. The movement was at first associated with the name of Prince Lievin—a prominent landholder in Latvia—who was anxious to raise a White Russian army in the west against the Bolsheviks.

He declined, however, to participate in a scheme which might place his country under the German yoke; and a Caucasian colonel named Bermondt, undeterred by such scruples, took command of the pseudo-Russian army. He was, of course, a mere puppet, who danced to the pulling of German strings.

The whole staff of a German army corps adopted Russian nationality,[1] as

[1] Niessel, *L'Évacuation des Pays Baltiques*, p. 22.

Photo: A. J. Insall.

MOREUIL TO-DAY ACROSS THE MEADOWS
During the two last days of March, 1918, Moreuil and its wood were the scene of some of the most violent fighting in the history of the March Retreat. At the outset, the northern edge of the wood formed the Anglo-French boundary; but during the night of the 29th/30th the French (Groupement Mesple troops) evacuated both wood and village, and the German advance of the 30th found these untenanted. *(Continued opposite.)*

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did a number of formed bodies of German troops, "placing themselves under a Russian commander, while keeping their former chiefs and their former organisation."[1]

The detachment of the Baltic Landeswehr in Libau attempted to break out and join this army; but luckily I got wind of their intention just in time to block all exits. The Balts made a reconnaissance, found that they were shut in, and abandoned the venture.

A few days later they attempted to escape by sea. Fortunately, our squadron happened to be in harbour. They had chartered a ship, however, and most of them had embarked before the news reached me. I sent for the leaders. Unhappily, I was alone in my office when four of them, fully armed, arrived. I asked them to explain their present and previous attempts at departure without my consent. They derided my authority. They said that their men were practically all on board, that they held every approach to the quays, and that they expected to sail within the hour.

1 *Ibid.*, p. 23.

A Tight Corner

I said "No," that I was Governor, and that no one left the fortress without my permission. They laughed at me, and enquired how I was going to stop them. I replied that I had arranged with the Commodore to sink their ship if they tried to leave the harbour. They were furious, and rather frightened me by the threatening attitude they assumed. My guard had asked permission a few days previously to disarm visitors before they were allowed to enter my office. I had refused, and was now sorry. However, I managed to conceal my fears, and the danger passed away.

An hour later, I went down to inspect their ship. That made them still more angry. Their arrangements had been made with German thoroughness, and were quite interesting, for the unit included a section of field guns and a troop of cavalry. I was sure that they hoped to get away by night; so I warned them that their ship would be illuminated by a searchlight from a

MODERN MOREUIL AND ITS SPECTACULAR CHURCH

Photo: A. J. Insall.

(*See previous caption.*) As a precaution, the British 2nd Cavalry Division was sent southward to secure the line through Moreuil Wood, as far as the village. The first troops to reach the wood were the Canadian Cavalry Brigade; and there the R. Canadian Dragoons and Lord Strathcona's Horse led a brilliant attack which, despite the fiercest opposition, secured all the northern part of the copse. The 3rd Cavalry Brigade then joined the struggle, and, together with 100 men of the 2nd West Yorks (8th Division), cleared the southern part too, but were later driven out. This was not by any means the end of the contest hereabouts, but space forbids an account of the subsequent fighting, in which the French were chiefly prominent. It is noteworthy that General Foch himself wrote specially to congratulate the survivors of the Canadian Cavalry Brigade for their work on this day.

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Photo: Imperial War Museum.

A HEAVY-GUN PARK

The heavy-gun park here illustrated is one at Heilly, a village on the north bank of the Ancre, 1 or 2 km. south of the Amiens—Albert road. An Ordnance gun park of reserve equipment, under the control of G.H.Q., was allotted to each Army for the rapid replacement of guns, carriages, and machine guns.

REPAIRING GUNS

The lower picture shows guns undergoing repair at a travelling workshop on the Beauval—Amiens road, April 8th, 1918. This date, it will be observed, falls just between the end of the Somme offensive and the beginning of the Lys "push." Mobile workshops and armourers' shops were an Ordnance provision for light repairs to guns, rifles, instruments, vehicles, and harness.

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

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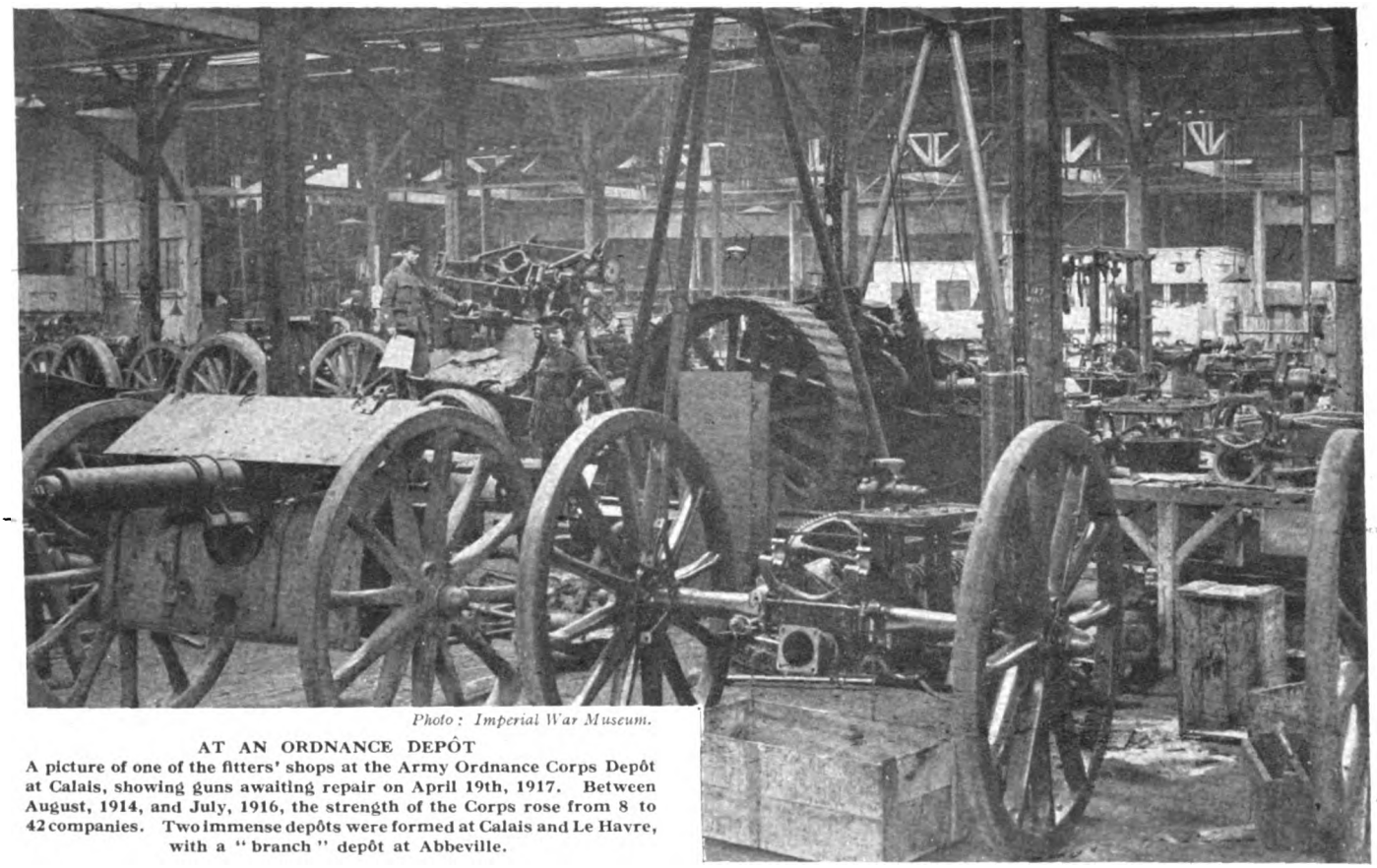

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

AT AN ORDNANCE DEPÔT

A picture of one of the fitters' shops at the Army Ordnance Corps Depôt at Calais, showing guns awaiting repair on April 19th, 1917. Between August, 1914, and July, 1916, the strength of the Corps rose from 8 to 42 companies. Two immense depôts were formed at Calais and Le Havre, with a "branch" depôt at Abbeville.

DISTRIBUTING TOOLS

A scene in the Calais Depôt of the A.O.C., showing women of Queen Mary's Army Auxiliary Corps at work in the tool-distributing shed. Articles supplied by the Ordnance in the first 10 months of 1916 included items so diverse as 1,000,000 "tin hats," 7,000 watches, 2,250,000 bars of soap, 4,000,000 pairs of horseshoes, 12,800 bicycles, and 3,500,000 yards of flannelette.

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

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cruiser during the hours of darkness. Then they sullenly disembarked. Actually, they managed to escape a month later, after I had left Libau.

In August, the British Government decided to acknowledge and assist the Russian North-West Government, of which Yudenitch had recently taken charge. Before its assistance could become effective, however, the Bolsheviks attacked Rodzianko and drove him back into Esthonia.

Yudenitch was now short of troops, and so wired asking me to send him all my White Russians. I got hold of a transport and ordered them to embark. Two companies at once mutinied. We surrounded them with machine guns in the night, and they surrendered. Two other companies were on duty at the outposts, watching the Germans. I wanted to relieve them at 3 p.m., but Kapitch, one of the ablest Russians with whom I had to deal, pressed me to leave them there until the last possible moment, as he was afraid that an attack might be organised against his force during embarkation, and he trusted no other troops.

Reluctantly I agreed to an extension of their duties until 9 p.m. At 5 p.m., I was informed that the outpost-line had been abandoned, and that the approaches to the town were completely open. That is just one example of the way in which we were continually let down even by the best of the White Russians.

Transport Difficulties

Embarkation continued throughout the night, under pressure exercised by the British officers. It was completed at 6.30 a.m., when Kapitch appeared for the first time, having divided his last 12 hours between a cabaret and a brothel.

Later, we had an influx of further White Russian troops, and Yudenitch demanded their help also. There were no transports available except two German ships. I asked the German representative for permission to use them, and met with a curt refusal. On the following morning I boarded them with a party of soldiers, and took possession. But the captains refused to sail. However, two patriotic Lettish captains promised to obtain local crews, and to be ready to start the following day. So the troops embarked.

The patriots then demanded five times the normal pay before they would move. I had them out at once; and then luckily succeeded, by a mixture of persuasion and force, in inducing the German captains to take on the job. For years afterwards, the German Government protested against my action and demanded compensation; but the Foreign Office backed me up staunchly, and refused it.

The Yellow Jacks now gave trouble. They were for the most part a lot of ruffians, but they were the best soldiers we had—very smart and efficient. We used them largely as guards over Government buildings, where they made an impressive show in their bright yellow uniforms.

The men of my own permanent guard were the pick of the bunch—quite a nice lot, in fact, and we soon made friends. I found that, under their gay tunics, they had absolutely nothing; so I provided them with underclothing, and also made additions to their slender rations. After that I banked a little on their friendship.

One evening just before dinner, my Intelligence officer came to me to say that he had discovered a plot on the

Photo: A. P., Paris.

CAIX CHURCH

The village of Caix lies 4 km. due west of Rosières, at the bifurcation of the main roads to Amiens and Moreuil; and it is some 10 km. south-east of Villers-Bretonneux. It was well behind the French lines from the outset of stabilised warfare until March, 1918, and this photograph of the church shows that edifice to have been barely nibbled. Caix was recovered for the Allies by the Canadian Corps on the night of August 8th. There is to-day one British cemetery, containing 219 Canadian, 129 United Kingdom, and 12 Australian dead.

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part of the Yellow Jacks to seize me and the Civil Governor and to carry us off to the German force, in the hope of securing thereby a pardon for their former misdeeds. It sounded rather a cock-and-bull story, but it could not be ignored; and, actually, it proved to be entirely true.

Delinquents Shipped to Germany

I made arrangements, which proved successful, for surrounding and imprisoning the delinquents. They were tried, and found guilty, the following day. The Letts wanted to shoot them. I protested. It would make martyrs of them. Instead, we sent them off in small batches, in any available German ship, to their own country, where they might expect a cool reception.

My own guard I had chanced. I thought the men too friendly to be involved in the plot, so insisted that they should be allowed to remain at their posts. But I was a little anxious about them, especially as the Commodore was dining with us. So I sat with a Browning handy, ready to shoot the first Yellow Jack who put his nose through the door. But I neither expected to have to use it, nor did so.

After two months in Libau, I was transferred to Kovno. Lithuania, of which Kovno is the capital, is one of at least three countries whose sway had extended at one time or another from the Black Sea to the Baltic. Now, lashed by memories of greatness, she wished to regain her ancient boundaries. Unfortunately for her, Poland and Russia (both White and Red) stood in the way. Poland, indeed, reaching out to the sea on the one hand through Lithuania and on the other hand through the Ukraine, was inspired with a like ambition. Thus in this region there were all the elements of serious conflict.

Lithuania is a country but little known to the ordinary Briton. Chaucer does, indeed, in his *Canterbury Tales*, send a brave English knight there, but nowhere else in our literature is mention made of the home of the great Jagellon.

On my journey thither, I spent the first night in a frontier garrison town, whose commandant apparently regarded me as a proper successor to Chaucer's knight. He entertained me to dinner, and, having unearthed some bottles of port, rose at short intervals to make in broken English a speech which never varied: "It is a proud day for me and a proud day for my country when a British colonel enters Lithuania."

Photo: A. J. Insall.

REPAIRS IN PROGRESS

During the stage-by-stage withdrawals of March 28th, 1918, it fell to the lot of the 50th Division to pass through Caix soon after 6 p.m., on its way back to Moreuil, where it was to serve as reserve to the 20th Division. The retirement, admirably covered by six armoured cars of the Canadian Motor Machine Gun Corps, was carried out over open ground, enemy observation being mercifully obscured by a heavy squall of rain. Unfortunately, however, the 2nd West Yorks and 2nd Middlesex had not received their orders to withdraw, and held on until almost surrounded, when very few men managed to escape.

Luckily for me, who had travelled all day over the world's worst roads, the bout did not last long. Drinking by the tumbler quickly emptied the bottles, and I was then able to put my tired limbs to bed.

Patriots Who Disliked Everyone

The Lithuanians were (and still are) highly patriotic. They dislike all their neighbours—Letts, White Russians, Red Russians, Germans, and Poles. Under considerable pressure, they could be persuaded to fight the Bolo and the German. The Pole, whom they not only disliked, but hated, they were always ready to fight. This was embarrassing to the British Mission, for whereas the Bolo and German were our enemies, the Pole was our ally.

The main bone of contention was the town of Vilna, which the Lithuanians claimed as their capital, and which had been allotted to them by Versailles. The Bolsheviks captured it from them in February, 1919, and then established themselves on a north and south line half-way between it and Kovno. The Poles insisted on liberating the ravished portion of Lithuania, and drove the Bolsheviks out of it, much to the disgust of the Lithuanians, who preferred any tyranny to Polish domination.

The Poles were ordered by Versailles to return Vilna to the Lithuanians. In response they stated that the inhabitants were mainly Polish, but that, in the interests of justice, they had ar-

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Photo: E.N.A.

POLISH SNIPERS IN 1919

A scene from the Russo-Polish War. This involved conflict has left in its wake anomalies and difficulties which are no less grave because the "man in the street" in Western Europe is scarcely aware that they exist. In contrast with cities or provinces in dispute are frontiers more rigid than one might deem possible. The "green frontier," for instance, between Poland and Lithuania, is marked by a No Man's Land 15 yards wide, patrolled night and day on either side by the soldiers of the two countries. No one, except in the rarest of circumstances, is ever allowed to venture on to this belt, and fewer still may cross it. A railway which traverses it has been for years without a train. In many instances farms have been shorn in two by it, but the inhabitants of one half may not approach nearer than within 15 yards of their relatives in the other. And so jealous are the rival troops that no cameraman is permitted to photograph a Lithuanian and Polish frontier-guard in the same picture.

ranged to hold free elections by secret ballot to decide the town's destiny. As they put everyone in prison who was unlikely to vote for them, their free ballot resulted in a large Polish majority.

They were then able to indicate to Versailles the impracticability of evacuating the town, as such a procedure would be in direct contradiction to the wishes of the inhabitants, and would clearly outrage the principles of democracy and self-determination.

France alone could bring pressure on Poland and she had no intention of doing so. In spite of the Covenant of the League, the other nations showed no inclination to draw swords against the aggressor, and so the Poles remained in possession.

In Lithuania, as elsewhere in the Baltic, the Germans had hindered the formation of a national army. Consequently, when they fell back before the Bolsheviks to their own frontier, there were available for the defence of the country only some 6,000 men, wretchedly armed, and with hardly 10 rounds to a rifle.

Trials of the British Mission

The task of the Mission was to organise, train, and equip an army. Training was being hindered by the despatch of recruits to the Polish front as soon as they were enlisted, and equipment was rendered difficult by the absence of a port. However, shortly after arrival we obtained control of the Riga—Kovno railway, and stores began to reach us. We were then able to insist on troops remaining under instruction until they were competent to handle the new British weapons.

On August 26th, I flew to Riga to attend a conference of all the anti-Bolshevik forces in the Baltic on the subject of a general offensive on a line 500 miles long, stretching from Poland to Finland. Senior officers representing the five States involved were present, and even Bermondt and a German representative were there.

For several reasons the conference did not prove an unqualified success. Nearly all the States disliked each other even more than they disliked the enemy; each representative had a scheme of his own on which he wanted to talk, and when started on it was almost impossible to stop; and, finally, there was present no senior officer of the rank and prestige needed for giving decisions on the nature and distribution of the various tasks. It was settled, however, that an attack would be launched along the whole front on September 15th.

I returned to Kovno, made plans for the part the Lithuanians had to play, and sent them to Riga for confirmation. Then the enemy upset matters by retiring 50 miles on the Lithuanian front. We followed him up, made fresh plans, and informed the Poles and Letts on our flanks. Then the Poles came to tell me that, having heard nothing of the proposed plan since the conference, they were going to drop out. The Lithuanians demanded definite orders, and the Germans complained that they had been crowded out of the place which had been allotted to them. Finally, the 15th came and went, and nothing happened.

It was a pity, for the opportunity was there. Trotsky was at that time at full stretch in his battle with Denikin, and could afford but weak forces for the other fronts. If all the armies involved had advanced on their own fronts, and at the same time a combined blow had been struck at Petrograd by the Finns, Esthonians, and Rodzianko's Russians, the Bolshevik power must have been shaken to its foundations.

Raid on Kronstadt

That very month, a flotilla of British motor-boats broke into Kronstadt harbour, and, by a feat of splendid daring, sank two Red battleships there. But this was an isolated effort, unrelated

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to any general plan, out of harmony with the naval policy previously followed, and not further pursued.

A month later, Rodzianko captured Gatchina, within 30 miles of Petrograd. These two successful actions caused panics among the people of that town and the controllers in Moscow. So certain did it seem that Petrograd would fall that the American Relief Association rushed their trucks of food up to Gatchina, so as to be able without delay to feed the starving children whom they expected to find in the former capital.

The White Russians were, however, not supported; many of them were stricken with typhus and scurvy; and, consequently, on the advent of fresh Red troops, they were driven back into Esthonian territory, where they were disarmed by their recent allies, who in the meantime had made an armistice with the Bolsheviks.

It must be admitted that Trotsky made skilful use of interior lines, as the Germans had done before him in the Great War. His success was due, however, less to his skill than to the complete absence of co-operation among his opponents. Mannerheim, with 100,000 Finns, was straining at the leash, and, had Yudenitch agreed to Finnish independence, would have sprung forward against Petrograd. Yudenitch, on the other hand, thought that once the Finns were there he would never be able to get them out.

The same distrust and discord prevailed everywhere. Let me give an instance from my own experience. A number of White Russians arrived in Kovno, and asked me to send them to Denikin. No other route appeared to be open except that through Poland, so I arranged with the Polish authorities for their through passage by batches, and informed Denikin. Later I heard that none of them was reaching the southern front; and, on enquiry, I found that, in spite of promises and of the fact that the Poles were also at war with the Bolsheviks, the White Russians had all been consigned to Polish prisons. What a war!

A Mixed Medley

At this time Bermondt's army consisted of the following formations:

Germans		
The Iron Division . .	13,500	
Guard Reserve Div. .	11,000	
2nd Infantry Bde. .	3,000	
Various *Freikorps* .	3,500	
		31,000
Russians		
I Corps (Bermondt) .	12,000	
II Corps (Vyrgolitch)	8,000	
		20,000
Total .		51,000

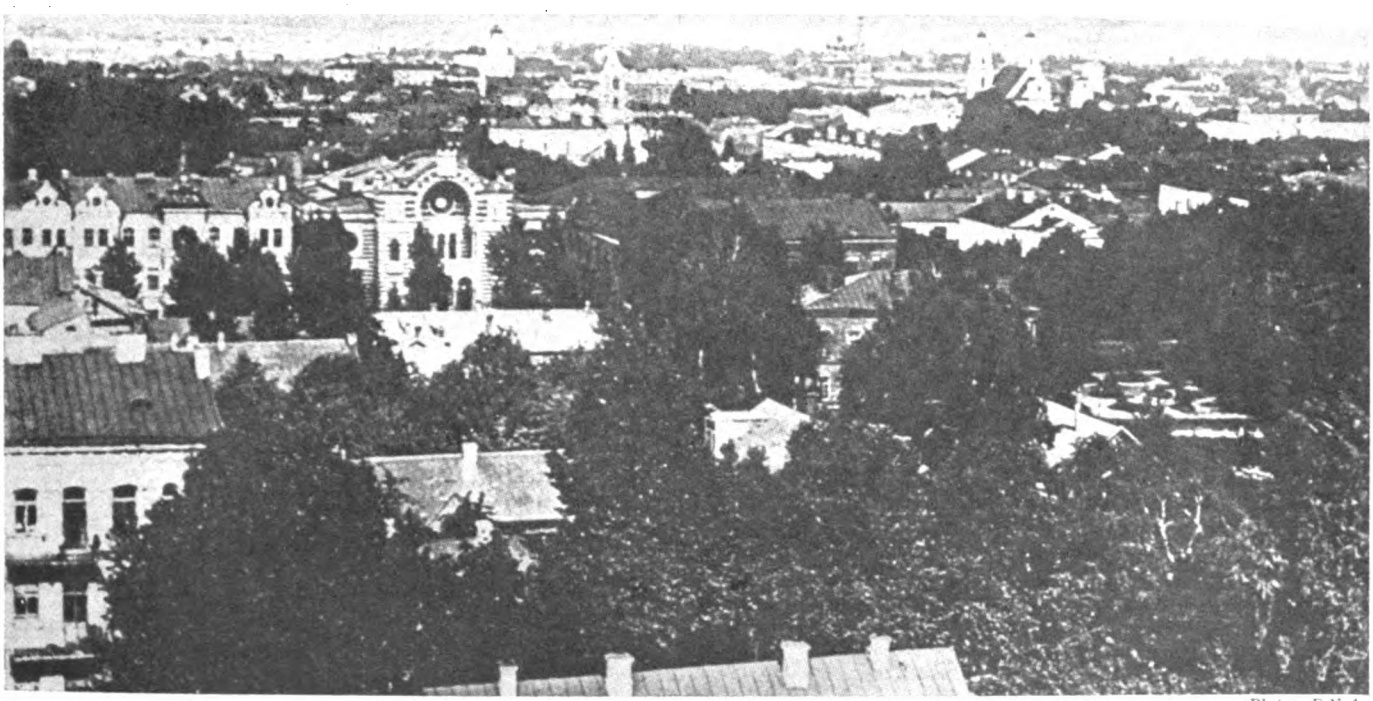

Photo: E.N.A.

PANORAMA OF MINSK

The city of Minsk lies in the extreme west of the U.S.S.R., about 30 miles from the Polish frontier, and is the capital of the White Russian Republic—a Red State, in spite of its name. There are two universities and several other educational institutions in the modern town, which is consequently an important centre of Soviet learning. The river in the background of this panoramic view is the Svisloch, a tributary of the Beresina. There were numerous German air-raids on Minsk in 1915–16, but the city was not captured until February, 1918. In August, 1919, the Poles secured it from the Bolsheviks, and eventually it became the scene of the abortive Russo-Polish peace conference of exactly a year later.

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On October 8th, the greater part of this force moved against Riga. On the 9th, it reached the left bank of the Dwina, having driven in the Lettish covering troops without difficulty. Bermondt's wireless proclaimed an overwhelming victory, and, consequently, grave anxiety prevailed not only in Riga, but also throughout the Baltic States. For a few days, in fact, the Letts were on the verge of surrender. Then, at the critical moment, on the instruction of Admiral Cowan, British and French warships intervened. They steamed up the Dwina and bombarded the Russo-German position.

It was a dangerous venture. The Germans possessed ordnance up to 8 inches in calibre. Firing over open sights, at point-plank range, at the ships in the narrow estuary, they might well have inflicted grievous damage. However, as is so often the case in war, daring proved successful. The only serious naval loss was that caused by a direct hit on a 6-inch gun. The Letts were tremendously heartened by the action of the Allies, and thereafter fought splendidly. Taking advangage of the covering fire of the warships, they crossed the river and drove the enemy from the left bank.

Bermondt continued his efforts for some weeks; but then, pressed in front by the Letts and threatened in rear by Lithuanians, he fell back on Mitau.

Results of the Battle of Riga

The Battle of Riga was decisive in its effect. It sounded the knell of two adventures, that of Bermondt and that of Yudenitch. The Germans did, indeed, continue to make strenuous efforts to maintain their hold on the land; but their precious prestige was broken, the morale of many of their units had suffered, and their withdrawal into Germany had become inevitable. The German Government felt the defeat so much that it actually asked for the despatch to the Baltic of an inter-Allied commission to arrange for the safe evacuation of the German troops.

Yudenitch suffered because the Letts were forced to thin their front against the Bolsheviks in order to reinforce the garrison of Riga, and the Reds were then able to withdraw such of their troops as were facing Latvia and to throw them against the North-West Army at the moment when its prospects were at their highest.

A glance at the map will show that Lithuania lay directly across the communications of the Germans between Riga and Tilsit. I had been strenuously urging her Government to make up its mind on the action it would take in the event of an attack on Riga.

Voldemar, the Foreign Minister, anti-Pole and pro-German, was opposed to the taking of any action. He pretended to have certain news that, if the Lithuanians were to move their troops towards Latvia, the Poles would at once advance on Kovno. I had obtained a promise from the Poles, who were as eager as the rest of us for the defeat of Bermondt,

Photo: A. P., Paris.

IN THE BOIS-EN-Z

The Bois-en-Z—*i.e.* wood in the shape of a "Z"—is one of several collections of trees in the vicinity of Roye, and in March, 1918, was therefore almost on the Anglo-French boundary, not counting the British 58th Division away down on the Oise. This picture of the Bois, dated June, 1917, shows a typical German "pill-box."

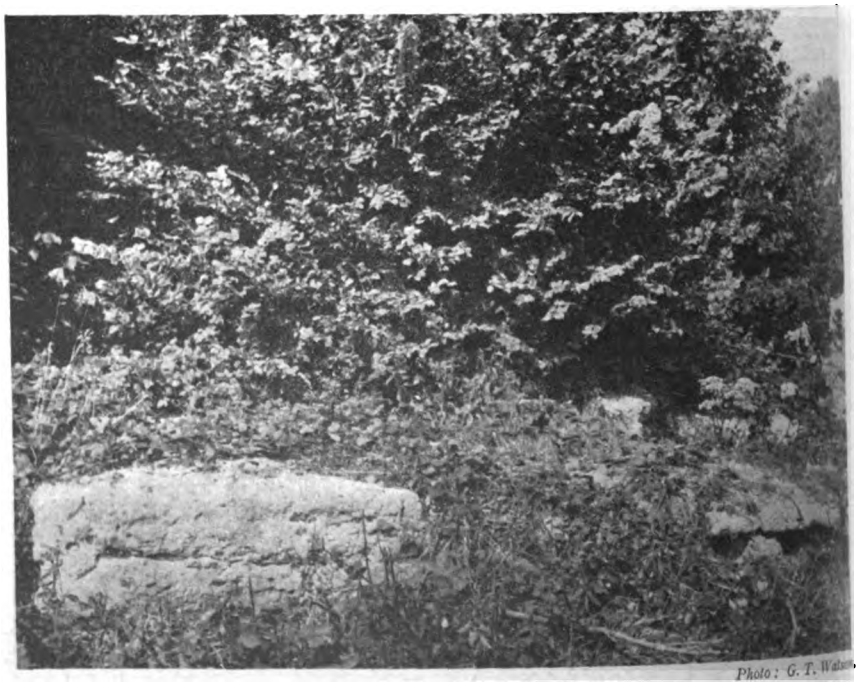

Photo: G. T. Wat...

STILL THERE

At least, the photographer thinks this is it. The Bois-en-Z is nowadays a most irregular clump, but it contains no other visible relics. The depth of the apparently shallow concrete structure was amply attested when our unfortunate explorer took an incautious step beside it, and sank to his waist in brambles. Being simultaneously apprised of the fact that the holes seen on the right housed a bees' nest, he abandoned further investigation!

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Photo: A. P., Paris.

THE CHÂTEAU DE PÉRONNE

The Château de Péronne furnishes another instance of a splendid mediæval building irreparably spoiled by the undiscriminating grossness of war. The citadel has been immortalised for the English-speaking peoples by Scott's description of it in *Quentin Durward*, and is, besides, the scene of several historic events. The above photograph shows the south façade and entrance on September 18th, 1917.

that they would do nothing of the sort.

When Riga was attacked, there were all-night sittings of the Cabinet. It was no light matter for a little State such as Lithuania to attack a great Power whose borders marched with hers, and whose armies had invariably been successful in eastern campaigns. And there was the added fear of Polish aggression.

Photo: A. J. Insall.

ALL THAT REMAINS

The massive towers of Péronne's great citadel have survived, but gone are the roofs and all the finer details. Even the towers have been drastically restored, as witness the scaffolding still surrounding one of them in this photograph, taken in 1937. The château, which in the fifteenth century belonged alternately to France and Burgundy, stands on the site of a still earlier building, in which King Charles III of France (Charles the Simple) was starved to death in A.D. 929. It was this king who had given Normandy to the Normans.

In the latter connection, Valdemar and I affirmed with absolute certainty, the one that the Poles would advance, the other that they would not do so. Finally, in the presence of the President, I bet Valdemar ten to one against his certainty. The offer was in pounds only, but the Minister was thrown off his balance and refused the bet. His refusal was largely decisive of the issue. That night I was able to send a wireless message to Riga that the Lithuanians would come in on the Lettish side. How often, I wonder, has a declaration of war been influenced by a bet?

Bashful Assailants

I tried to organise an attack on Shavli, the most important railway junction behind Bermondt. The Lithuanians agreed to the scheme; but, in their fear of the Germans, they were terribly slow, even inventing, so that they should not have to attack, reports that the approaches to the town were strongly held. Their concentration toward the railway did, however, have an unnerving effect on the Russo-German commanders, causing them to look constantly and anxiously over their shoulders.

While the Germans were moving against Riga, and were likely, if successful in capturing that town, to dominate the Baltic States, it was clearly our duty to endeavour to intervene decisively by an immediate attack on their rear. Once the assault had been repulsed, however, our correct course was much less clear. We felt that it might be wise to allow them to withdraw unhindered.

But then, as the Letts could not pursue far, the enemy were likely, if unmolested, to recover, reorganise, and settle themselves firmly in Lithuania, whence, later on, it might be difficult to expel them. That danger could be eliminated only by an immediate attack, delivered before the opportunity created by their defeat had passed away. On the other hand, successful action on our part might cause Germany to despatch to the aid of our opponents strong regular forces, which might re-establish themselves in the Baltic Provinces.

In this dilemma we were particularly anxious to act in harmony with Allied policy. But we did not know what that policy was; and, if we were to attack, we must do so at once. Prior to the event, I had written for instructions, but had received none. Now I was cabling daily without effect.

Finally, in my fear of missing the opportunity, I sent identical wires to my four superiors — Versailles, the Foreign Office, the War Office, and the

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Mission headquarters at Reval, worded so as to place upon each of them the responsibility of both a decision and an answer. "Unless instructed by *you* to the contrary within 24 hours, the Lithuanian army will destroy all the railway bridges between Shavli and Tilsit."

Inter-Allied Commission Heralded

At once the silence was broken. The answer in each case was, practically, "For heaven's sake don't." And additional remarks showed that an Inter-Allied Commission, under General Niessel, was being despatched to carry out a controlled evacuation in the near future. That settled the matter. We remained within striking distance of the railway, and awaited the arrival of the Commission.

In the meantime, the Germans had made three separate attacks on Libau, on the 4th, 6th, and 14th October respectively. Here occurred a little-known but extraordinarily effective case of co-operation between sea and land forces. When news of the German advance was received, the senior naval officer on the spot worked out, with Colonel Grove of the British Military Mission, a plan for the defence.

The Navy landed a large number of Lewis guns, and a few light guns, for the use of the garrison. Signal communications were perfected throughout the defences. The ships occupied surveyed positions in the harbour and—much as our artillery had done in France—prepared large-scale gridded maps of the adjoining country.

The general result was that the guns were controlled throughout the attacks so as to conform with the changing situations. In the principal attack—that of the 14th—the enemy broke through the lines and threatened the harbour. The ships, however, supplied with good information, pounded him to a standstill at the gap he had made.

They then prepared the way for a counter-attack, in which the Letts, who fought splendidly, regained all their lost positions. Finally, since the approach to the town from the east lay along a causeway between two lakes, the ships, among which were two monitors carrying 15-inch guns, were able to put a barrage across it, from which the enemy suffered considerably in his retirement.

The Russo-German forces were not easily evacuated. They did all in their power to remain in the country; and, in view of the promises made by the Ulmanis Government of settlement on the land, their reluctance to leave was not surprising. Some of those who had enlisted on the strength of that promise had been fighting for months to earn their places; and that they had often fought on the wrong side was less their fault than that of their leaders.

Germans Finally Withdraw

The Niessel Commission, which was assisted by the French and British missions already in the Baltic, had three weapons with which to secure the execution of the task entrusted to it: the Lettish and Lithuanian Armies, and the naval blockade, the last named of which could be tightened at will.

They were all needed, but with their combined aid the Germans were eventually forced, about the middle of December, 1919, to withdraw across their frontier, having been previously made to disgorge large quantities of booty which they had amassed, and to hand over to the Letts and Lithuanians a considerable amount of equipment.

It is interesting to note that only in the Baltic did Great Britain in her Russian adventures obtain any lasting success. There she was largely instrumental in winning independence for Esthonia, Latvia, and Lithuania—an independence which has since been firmly maintained.

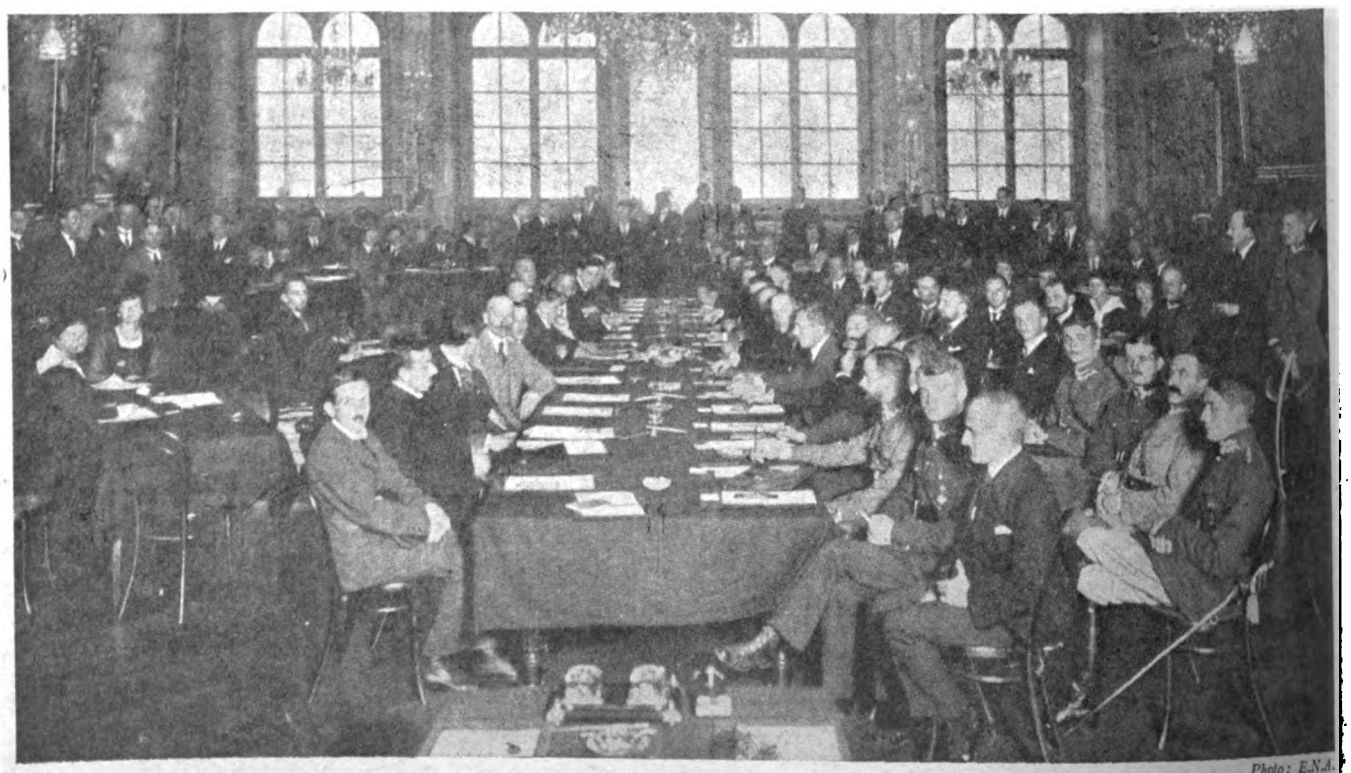

Photo: E.N.A.

THE DRAWING-UP OF THE TREATY OF RIGA, 1920

The above is a view of the scene in the ancient Hall of the Blackheads, Riga, during the second Polo-"Bolo" peace conference, held in October, which resulted in the Treaty of Riga and the termination of hostilities. Considering that the Russians had advanced almost to the gates of Warsaw, and that the only Polish successes had been the capture of Kiev and Minsk, the terms of the treaty were remarkably advantageous to Poland. It was signed on October 12th, and ratified on March 18th, 1921. In the photograph the Polish delegates are seen on the right of the table, the Bolsheviks on the left.

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AROUND LAVENTIE

Then and Now

Photo: Imperial War Museum

IN THE PLACE DE L'EGLISE, LAVENTIE

Only one pair of photographs of this highly-important village has previously been shown by us, on pages 1086 and 1087 of Volume Two. Opportunity was there taken to describe, as fully as the limited space allowed, the serious break-through of April 9th, 1918, and to vindicate in some measure those unfortunate and much-maligned troops, the Portuguese. The present photograph of the square before the church was taken on August 29th, 1917, while the sector was still hushed in slumber—more or less.

Photo: G. T. Watson

THE *PLACE* AT THE PRESENT DAY

At the end of the first week in April, 1918, the Portuguese 2nd division, which had been under strength for some while, was still short of 139 officers and nearly 6,000 men. In view, therefore, of the known imminence of the German attack, it was decided on April 8th that the British 50th Division and the 166th Brigade of the 55th Division should temporarily replace the Portuguese in the XI Corps, beginning the relief on the night of the 9th/10th; and that the XV Corps should be transferred to the Second Army at midday on the 9th. The German assault forestalled both these vital movements.

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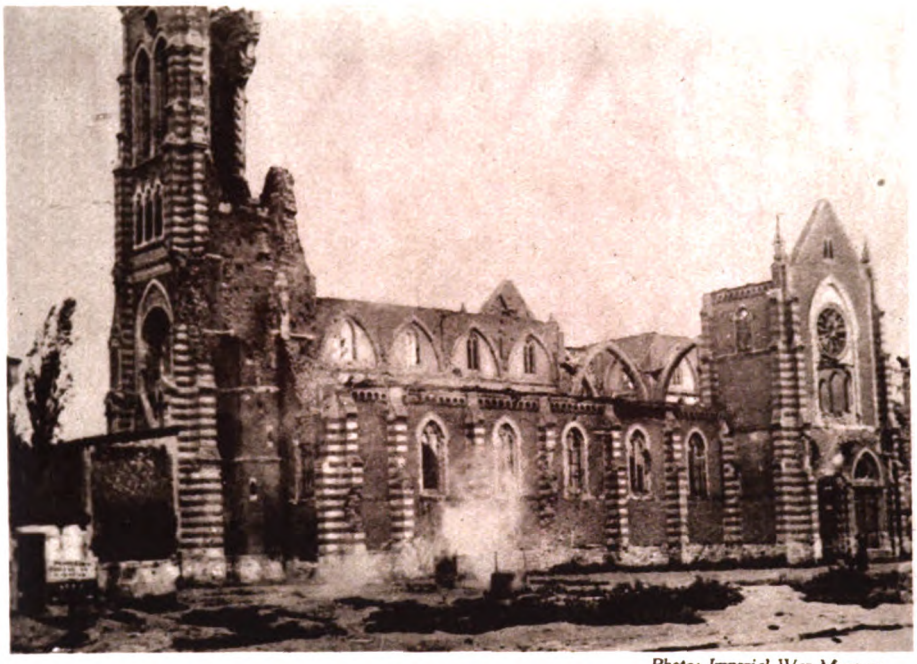


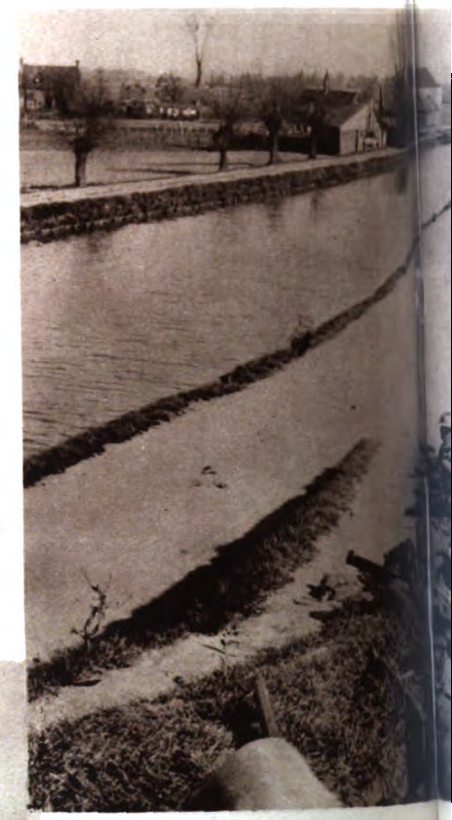
Photo: Imperial War Museum

LAVENTIE CHURCH

On April 9th, 1918, Laventie village lay within the Battle Zone, the front opposite it being held by the 4th Portuguese Brigade, whose troops were distributed in a series of small posts along a well-constructed, continuous line of breast-works. Altogether there were three Portuguese brigades, all very weak, in the front line, against which were arrayed no fewer than four complete German divisions.

DEFENDING THE

A picture actually taken on April 12th, 1918, when the Britis hold a section of the Lys Canal near Merville. The line had having been the 151st Brigade, 50th Division (Highlanders). A eously from north-east, east, and south. The brigade was m ing it, but had not been sufficient in number to prot



THE LYS AT M

Prior to Merville's fall, the 115th Cornwall R tried to fill the gap between the 151st Brigade to enter the northern part of the village about fighting, in which the Engineer companies took valiant part, and then, by divisional order, the of the ruins. The 446th Field Company, R.E., Germans were al

Photo: G. T. Watson

LOCAL CYCLIST BATTALION IN ACTION

When the attack was launched, the majority of the raw and youthful Portuguese troops gave way almost at once; indeed, some, who had detected German patrols filtering through the gaps in the thinly-held defences, had been observed by the British divisions on their flanks to be drifting back even before the assault proper had fallen. But, in contrast to this, there were, as the British *Official History* reveals, not a few instances of great bravery, some of the front-line posts being held against the overwhelming odds until nearly all the defenders lay dead.

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HE LYS

ritish troops in the foreground were preparing to
ad been lost the day before, its ultimate defenders
About 4 p.m. it had been threatened simultan-
menaced, had fallen back to a shorter line cover-
rotect the southern part, nearest the Lys.

Photo: Imperial War Museum

IERVILLE

(61st Div. Pioneers, attached to 51st Div.)
the canalized river, but the enemy began
30 p.m. There was some house-to-house
loyed in demolishing the bridges took a
igade fell back behind a small stream west
blew up the last of the Lys bridges as the
lly crossing it.

Photo: A. J. Insall

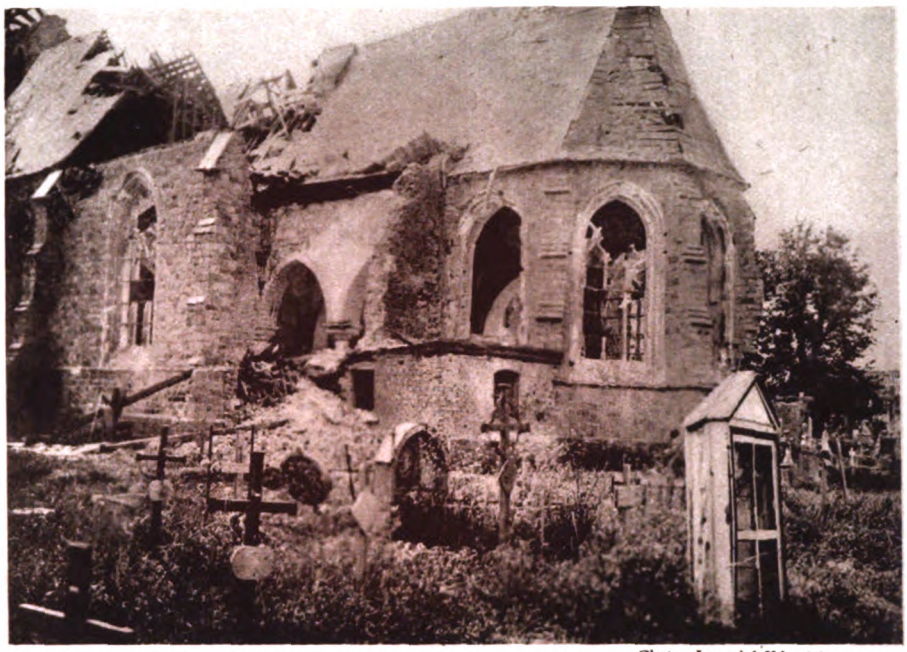

Photo: Imperial War Museum

AT RICHEBOURG-ST. VAAST

A photograph taken during the comparatively sedentary days of July, 1915. Richebourg-St. Vaast lies 9 km. north-east of Béthune, between Lacouture and Neuve-Chapelle. On April 9th, 1918, it was near the rear of the Forward Zone, and was defended by a number of machine-gun posts. The front line before it was held by the 5th Portuguese Brigade, and the front line of the Battle Zone, in rear, by the 11th Cyclist Battalion.

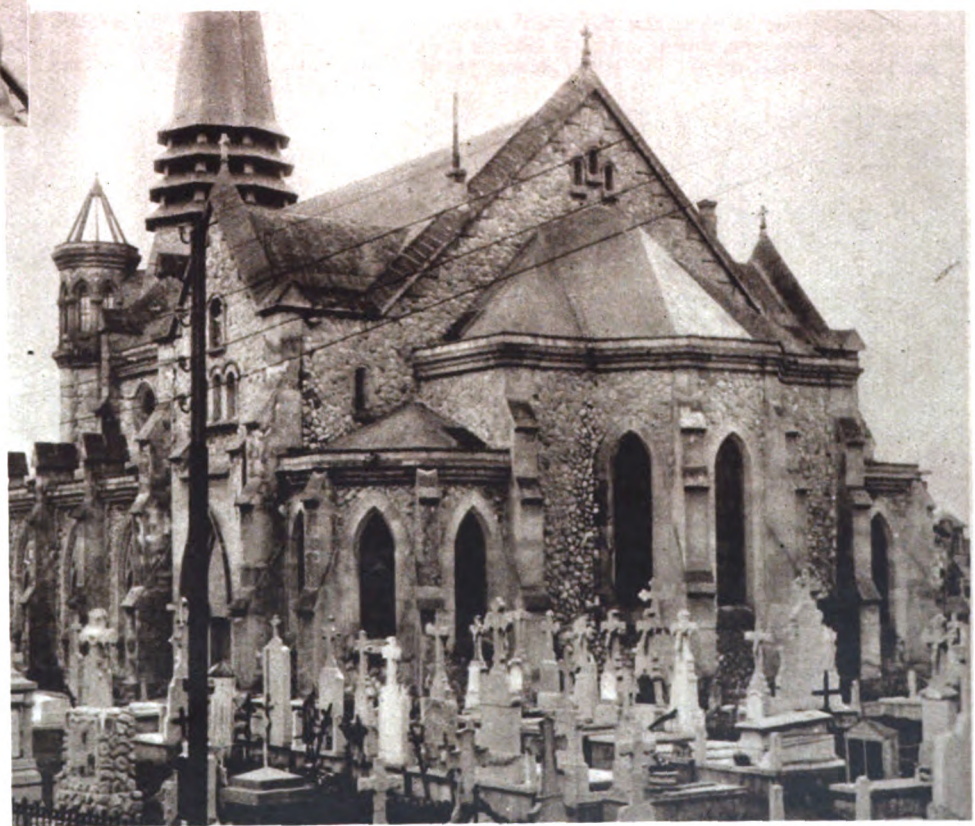

Photo: G. T. Watson

REBUILT AND REDESIGNED

The sector of the Portuguese front immediately east of Richebourg-St. Vaast was among the most stoutly defended. Many of the posts held out for about three hours after the majority elsewhere had been abandoned, and afterwards small parties of men attached themselves to the British in the Battle Zone and fought well. But the heavy-artillerymen working with the British batteries, and the Portuguese Tunnelling Company under its British officers, alone retained their formation. Some 30 Portuguese infantry joined the 11th Cyclists.

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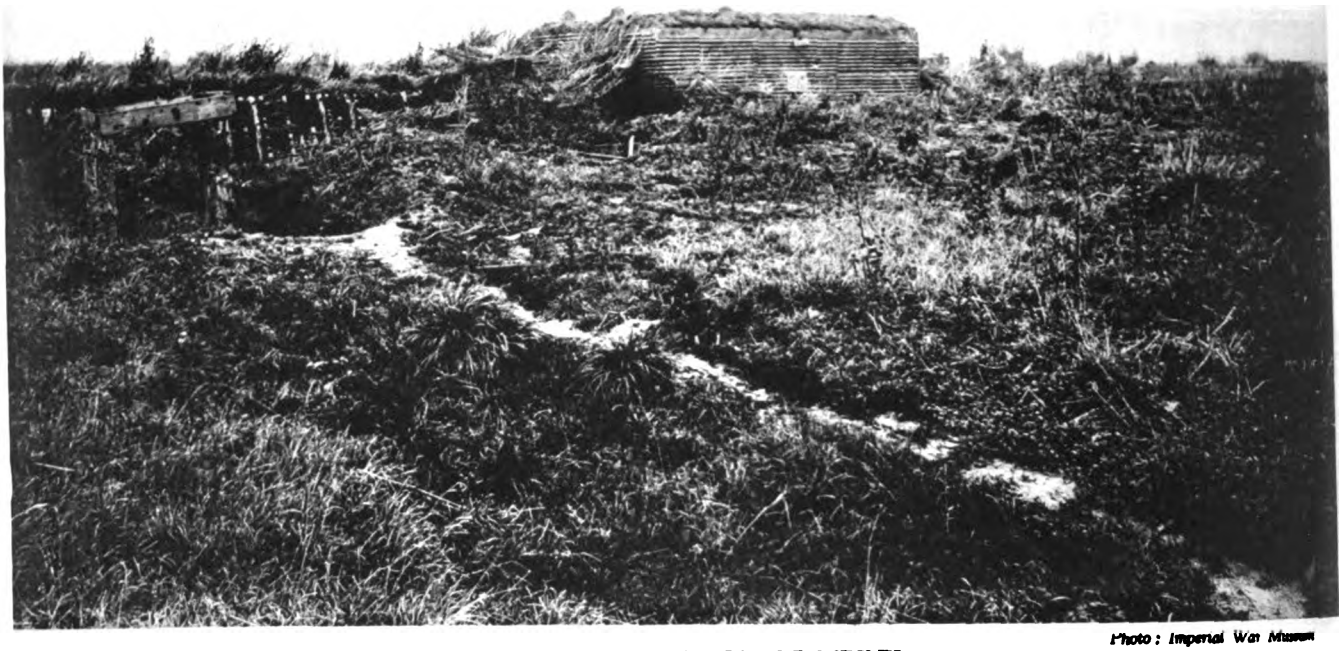

Photo: Imperial War Museum

A "PILLBOX" NEAR LE MESNIL

"Le Mesnil" is the spelling under which every Tommy knew the place, and the one which we shall consequently use here; but for the punctilious it may be stated that the correct modern spelling is "Le Maisnil." In contrast with the other villages illustrated in this section, Le Mesnil was already inside the German lines before the Lys push, its position being 2 km. north-east of Fromelles, and 4 km. due south of Bois-Grenier. The above photograph, which was taken on Armistice Day, 1918, shows an ex-German "pillbox" on the Fromelles Ridge.

Photo: Keystone

NOT YET OBLITERATED

The ancient strong-point, to-day in strange contrast with its agricultural surroundings, is still to be seen on Fromelles Ridge, although the ridge itself, like so much of the ground considered high in wartime, is to-day nearly lost in the general flatness of the peaceful landscape. Other "Then and Now" views of this same locality appeared in Volume Two of TWENTY YEARS AFTER, on pages 1040-1 and 1222-3. The region is perhaps chiefly of note for its having witnessed the debut of the Anzacs on the Western Front in the spring of 1916.

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CHAPTER XLIII

MEMORIES XI.—THE SOMME REINCARNATED

By many men, and by the civilian soldier in particular, the Somme is remembered as the battle of battles. It was on July 1st, 1916, and in the weeks that followed, that the mightiest body of volunteers ever to serve this country in time of war received their real baptism of fire. The Somme valley with its many villages and woods witnessed the most fiercely-contested struggle the world had seen up to that time; it afforded a last resting-place to thousands of the Empire's flowering manhood; and there, too, the German Army sustained wounds from which it never fully recovered. Here a former infantry officer revisits some of his old haunts and conjures up again the scenes once familiar to so many.

THE custodian of the very wonderful War Museum at Ypres told me that, of all the souvenirs of the battlefields—with the exception of some freaks such as one shell embedded in another—the rarest trophy is a rum jar. Made by potters in Cheshire, these jars, although stout, were not shell-proof, and, once empty, were regarded—unlike scrap-iron—as valueless. The famous vessels marked " S.R.D." have become almost as extinct as the Dodo; and perhaps one day the survivors may be sold at Christie's for fabulous sums.

A Rum Jar in the Valley of Death

As I was walking this late summer from Fricourt to High Wood, by way of the Valley of Death which lies beside Mametz Wood, an object in a ditch held my eye. It was a rum jar, intact; and since I was almost as hot, footsore, and exhausted—in fact, what we used to term " whacked to the wide "—as I had been on the 14th July, 1916, when I marched up this same valley, I regretted much that my welcome friend was empty.

Nevertheless, what a treasure! I carried the fellow ten further miles, and now that very pleasant help in time of trouble grins broadly, even if he no longer gurgles with suppressed laughter, beside me as I write.

There was much else in this valley to recall the stupendous Battle of the Somme, for the hare and partridge shooting season had just opened. When France takes to shooting, it's a communal affair. The fields were everywhere alive with patrols searching the ground, while there were lively sounds of musketry ringing across those rolling downs. But let's get back to the beginning.

Amiens was the hub of the battlefield, at all times seething with soldiers; and the main route to the centre of the battlefield follows the National Road through Querrieu, Sir Henry Rawlinson's headquarters, and Lahoussoye—invariably called " Lousy Hoy "—to Albert, where hung the familiar gilded Virgin. Few know the story of her origin. A tradition, dating from somewhere about the twelfth century, has it that a shepherd, watching his flock near the town, which at that time bore the name of Ancre, stabbed the turf while resting on his crook. A cry from the ground came to his ear, " You wound me, shepherd! " —and he saw that the end of the crook was tipped with blood.

The spot was shortly afterwards inspected; and there was unearthed a statue of Our Lady with the Holy Child, which since then has been reverenced as " Notre Dame de Brébières." Years later, a huge church arose in Albert in her veneration: and what was known as the Pilgrimage Church, familiar to soldiers on the Western Front, was erected in 1885, nearly the whole of the enormous expense being met from the small contributions of a pious peasantry. Almost every brick is inscribed with the name of the donor.

The Virgin of Albert

The gilt-bronze figure of the Virgin Mary on the summit of the church was struck by a shell on 15th July, 1915. Under cover of darkness, French soldiers climbed the spire and secured the gilt figure by a steel hawser, so that it remained fast, thrown out almost at right angles over the street; and then, in March, 1918, the figure fell—destroying the familiar superstition of the time, that with its fall would come the end of the War.

Through dust and heat and myriads of flies, the sweating divisions traced their way along the straight, switchback highway to the battle-line. Hugging the sides of the road to let pass the endless stream of ambulances, horses, lorries, prisoners-of-war, water-carts, walking wounded, limbers, despatch riders, and food, fodder, and ammunition waggons which poured ceaselessly to and from the forward areas, the columns of infantry and artillery stumbled and jostled forward, exchanging familiar jests and often curses with those who passed down the valley.

The foul stench of trench sanitation and the nauseating reek of blood, mingled with gas, from the carnage behind the shattered defences of the German front lines, held the air. There are yet some places wherein the war upheaval was so immense that this curious reek, indescribable yet never to be mistaken, smites the nostrils with its awesome familiarity.

Few pilgrims since the War have trodden the Valley of Death. It's off the beaten track. The great, chalk-lined craters still yawn wide-mouthed, shell-holes mark the bank which flanks the farm track—once an artillery road—and scarred chalk shows where vast dug-outs were hives of command activity or dressing stations. Lying just as they have been thrown from the fields by farmers are scores of tin hats, British and German, rusty rifles from which the wood has decayed, bombs, barbed wire, and all the metallic miscellany of war. The scene has scarcely changed.

Mametz Wood, still thick with undergrowth as it used to be, lies to the left of the track, protected for shooting. This wood was a hard nut to crack. The ground rises to it on all sides, while the dense undergrowth, honeycombed with dug-outs, provided superb cover for the defence. The credit for its capture belongs to Wales, but I shall not forget the rows of dead which lay

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Photo: A. P., Paris.

BARRICADE IN MERVILLE-AU-BOIS

Merville-au-Bois—nothing to do with *the* Merville, up north—is situated on a country road 3 km. east of Ailly-sur-Noye and 6 km. west-south-west of Moreuil. The wood or woods (the name is sometimes spelt "aux-Bois," in the plural) lie to the east of the village, and probably formed one reason why the enemy stopped about 3 km. short of the houses at the end of his 1918 advance. His proximity, however, is symbolised by this barricade across the main street, photographed on April 10th, 1918.

upon the grassy slope between the wood and the road as we passed up to the next objective. The track bends beside the eastern corner of Mametz Wood, giving a view of Bazentin-le-Petit, and also of Bazentin-le-Grand (which is the smaller, though the higher), with its important farm homestead.

Indians in Caterpillar Valley

At this point, also, Caterpillar Valley runs south to the right. I well remember the sight of hundreds of horses—those of the 7th Dragoon Guards and the Deccan Horse, with their dusky warriors, steel helmets set tight upon turbans—gathering in this narrow valley on the evening of the 14th July. It was not long before huge shells plunged among the screaming horses, but the riders held their ground, awaiting the promised "break-through" on the morrow.

Except for the absence of shell-fire and gas, the scene to-day is almost as it was twenty years ago. If, just before sunset, you stand in the silence beside Mametz or High Wood, and listen, you will hear the rumble of farm carts and waggons upon the roads. They recall the exactly similar sound made by limbers bearing food supplies, or even the mails, as it used to be brought to the ears of those in the outward defences and strongholds during that brief, almost silent, lull, mutually acknowledged, which gave respite from gun-fire and from the death grip.

Where the Valley of Death meets Caterpillar Valley there stands a noble cemetery, named after Flat Iron Copse. As the sun sinks behind Mametz Wood, the high stone cross at the western end of the cemetery throws a long shadow across the stones and flowers—a lovely epitaph to a field so grim in memory.

I shifted my pack and lit a gasper, as once before I had done; and I remembered the words of the gunner whom I had once questioned concerning the effect of our fire upon High Wood, which we were to attack on the morrow—"Nothing can live there, my dear fellow!" It was as he had predicted: our brigade was almost annihilated by German machine guns of the *134th Saxon* and *93rd Anhalt Regiments*.

It was, indeed, a strange coincidence that in this bitter battle the 93rd Foot (2nd Battn. Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders) should have encountered the *93rd German Regiment*; for the two forces had already met at Loos on September 25th, 1915, and met again on the Reutelbeecke on September 27th, 1917, in the Third Battle of Ypres. And it was even stranger that this German regiment had, in 1813, been in Scotland guarding French prisoners captured in the Napoleonic Wars! I've since wondered whether perhaps their descendants fought on our side in 1916. (I had almost written "both sides," but remembered that it has always been said of the Army, "they can do anything with you except put you in the family way!")

Death at his Most Hideous

I tramped on to Bazentin-le-Grand, to where an iron crucifix, defying shell-fire, had once stood as a guide to the sunken road which led

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Photo: G. T. Watson.

A FORGOTTEN VILLAGE AGAIN

An ancient rustic, to whom our War view opposite was shown, professed to remember the barricade well; and he averred that a trench lay on the far side of it. Although the photograph does not show much damage, the church lay in ruins at the time, and the edifice seen above is modern. The wrought-iron cross of which the stem appears on the right of the old view has now been replaced by a stone cross, not visible above. A few British graves are to be found in the churchyard.

down to the valley below High Wood, in which we were to deploy. There were many young soldiers in the divisions which fought the First Battle of the Somme, many of whom had never before seen death in his most hideous garb. The ribaldry tossed from mouth to mouth was the camouflage for fresh horrors, which nearly every step revealed.

The bloated carcasses of animals, with distended stomachs, lay in every ditch; each bend of the road disclosed more bodies mutilated beyond recognition, distorted almost beyond the semblance of human form, lying everywhere unburied. The air reverberated with the thunder of bombardment. Great shells hurled themselves through the torn and jagged trees, shorn of their summer splendour, and buried themselves beneath the undergrowth, or burst upon the road.

A burnt-out ambulance, and abandoned stretchers soaked with blood now clotted brown and fly-blown, piled themselves beside lines and groups of British soldiers who had perished before the murderous fire of the machine guns which for long hours had seemed riveted to the corners of woods and shattered farm-houses.

We had spread ourselves in the sunken road, from which, across the valley, through the dust and haze of the British bombardment, could be seen, to the left flank of the village of Martinpuich, with its halo of pink brick-dust, the leafy trees of High Wood, and to the south Delville Wood, sprawling upon that hillside which bears Longueval on its summit. Beside the wood stood Waterlot Farm, whose crumbling ruin, bristling with machine guns, changed hands again and again.

Delville Wood, once known as Devil's Wood, will be for ever remembered by South Africa as the grave of many of her finest sons. It was captured by the South Africans on July 15th, 1916, and remained in Allied occupation until its recapture by the Germans in March, 1918. Finally retaken by British troops on August 27th, 1918, the wood was purchased by the Government of South Africa in 1920. It lies between Longueval and Ginchy.

A Scots Anecdote

The Somme was an incubator of good stories. Here is one about a Jock. The Scot, badly wounded in the stomach, looked up at the M.O. as he was being examined, and asked: "D'ye think I'll pull through, doctor?"

"Aye," replied the M.O. "Ye've got a chance, if ye'll keep a guid hairrt."

"If I could get a wee drap o' whisky it 'ud keep me hairrt up!" replied the soldier.

"Medical comforts are restricted, but I'll see wha' we can do aboot it."

The Jock sank back upon his pillows, a grateful smile upon his lips. "Aweel," he said, "come and see me as often as ye can the while. . . . I like the smell of yer breath!"

I stood again where we had deployed in that half-crouching attitude which modern tactics dictate, resembling suppliants rather than the vanguard of a great offensive. "P.B.I." I reflected—a soubriquet so truthful: an infantry so soused in blood. We deployed about 800 yards west of High Wood. . . . A peasant with three horses rested upon

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his plough on that same ground when I last saw it, but the furrows still contained many fuse-noses and scores of shrapnel bullets.

A heavy dew had been upon the grass on the morning of the first attack, and it hung like pears upon each blade of grass. After the turmoil of the preceding night an eerie stillness pervaded the atmosphere. No shot was heard, except a faint echo from the flank. Men spoke in whispers. . . .

Again, alone in the silence after twenty years, I whispered, almost fearing the sound of my own voice upon that once dread ground. I remembered that I had passed the time with dried blades of grass, chivvying the red ants and preventing them from crossing a narrow trench I had scratched with a finger-nail.

It had been restful and pleasant lying in the warm, humid atmosphere, belly to the ground, in the quiet of the early morning. Again I found it so as I lay. It was easy to repicture the scene. I had journeyed to Albert from Bienvillers-au-Bois, Fonquevillers, and Gommecourt, where, in the front of the wood, the trenches, disordered and overgrown, yet remain—a fearsome "toffee-apple," the peril of peasants, lying in splendid isolation upon a former chalky parapet.

A Billet Twenty Years Old

In Bienvillers, in the main street beside the new church, I discovered the bullet-pitted façade of the billet which I had occupied before we entered the fray at High Wood. All else had gone except this pleasant souvenir. On the early morning of July 15th, 1916, perhaps a stray thought had turned to that billet; for, although there was such an uncanny silence to our front, furious sounds had come southward from Thiepval and beyond on our left.

There had been a heavy mist on July 15th. Men's faces were pallid, dirty, and unshaven, many with eyes ringed with fatigue after a night hot and fœtid, gaseous and disturbed by shell-fire. I had looked up suddenly from my playthings. The mist was clearing, rising rapidly. The sun peered through, orange and round, topping the trees of High Wood. A wind seemed to stir the tall trees. My heart thumped in my throat.

Riflemen and Highlanders rose to their feet, bayonets gleaming in the morning sunlight. . . . For a moment the scene remained as if an Aldershot manœuvre. A few seconds later an inferno of rifle and machine-gun fire broke from the edge of the wood. A scythe seemed to cut the feet from under the attack, and line after line crumpled and fell.

There was no shred of cover, and men dropped in their tracks as hares sometimes fall in a *battue*. . . . Even as I lay again in contemplation, a hare, driven between two fires from the sides of the wood, leaped high in its death throe, just as those who, attempting by rushes and bounds to get to grips with the enemy, had thrown themselves as they fell, stricken by snipers from the trees.

The attack had failed in its opening minutes. The larger part of a superb brigade, dead and wounded, littered the grassy slope! And now, in my peace-time pilgrimage, I ran, with eyes upon the trees, to a small quarry on my left. There had been a German field gun here, firing almost point-blank into our flank. We had made short work of the gun crew, and taken respite while surveying a means of approach to the wood.

It had been from this piece of temporary cover that I had witnessed an amazing sight. I turned my eyes again to the sunken road from which had debouched Indian cavalry in a mad cavalcade, their dark faces pressed hard upon the necks of frenzied horses, shrill cries of "Ai! Ai!" and "Din Din!" upon their lips. . . .

Then and Now

The peasant was again ploughing his furrow, the three horses an inescapable

WAITING FOR ZERO HOUR

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

A picture of reserve troops awaiting the order to attack near Ginchy, on September 25th, 1916, during the Battle of Morval. Ginchy, of which "Then and Now" photographs appeared on pages 704 (Volume One) and 1205 (Volume Two), had been gained and lost on September 3rd, and regained on the 9th.

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mark for a rifleman from the wood. How Elysian it seemed! How stupefying, in its superb heroism and monstrous absurdity, had seemed that charge of the Deccan horsemen against the wood which for more than two further furious months was to defy artillery, mortar, rifle, bomb, and bayonet!

These masters of horsemanship had galloped through a hell of fire, lifting their mounts lightly over yawning shell-holes, turning and twisting through the barrage of great shells as if Krishna and Vishnu had come to their aid. But not a man escaped. . . . Months later, the wail of the dying was re-echoed among the Western Ghats, where Shivaji, their warrior prototype, is incarnated among the rocky heights. On that date twenty-one years ago the sun had set in blood-red fury—a fitting epitaph to the day.

The quarry remained as it had been, a broken Mills bomb on its lip to remind me of the moment when 47 men, the ragged remnants of the brigade, had rushed the south-western corner of the wood and held it. At the corner had been a stout birch-tree, from which hung the body of a too-daring sniper, his beheaded trunk like a flour sack caught in the fork of a branch, his blood lying black and obscene on the silver surface of the stem down which it had poured, and on which it had congealed. I had offered a prayer and a curse, brief, the gasp of an overwrought soul, for my little band of followers. . . .

I found that after all this time the wood still contained the forlorn and smitten stumps of trees, to some of which unconquerable Nature has imparted her strength, and from these corpses has caused to grow out fresh shoots and lower branches, while from the lattice-work of roots there have sprung up young saplings to inherit the history of High Wood.

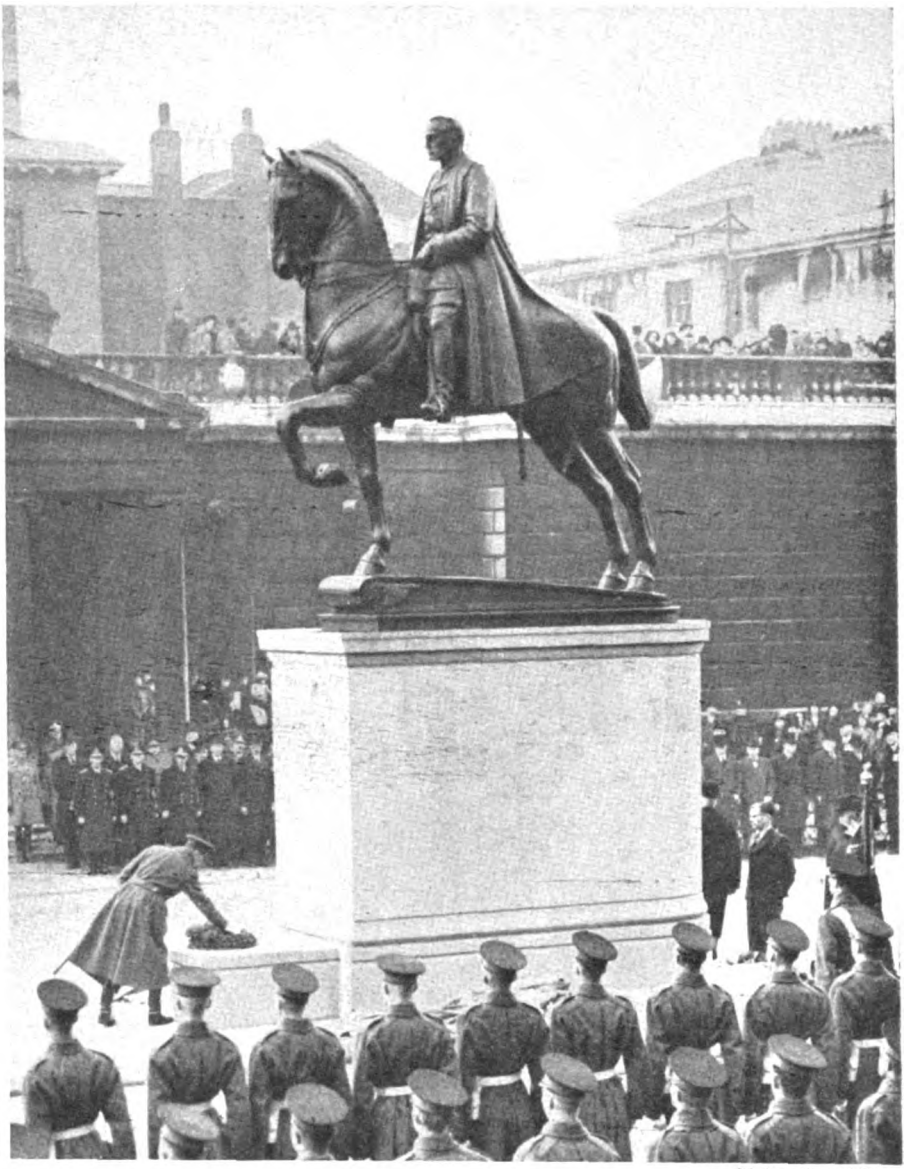

Photo: Central Press.

THE EARL HAIG MEMORIAL

The memorial in Whitehall, London, to the memory of the late Earl Haig, must be fresh in the minds of all, for it was unveiled by H.R.H. the Duke of Gloucester as recently as November 10th, 1937. The monument may be said to have gained a measure of celebrity before being erected, owing to the widely-publicised controversy which arose in some quarters over the design of the horse. The sculptor is Mr. A. F. Hardiman.

High Wood Cemetery

I found the old stems, pitted with shrapnel and machine-gun bullets. Scarcely concealed by undergrowth were steel helmets, rifle barrels, bombs, boots, and the remains of all kinds of equipment. At the large High Wood Cemetery the British gardeners continue, even in 1937, the vast labour, unceasing since the Armistice, of burying the dead. Even now many are interred every week. Though identification is difficult, and discs have perished, it is something of a tribute to British leather that the stampings thereon have survived, so that from them the final resting-places of soldiers of the Empire may be known.

From the Flers Ridge there is an immense view to the east. No wonder the German defence was so hard a nut to crack, and the victory so eagerly sought in July was lost in the bogs of Bouchavesnes and Lesbœufs in November. No one who participated in the operations of November and December, 1916, can reflect upon them without a shudder. The countryside became a quagmire. Roads disappeared beneath a surface of oozing mud. Trenches were water-logged.

A pitiless rain descended, while no part of the line held a more hideous spectacle than that which followed the stinking ruins of Ginchy and Guillemont, Rancourt, Hem, and Curlu. The burden of movement alone, quite apart from that of offensive action, rendered almost impossible the task of shifting ammunition, stores, rations, and the ever-increasing wounded.

The troops, huddled without security by day, waited for the darkness during which succour could at last be brought to the wounded. Without fear of a sniper's bullet, an effort with ropes and stimulants could be made to free men, half drowned and frozen, held fast in the mud. They were sometimes bogged in No Man's Land, waist and even shoulder deep.

Then, suddenly, early in January,

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Photo: Imperial War Museum.

LAUCOURT
The main street of a village situated 3 km. south-west of Roye, where the highways from Montdidier and Senlis converge. In the photograph, taken after the French recapture on August 29th, 1918, traces of old communication trenches can be seen among the ruins.

1917, a fierce frost descended upon the battlefield. The mud caked like coke. Though it was as impracticable as before to construct trenches or earthworks, rapid movement became immediately impossible. The General Staff reappeared to take stock of a situation hitherto known only by hearsay, and vaguely reported by brigade and battalion commanders. Orders were finally issued for a raid, the object being to obtain identification of the troops opposed to our line before Mont St. Quentin and Péronne.

The Two Types of Raid

We knew all about those raids. They were of two types. The "raid and stay," which involved artillery preparation for the purpose of destroying barbed-wire entanglements, and then a slow march, usually under cover of darkness, and sometimes also under that of gas or smoke, by an infantry weighed down with bombs, ammunition, machine guns, and all the paraphernalia of specialist warfare. If they arrived safely in the enemy's trench, the infantrymen would find it occupied by two or three machine-gun posts, a few desperate enemy, and the dead and wounded, and would then prepare for the inevitable shelling to extinction by the hostile artillery, which could range on the trench-line to a fraction of an inch and knew with minute accuracy the whereabouts of the entrance to every dug-out.

The other type of raid was that of "raid and away." This diversion consisted in rushing the enemy line by any ruse of surprise which happened to be the stunt of the moment; and if the vigilance of the enemy was distracted by a livelier interest in breakfast, the mail, or some other small excitement to break the monotony, then the raid was usually highly successful. It was possible to bring back quite a collection of reluctant prisoners to keep Intelligence officers occupied with improving their knowledge of the German language, and

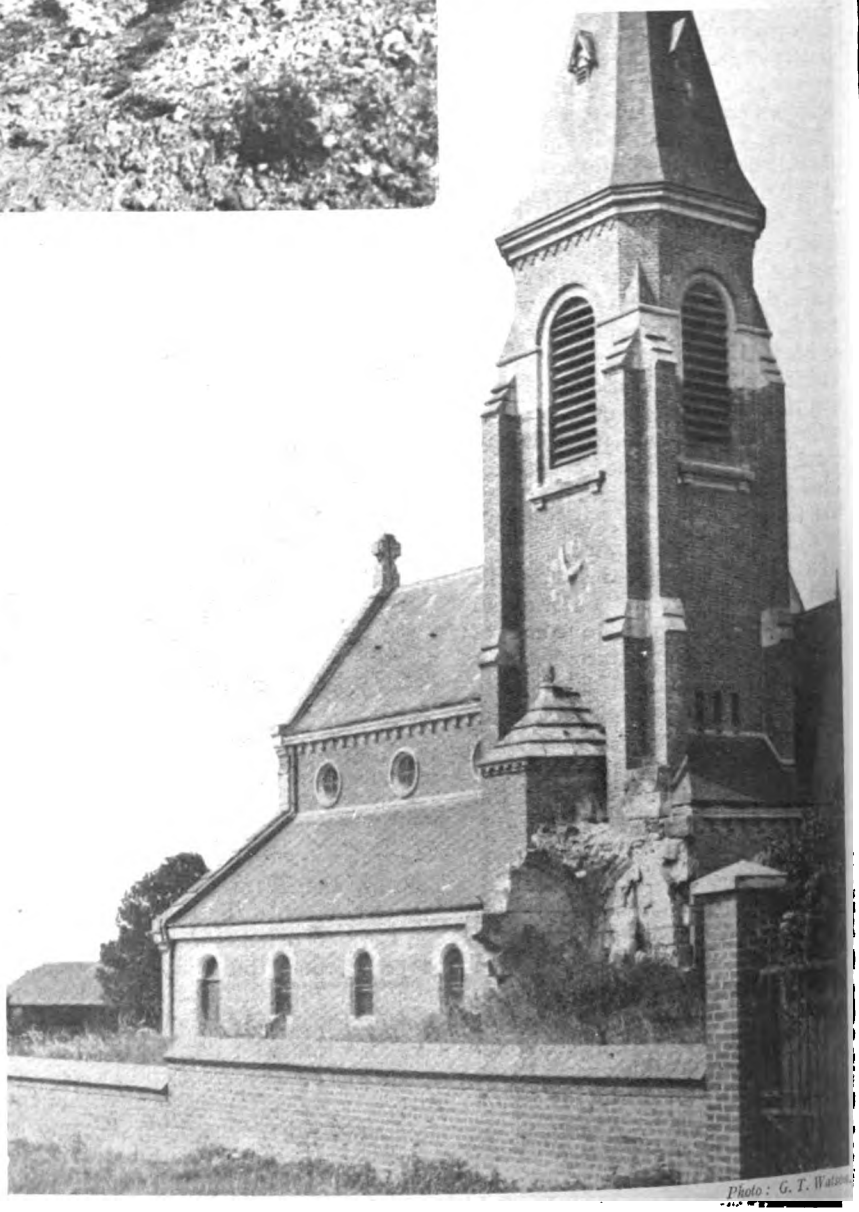

Photo: G. T. Watson.

THE NEW CHURCH—AND A FRAGMENT OF THE OLD
Roye was lost on the morning of March 26th, 1918, by the French 22nd Division, which lay with a large gap between its left and the British XIX Corps, and a smaller one between its right and the French 62nd Division. Reinforced by the arrival of the French 1st Cavalry Division, the infantrymen of the 22nd steadied the line for a time at Laucourt, but in the evening were forced to fall back a further two miles.

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with compiling those Intelligence Reports which we named " Comic Cuts."

If, on the other hand, the German sentries happened to be gazing through a camouflaged loophole upon the dull vista of soggy sandbags, empty tins, and tangled wire presented by the British trench system, and then noted the sudden and unusual appearance of numerous steel helmets in the foreground of this wearisome landscape, the raid came to a sudden and tragic end upon its own parapet.

The type of attack chosen for this new adventure was " raid and away." Then snow fell for two days, until the ground was white as a sheet, and the figures of khaki soldiers would stand out in black silhouette. Someone had an idea, and went to those far regions behind the front line where civilisation yet reigned. He returned with two hundred and fifty " dresses, night, linen, white, ladies, for the use of," or words to that effect. No, they were not articles of stores : but, on the contrary, were quite works of art, pleated and frilled, with mother-of-pearl buttons.

An Extraordinary Battle

Then was fought one of the strangest battles in history, and it always intrigues me that I played a part in it. The 2nd Battalion Worcestershires actually did the job. After whitewashing helmets, faces, hands, rifles, and boots, they crawled forward noiselessly, clad in nightshirts, through the deep snow. The Germans of the *3rd Guard Grenadier Regiment* were completely surprised.

Not one of us gave them the " frozen mitt " ; on the contrary, we brought in a good haul of prisoners with a warm welcome, and two machine guns ; and more than one party of men made two excursions across No Man's Land to bring in prisoners and loot. Our casualties were only a few lightly wounded, and we made hay of the enemy's dugouts.

You've only got to push straight on from Péronne to the east, and you come to where we began the War at Mons, Le Cateau, and St. Quentin, and where, also, we concluded it with the Armistice. An immense battlefield lies in between Péronne and Maubeuge, with Cambrai, the Hindenburg Line, the St. Quentin Canal, and the Rivers Selle and Sambre as its high spots.

Another contributor to this work has already told the story of the " old sweat " who countered the cry, " Are we downhearted ? No ! " of some of the earliest reinforcements with the laconic reply, " But you b—— soon will be ! " And were we downhearted ? Just a little, I think. We were entering a new, strange world which few of us knew or understood ; and we knew we were to experience the severance of comradeships which we had learned to value above anything else in life. Even so, few friendships have been as fresh as they were " Somewhere in France."

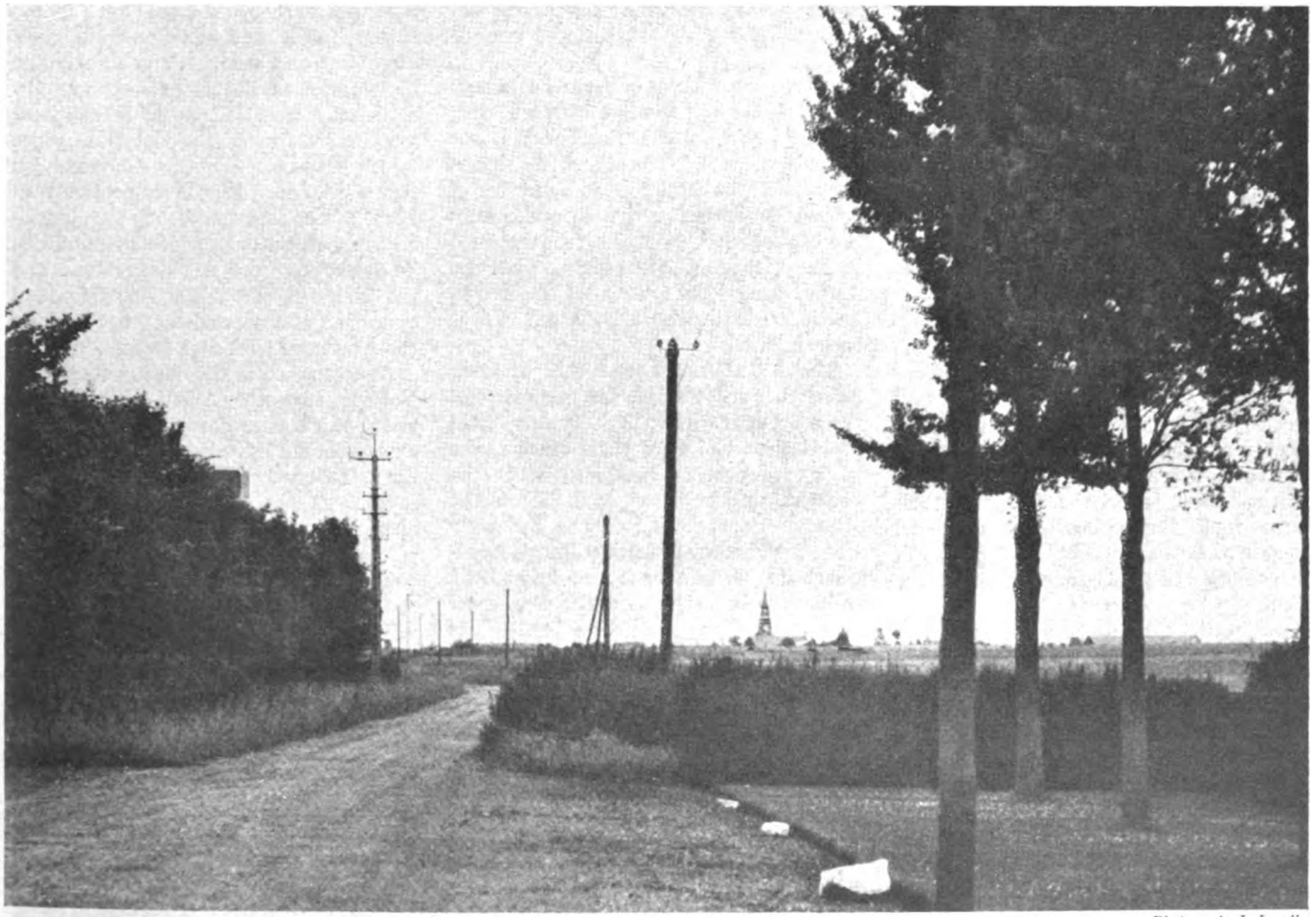

Photo : A. J. Insall.

GINCHY, FROM DELVILLE WOOD

In this photograph the village is seen on the horizon, and the wood, together with the South African memorial, lies mainly to the left. Ginchy was first captured in the early afternoon of September 3rd, 1916, by the 7th Division. The enemy recovered it on the same day, but was driven out on the 9th by the 49th Brigade of the 16th Division. On March 24th, 1918, the Germans re-entered the ruins by driving a wedge between the VII and V Corps. The eventual recapture was made at the end of August.

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CHAPTER XLIV

THE OCCUPATION OF THE RHINELAND

In the closing weeks of 1918, *on all the roads converging upon the Rhineland, troops representative of the victorious Armies were marching towards Germany, preceded, at a distance, by the defeated grey legions that for more than four years had fought with outstanding valour. But a few months earlier those same men in field-grey had driven forward in a last vain thrust towards the Channel ports, only to be held when victory seemed within their grasp. This march towards the Rhineland was the opening phase of a strange interlude which was to extend over a period of some eleven years. As will be shown in the following chapter, the Army of Occupation entered Germany as a conquering host, but when the time came for the last British soldier to return homewards from the country of those who had been his enemies he left Germany and the German people as a friend.*

THE month of November, 1918, saw the Allied line sweeping forward on the whole of the long front from Switzerland to the sea. The spirit of the troops rose as the tide of battle rolled eastward. The British were coming within sight of Mons, where the Old Contemptibles had first made contact with von Klück more than four years before; every day the French and Belgians saw a few more miles of their native soil freed from the invaders; Pershing's "Doughboys," young to the game of war and very full of fight, were beginning to learn their job and settle down into an efficient military machine.

The Spectre of Collapse

On the other side of the lines the picture was very different. The failure of the great offensive in the spring had destroyed the last hope of victory. It now remained only to fight on grimly with a view to making peace on the best terms. But, when the Allies in their turn took the offensive, Ludendorff began to be haunted by the spectre of the collapse of the German armies in the field.

Bulgaria, Turkey, and Austria were already tottering to their fall. Every day the iron grip of the blockade made itself more deeply felt on the home front. Workmen were fainting in the factories and women collapsing in the streets. And with hunger came the menace of revolution. Troops returning from leave spread the virus throughout the armies, and under the double strain of the smashing blows of the Allies in front and the insidious sapping of the morale from the rear, the bonds of discipline began to relax.

At the end of September, headquarters at Spa informed the Kaiser and the Chancellor that if a military collapse were to be avoided, an armistice must be concluded without delay. Negotiations were opened, but the Germans demurred at accepting the terms proposed by the Allies, which amounted practically to an unconditional surrender.

There was talk of a *levée en masse*, and of defending the line of the Rhine. But by this time the situation had got beyond control. The Fleet mutinied, open revolution broke out in a number of towns, Ludendorff resigned, and finally the Kaiser fled over the frontier into Holland, leaving Hindenburg with the Army, and Prince Max of Baden in Berlin, to deal with the situation as best they might.

The Allied forces were still pressing forward, and, though the majority of the German front-line troops held together and obeyed their officers, the back areas were seething with discontent, and soldiers' councils on the Russian model were springing up under the very shadow of Hindenburg's headquarters. Whatever it may have been in September, the position was now hopeless. The Armistice came on November 11th, just in time to avert the collapse of the German armies in the field.

Terms of the Armistice

Let us refresh our memories with another glance at the terms of the Armistice. These included the immediate evacuation of all invaded territory; the repatriation of civilian inhabitants who had been carried off to work in Germany; the surrender in good condition of 5,000 guns, 30,000 machine guns, 3,000 *minenwerfers*, and 2,000 aeroplanes; the evacuation of the left bank of the Rhine, and the surrender of three bridge-heads on the right bank opposite Cologne, Coblence, and Mayence; the surrender of 5,000 locomotives, 150,000 waggons, and 5,000 lorries; the disclosure of all mines with delay-action fuses, and assistance in their discovery and destruction; immediate repatriation of all prisoners of war; the abandonment of the treaties of Bucharest and Brest-Litovsk (the victorious peace terms imposed by the Germans on Roumania and Russia respectively in 1917); the surrender of six battle-cruisers, 10 battleships, 8 light cruisers, 50 destroyers, and all submarines; and the right of the Allies, on failure of execution of any condition, to denounce the Armistice within 48 hours.

As explained in the closing chapter of Volume two, the Allied military and naval chiefs who drew up these drastic clauses would have been lacking in their duty if they had made them any less severe. Their job was to draw the enemy's teeth. That necessary operation having been performed, it was then the business of the statesmen to arrange the terms of a lasting peace. And if these were less successful in performing their part, it should be remembered that it is one thing to arrange the terms on which a beaten army lays down its arms, but quite another to bring peace to a world distracted by more than four years of exhausting warfare.

Foch had arranged with the Germans that the Allied troops should stand fast for six days before beginning their 200-miles march to the Rhine. The time was all too short. A plan had to be evolved for taking over and administrating the 6,000,000 inhabitants of the invaded departments of northern France and of Alsace-Lorraine. Everywhere

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there was disorganisation and famine.

Then there were the 12,000,000 Germans of the Rhine provinces and other territory shortly to be occupied by the Allied armies. Here were not only famine and disorganisation, but also the threat of Bolshevism. The Allies would ultimately be responsible for the civil administration of this vast population.

Perilous Missions

Special missions were pushed forward to take over the surrendered war material, and to see that none of it was smuggled back into Germany. "Odd situations would arise during this gigantic process of transfer. At Mons one morning a group of German officers might have been espied acquainting British R.T.O.'s with the best rail facilities for the approaching advance. Sometimes Germans on these perilous 'staying behind' missions would have been torn to pieces by the local inhabitants but for their British guards.

"One sees an officer of Death's Head Hussars riding back on some mission into a Belgian townlet at the head of a dozen troopers. Deadly white and seated upright in their saddles the late oppressors rode, not looking to right or left at the windows on either side, from which, they feared, bullets might ping at any moment." [1]

[1] Ferdinand Tuohy, *Occupied 1918–1930.*

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

THE LAST DAY OF THE WAR

Another view of the Canadians in Mons after their capture of it on November 11th, 1918, a few hours before the Armistice—almost at the moment, in fact, when the historic scene between the Allied and German delegates was taking place in the railway carriage at Rethondes station. Notice the Canadian Scottish pipers.

French and Belgian towns had to be entered by the liberators, and touching scenes were enacted as women, children, and old men clung to the marching infantry, kissing and hugging them. The roads were congested with the stream of returning refugees, trundling wheelbarrows laden with their few belongings.

In the other direction came the even more pitiable columns of prisoners of war. Their plight was appalling. The Germans simply opened the prison camps and told the inmates to make the best of their way home to their friends. With clothing in rags and almost non-existent footwear, they shuffled, unwashed and unshaven, along the frozen roads, with little food save what they could beg from the villagers.

The Germans, too, needed a rest to pull themselves together. It was essential that they should not dissolve and stream back into the Fatherland as a Bolshevik rabble, spreading the plague of revolution wherever they went. This fear of Bolshevism was never far from the mind in those days.

The march to the Rhine began on November 17th. Something like a million men took part in it. From left to right of the long line were two Belgian divisions, Plumer's Second Army, Rawlinson's Fourth Army, the French Fifth Army, the American Third Army, the French Tenth and Eighth Armies.

Welcomed Like Victors

Before them trudged the long German columns. Hindenburg had got his beaten troops once more in hand. As far as the frontier they marched only

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

ONWARD TO THE RHINE

Here Brigadier-General A. Lawson, C.M.G., is shown leading the 2nd Cavalry Brigade into Spa on November 29th, 1918. This town, to-day a delightful holiday resort in the Belgian Ardennes, was German G.H.Q. until March 18th, 1918, and during the War's closing months became the scene of many conferences between the rulers and military leaders of the Central Powers. Here, too, on November 9th, the Kaiser abdicated.

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by night, to avoid untoward incidents with the French and Belgian inhabitants. But once in their own country they found themselves swinging through villages bedecked with flags. A good deal of this was due to a desire on the part of the authorities to keep the troops in good fettle and to steer them off looting, but the general effect was to cause some doubt in their minds as to whether they were a beaten army after all—a doubt which was subsequently reinforced by sedulous propaganda from nationalist sources.

On the Allied side, ". . . the start for the Rhine was all that a victory march should be: order, glitter, cheers, tears. With precision the Occupying Force moved daily forward, to take up billets each nightfall as arranged by advance parties, and to take over hundreds of abandoned German guns in its stride. One of the things that most impressed officers and men alike was the 'escaped' nature of their surroundings. To awaken in some cushy, intact château or billet and to gaze up at an uncracked ceiling afforded a second sensation akin to that of being permanently deloused."[1]

The beautiful country of the High Ardennes was a welcome change after the dreary, blood-soaked plains of Flanders and Picardy, and all went swimmingly. On reaching the German frontier the advanced troops halted for a few days to allow the long column to close up. The Belgian inhabitants of the frontier villages were now markedly less friendly. We were amongst a Flemish-speaking population which had made its peace with the Germans, and was not altogether pleased at the prospect of going through the whole business of organising its life and loyalties afresh.

The actual British invasion of Germany occurred on a quiet Sunday morning close to Malmédy, when a cavalry patrol crossed the frontier and clattered into a sleepy Rhineland village. Some white faces appeared at the windows; a small child waved a welcome, and the few peasants in the main street doffed their caps as the pennants passed them.

In other villages the astonished troops found themselves marching under evergreen arches through which the retiring field-greys had trudged a few days before, and thoughtfully left standing to propitiate the victors. There were even towns which had had the happy thought of adding welcoming inscriptions in English. Truly an amazing people!

British Weather for British Troops

The fine weather had now broken, giving way to dismal torrents of rain, and, to make matters worse, rations were not arriving regularly. The troops cursed the Staff and the base, and the feeling began to gain ground that these

[1] Ferdinand Tuohy, *op. cit.*

Photo, Imperial War Museum

OVER THE FRONTIER

British troops of the 1st Cavalry Division entering Malmédy, then the first town over the German frontier, on December 1st, 1918. Malmédy and its neighbour Eupen—the names cover small provinces round the actual towns—form a kind of Belgian Alsace-Lorraine on a small scale, having frequently changed their political nationality. Austrian until 1801, they then became French, and in 1815 were given to Prussia. They remained German until 1919, when under the Treaty of Versailles they were handed over to Belgium, to which they still belong.

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who had remained behind in France had had the best of the deal, and were now being demobilised at the rate of thousands daily to pick up all the best "civvy" jobs.

Most disgruntled of all were the Overseas Contingents. They had come over to win the War, and, that done, what was the flaming sense of hanging about in this God-forgotten country, instead of going straight back home? All things considered it was lucky that no "incidents" occurred on the march to the Rhine. The worst that happened was that a battalion of Jocks, misliking the looks of the local police at Düren, removed the lot under escort and incarcerated them in the local lock-up.

Our advance-guard entered Cologne on the morning of Friday, December 6th. The old city on the Rhine had lately gone through a trying time. Mutinous sailors and self-demobilised field-greys had torn the badges off officers in the Hohestrasse; the Red Flag had flown from the Rathaus; there had been a minor reign of terror, and the good burghers had had a taste of looting and anarchy.

The situation was now more or less in hand, but there were still some 10,000 Reds skulking in the poorer quarters of the town. The arrival of the British meant the guarantee of order, and in return for that the Kölner were quite prepared to swallow their pride.

On our side, the occupation of a city of 600,000 inhabitants of unknown temper called for military precautions. Fully-manned machine-gun posts appeared at cross-roads; armoured cars patrolled the streets; aeroplanes roared overhead; batteries of artillery unlimbered and prepared for action in convenient open spaces; and the walls were placarded with the regulations of the Military Governor.

But no trouble occurred. The inhabitants treated the incoming troops to a masterly display of "business as usual." We might have been the German garrison returning to barracks after a peace-time field-day.

The Last German Soldier

The only dramatic moment was when a sentry of the 18th Hussars was posted on a chalk-line halfway across the great Hohenzollern Bridge that spans the Rhine. At the same moment a lad in field-grey uniform, rifle on shoulder, emerged from the opposite bank and took up his station on the far side of the line—the last of the rearguard. It was a German who broke the spell. A shabbily-dressed man sidled up to our sentry and said with a grin, "Well, you've wound up the watch on the Rhine."

Six days later, on December 12th, we advanced to the perimeter of our

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

CROSSING THE RHINE

To-day, owing chiefly to its immense importance as a railway centre, there is almost undoubtedly no town in Germany better known to British holiday-makers than Cologne. Yet it was only in 1926 that the last khaki-clads left the city, bringing to a close an occupation which had lasted since December 6th, 1918, when British cavalry rode in, at the request of the local authorities, to quell disorder. This photograph, taken one month later, shows the 1st Battalion Grenadier Guards crossing the Rhine after a route-march.

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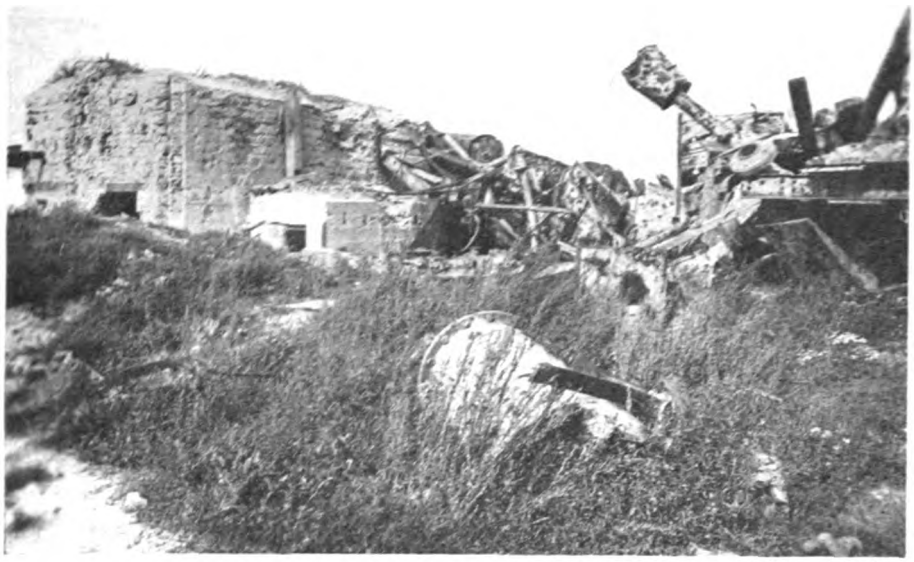

Photo: A.P., Paris.

POZIÈRES: THE *SUCRERIE*

Since we have already reproduced three "Then and Now" pairs of pictures showing this ill-famed village and its grim battlefield, there remains little to be said concerning the events there during 1916 or August, 1918. The above is a photograph of the wrecked sugar-refinery as it appeared on September 21st, 1917. Note the "pill-box" beside the tangled machinery.

bridge-head, twelve miles on the other side of the Rhine. "On the Hohenzollern Bridge, beneath the Union Jack and a statue of William II, Sir Herbert Plumer took the salute. As the first squadron rode by, *Rule Britannia* crashed out. Then it was *The Long, Long Trail*. . . . For two hours 'Old Plum,' best liked of Army Commanders, stood there at the salute as the Cavalry and Horse Gunners crossed on this their last ride eastward. . . .

"Next day it was the turn of the P.B.I. The 29th, the 9th Scottish, and the 1st Canadian Divisions trudged over the bridge in waterproof capes and through cold, incessant rain. These famous formations were finishing up in the element they knew best—mud." [1]

If the Germans were determined to set the tune of the occupation to the words "Business as usual," nothing could have suited us better. Our policy was already settled. German territory had to be occupied as a purely military measure in accordance with the Armistice terms. But, once here, we had no subtle afterthoughts, no political motives of any kind, and above all no desire to "rub it in." We had an unpleasant job to do, and wanted only to get through with it with the minimum of friction.

G.H.Q., installed in the Excelsior Hotel on the Domplatz, had got out a cut-and-dried scheme. Our method was to work through the existing German civil authorities. A special branch of the staff was set up to deal with civil affairs; this branch passed on its orders to the German officials, who, in their turn, passed them on to the inhabitants and saw that they were carried out. The most obvious outward and visible sign of the occupation was the red-capped military police who, from the first day, took their place beside the German police on point duty and assisted in directing traffic.

[1] Ferdinand Tuohy, *op. cit.*

Greenwich Mean Time

At first there were innumerable restrictions, which were gradually relaxed later. All civilians had to have passes; curfew was from 7 p.m. to daylight; civilian telephones were disconnected; letters were censored; and so on. Perhaps nothing brought home their position to the Germans so much as the compulsory change from Central European to Greenwich Mean Time.

One thing that probably worried the average British officer even more than the Germans was an order that all male civilians should salute them by raising their hats. This idea came from our French Allies, and did not last long in the British zone.

Strict orders were issued against fraternising with the inhabitants, but it was found practically impossible to enforce them. The British soldier is a friendly soul, and contrives to make himself understood no matter in what country he finds himself. Apart from

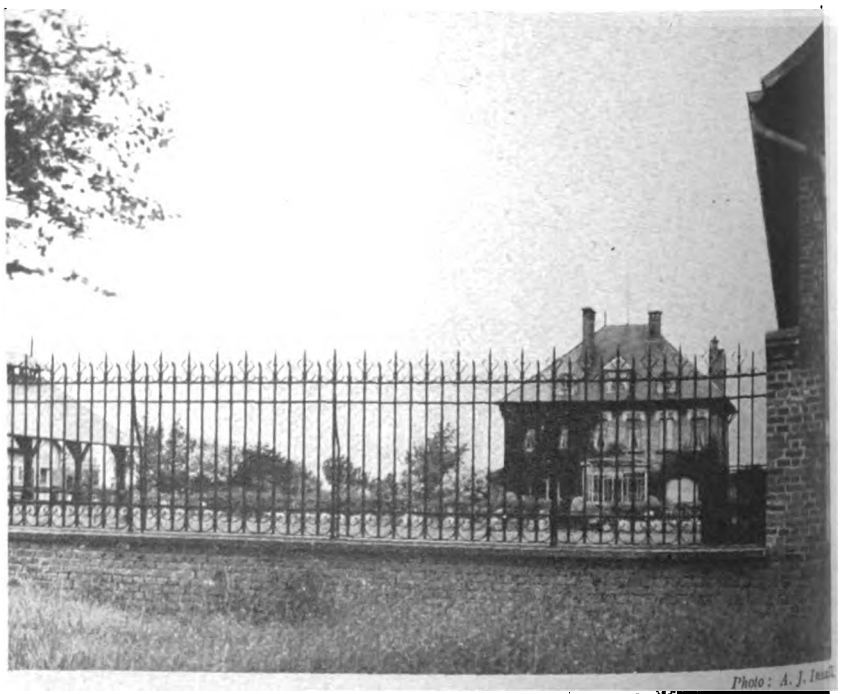

Photo: A. J. Insall.

A CHATÊAU-FARM ON THE SITE OF THE *SUCRERIE*

In 1916 it was the troops of Gough's Fifth Army who wrested Pozières from the enemy; in the March Retreat of 1918—that fortnight which was at once the glory and the tragedy of the same general and army—it was, by a curious turn of fortune, the Third Army which was forced to relinquish the ruins to the enemy. This happened on March 25th, and involved the V Corps—the formation destined to effect the August recapture.

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the inevitable "bit of skirt," there were plenty of Germans only too eager to get into conversation with him, once they discovered that the *verfluchte Engländer* did not bite.

It was not long before the Army made one revealing discovery. Germany had been forced by the blockade to tighten her belt to an extent that few people would have stood for so long. But what even fewer would have stood—and this was probably more than anything else the factor responsible for the final collapse—was the uneven working of the food-rationing regulations. In the well-to-do cafés and restaurants it was difficult to believe that there had ever been any shortage. But amongst the poorer folk there were obvious signs of sheer starvation.

In this situation it was Thomas Atkins who stepped in and forced the hand of authority. The troops were physically incapable of eating their fill when the people around them were starving, and, in spite of drastic orders to the contrary, they insisted on sharing their rations with the German population. Plumer interrupted an interminable discussion in Paris as to whether or not foodstuffs should be allowed to enter the occupied territory, by declaring that unless something was done about it, and that soon, he would be unable to maintain the discipline of his army.

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

BY GLENCORSE WOOD

A picture taken from the vicinity of Clapham Junction, on the Menin Road, looking toward Glencorse Wood and Inverness Copse at the time of the German counter-attack on September 26th, 1917. It will be recalled that the wood had been carried, after many a week of vain attempts, on September 20th, chiefly by British north-country troops and the 1st and 2nd Australian Divisions.

A Vast Smuggling Traffic

After this, there was no further difficulty about food so far as the occupied territories were concerned. But the blockade was still maintained on the rest of Germany until the Peace Treaty should have been safely signed. This meant that while food and luxuries of all kinds were easily obtainable on one side of the new frontier, they were worth their weight in gold on the other; and the implications of such a situation were not lost on any German of an adventurous turn of mind, anxious to get rich quickly. A vast smuggling traffic sprang up, and the troops stationed on the perimeter were kept busy patrolling the roads and tracks leading to unoccupied territory.

A good story is told of a picket near Benrath, on the main road leading from Cologne to the unoccupied town of Düsseldorf. A woman of gigantic proportions was in the habit of doing the journey by tram twice a day. The picket had orders to stop all traffic, including the trams, and to search the male passengers. Nothing was ever found. One day a female searcher was installed in a nearby house, and the women passengers were also examined. The fat woman turned out to be a man with a pair of hams slung round his waist, one on each side, and two gargantuan pats of butter, one on either side of his chest.

The culprit on this occasion, and all Germans falling foul of the regulations of the occupying authority, were haled before the summary court. This was a British military court run very much on the lines of a magistrate's court at home.

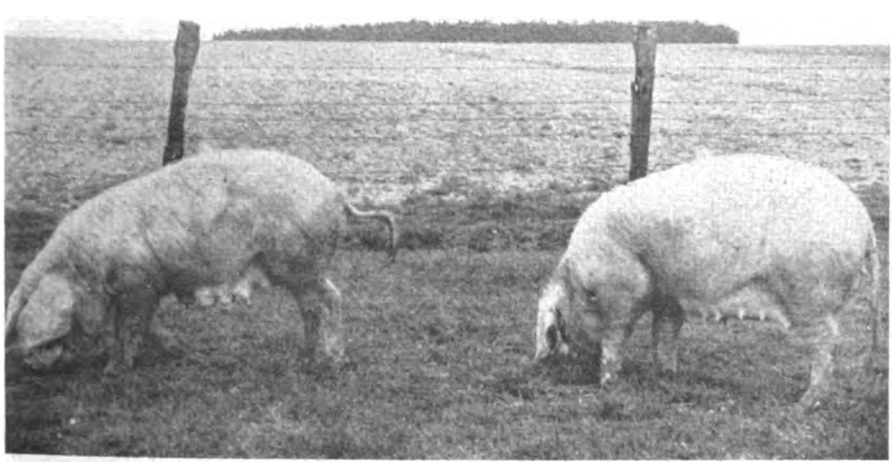

Photo: G. T. Watson.

A BLOOD-SOAKED COUNTRY

This is a particularly fortunate view of the contemporary Glencorse Wood, showing the type of isolated and normally insignificant mound which during the War proved time and again a vantage-point to be fought for at the cost of no matter how many lives. To-day, barbed wire and mud are not without their uses, and thoughts of murder have been supplanted by interest in the Fat Stock Prices.

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The place of the J.P. was taken by a British officer in uniform; another officer acted as prosecutor; the accused had the right to be represented by German civilian counsel; the military police acted as ushers; and there was an interpreter on duty.

The Germans, accustomed to the cumbersome ways of their own legal machine, were always amazed at the simplicity of the summary court procedure; and it is some tribute to British justice that throughout the ten years of the occupation, during which time a total of nearly 5,000 cases came before this court, there was no serious complaint that the accused had not had a fair deal.

The Demobilisation Question

The early months of the year 1919 were a bad time. Everywhere the reaction had set in. Men could not see why they should be kept with the colours once the War was over. There was trouble at Calais. Rations did not always arrive regularly. There was always the haunting fear that "the other fellows" were being demobilised first and were snapping up the jobs.

It did not make it any better that the grouses of the Overseas troops bore fruit, and they were repatriated, while their unfortunate British comrades remained behind on the Rhine in the midst of the half-starved German population.

There is no need to go into the demobilisation controversy here. It will suffice to say that Winston Churchill was the man who got matters in hand by seeing to it that those who had served longest and had been wounded were demobilised first, that the Army pay was raised to bring it more into line with civil rates, and, finally, that the young soldiers who had been trained at home but had never left England were sent out to replace the older men who had borne the heat and burden of the day.

After that, the Rhine Army settled down to make the best of things. Every day, scores of officers and hundreds of men were being sent home to be demobilised. As the civilian armies of wartime were gradually dispersed, life assumed the aspect of one long-drawn-out farewell party. With whisky at 4*s.* 6*d.* and gin at 3*s.* a bottle, obtainable in almost unlimited quantities from the canteen, it was an alcoholic time. But good humour prevailed, and there was little trouble.

The Army Commander decided that there must be amusements and plenty of them, and an officer with a special staff was told off to make the necessary

Photo: Imperial War Museum

THE WATCH ON THE RHINE

Carried out in this case by two Jocks aloft in one of the spires of Cologne Cathedral. The first British infantry troops to enter the city were the 28th Brigade (9th Division), which arrived there on December 7th. On the same day the Belgians, further north, entered Crefeld, in their sector of the Rhine; and on the 10th the Americans and French took possession of Coblenz and Mainz respectively. On the 11th the British Military Governor (General Fergusson) arrived at Cologne, and the Union Jack was hoisted for the first time over H.Q., the Hotel Monopol.

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Photo: Imperial War Museum.

TO LET—UNFURNISHED

A forest of wheel-less ammunition limbers, all of them empty, left behind by the German Army before its evacuation of Cologne, and not disturbed—at any rate for some months—by the British. The latter's cavalry crossed the Rhine here, and formally occupied the "Armistice bridgehead," on December 12th, 1918; and on the next day the infantry (Home Country and Canadian) followed it over the river.

arrangements. Old Rhinelanders will remember Captain Haygarth, and the Amusements Office over which he presided. Cinemas and a theatre were requisitioned. A host of concert parties made their appearance—"The Crumps," "The Colognettes, "The Tabs," "The Thistles," and a dozen others. Miss Decima Moore came out to run a club, where the chief attraction were the English women's voices.

Hectic Conviviality

An "Army College" was started, where enthusiastic students gathered nightly to study almost any subject under the sun. The *Cologne Post* made its appearance under the editorship of Captain Rolston. Besides the local German attractions such as the opera, the theatre, and any number of excellent concerts, the Army ran its own theatre —the Deutsches—with a repertory company, and Esmé Percy as presiding genius.

The two great meeting-places and centres of conviviality for the commissioned ranks were the VI Corps Club and the Ewige Lampe, more generally known as "the Earwig." Here at any time of the day or night could be found a crowd of officers, representing every arm, unit, and formation of the old B.E.F., renewing old acquaintanceships, swopping yarns, or discussing civilian plans. The world seemed a rosy place in those days.

Throughout this hectic time the Hohestrasse served as the promenade for the troops. There was even a ballad written about it, *Adown the 'Oher Strass'*. "At one time it bore resemblance to an Alaskan gold-rush, when temporary hutments had to be run up by Cox & Co. to provide facilities for cheque cashing. . . . 'The 'Oher' was the scene of never-ending bargaining between the troops and the shopkeepers, whose subterfuges to charge more per 'stook' for their wares came gradually to be defeated.

"There was always something tawdry about 'The 'Oher'; nevertheless it afforded a famous spectacle at the time, with the British Army on holiday in its streets and the Germans themselves somehow caught up in the atmosphere."[1]

Hardly a week passed without some distinguished visitor coming to Cologne —Haig, Foch, Winston Churchill, Joffre, Henry Wilson, and others. There were parades on the Dom Platz under the shadow of the great cathedral, and by this time the Germans had so far recovered themselves as to attend in their thousands. One of the most impressive sights was the Two Minutes' Silence on

[1] Ferdinand Tuohy, *op. cit.*

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Photo: Imperial War Museum.

ON THE DÜSSELDORF ROAD

A scene at one of the barriers marking the limits of the British Zone of Occupation: a picquet of the 9th Scottish Rifles near the Reisholz, on the road to Düsseldorf, examines one of the passes which had to be shown by all persons entering or leaving the zone. Düsseldorf itself, which combines the strangely-assorted distinctions of being one of the loveliest towns on the Rhine and one of the most important centres of West German heavy industry, was occupied by the French from March, 1921, until August, 1925.

Armistice Day, with the troops surrounded on all sides by a dense crowd of Germans standing motionless and bare-headed.

The headquarters of the Americans were at Coblence, where the Moselle flows into the Rhine; and the outward and visible sign of their occupation was an out-sized Stars and Stripes floating from the flagstaff on the old castle of Ehrenbreitstein.

The American Attitude

In many ways the Americans had a more difficult task than either the British at Cologne or the French at Mayence. In the first place, the German population deliberately set out to curry favour with Uncle Sam's representatives. Whether this attitude was decreed from Berlin, or whether it was due to local initiative, it is difficult to say. But in either case the motive was clear: the Germans looked to President Wilson as the man most likely to exercise a moderating influence in the Allied councils when it came to drawing up the peace terms. Thus they made every effort to play off the Americans against the French.

On the other hand, the "Doughboys" themselves were in a very different mood. "Here was a highly-strung force that had only 'got its feet wet,' bursting with comforts and well-being, feeling half cheated out of a revenge for the Argonne mess, and all out to see the cock-eyed world; no war-weariness, no profound relief and thankfulness here.

"If we strolled nonchalantly into Cologne, we were none the less damned glad it was over. So, for that matter were the French down south ever they did trail the conqueror's c But this vigorous young army was s inflated by the waves of big-dr patriotism, was still in the thro 'Hun' and 'Boche,' where others ha had time to calm down. . . .

"The Doughboys just didn't unde stand. Why in hell were these son witches all of a sudden so friendly Hadn't they mopped up thousands the boys in the Argonne only a few wee before?"[1]

The result was that in their treatme of the Germans the Americans alternated between ferocity and excessi friendliness. Nor were matters ma any easier by the orders against "ge ting together" with German girls, whi were enforced here far more stringent than in the British zone. Finally Prohibition came to remove one of th few remaining escapes from boredom.

Perhaps, all things considered, it was as well that the public outcry in th United States for "cutting loose fro European entanglements" got under way when it did. In less than nine months the American Army of Occupation had dwindled from 300,000 me down to a single division.

The "Doughboys" Settle Down

The remnant, a few battalions strong remained on at Coblence under General Allen until the Ruhr Occupation in 1923, when the American Government signalised its disagreement with French policy by withdrawing the troops to Hamburg. But long before that they had settled down, and the continued presence of this handful of men who saw more or less eye-to-eye with us on major issues went some way toward keeping things running smoothly.

The French attitude towards the occupation was quite different from that of either the Americans or ourselves. American historical connection with Europe could be summed up in the phrase used by General Pershing when he landed in France in 1917—"Lafayette, we are here!" Our own connection was a longer one. In 1704 the long columns of Marlborough's red-coated infantry had tramped through these self-same villages and towns along the Rhine bank on their way to Blenheim. But we are not a historically-minded people, and it is doubtful if more than a few dozen of the red-coats khaki-clad successors ever gave a thought to that episode of more than two centuries back.

[1] Ferdinand Tuohy, *op. cit.*

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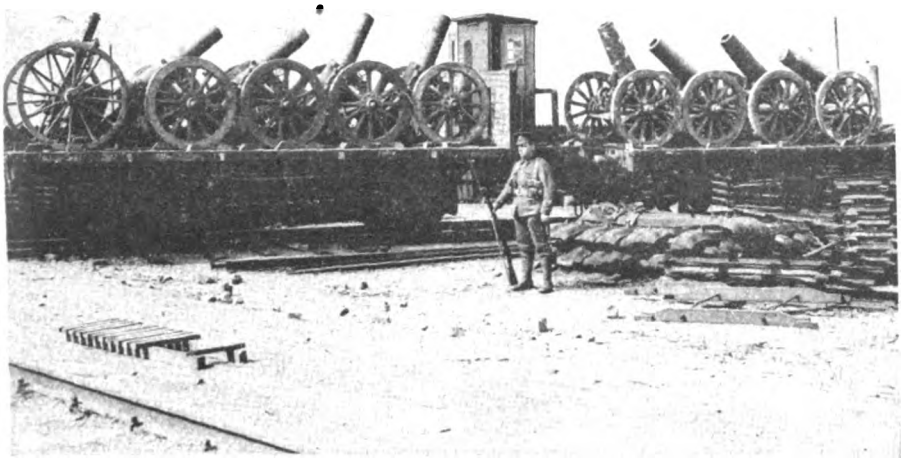

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

VETERANS

A characteristic example of German guile, worthy of the ancient Greeks, was the inclusion among the weapons surrendered under the Armistice terms of a number of obsolete guns, in some cases 50 years old. Unfortunately for the vanquished, however, these veteran pieces, of which a collection is shown above, were not accepted, and had to be replaced by modern artillery.

The French standpoint was made up of two factors. First, from time immemorial the fair lands of France had been subject to periodical invasion by the Germanic hordes from beyond the Rhine. 1814, 1815, 1870, and 1914 were graven deep into the consciousness of every Frenchman. To go back even further—and no Frenchman minds how far he goes back in history—the break-up of the Roman Empire was due to the piercing by these same hordes of the Roman defences along the line of the Rhine.

To the French, that line represents the only substantial military barrier between themselves and a dangerous neighbour. They wanted to annex the Rhineland after the War because they felt that France would be safe only so long as French troops held the bank of the great river. The moment the Rhine bridges were in German hands they would once more be haunted by the spectre of invasion. Perhaps if we had been in their place we might not have felt very differently.

The Cult of Glory

The other factor which went to colour the tone of the French occupation was the cult of Glory—with a capital G. Clémenceau—the "Tiger"—once said to an English friend, "A thing I like about you English is that you don't give a thought to glory. We are mad about it." They were; and of all places in the world, the Rhineland is most bound up with the glories of their military tradition.

The victorious armies of Louis XIV, of the Revolution, and of the First Empire, had all passed this way. Mayence was the chief town of a French department for twenty-five years, until Blücher's Prussians drove out the French eagles. The graves of half-forgotten French heroes were sought out and wreaths laid on them. When Mangin's cavalry first reached the Rhine, the squadrons halted at the salute while the standards were dipped in the brown, swirling waters.

It was an article of faith with the French that the Rhinelanders were a different breed from *les Prussiens*, a breed longing only to be freed from the oppressive yoke of Berlin and united once more with France. The first point was true; the average Rhinelander is a very different type from the Prussian—lighter-hearted, less overbearing; he was not considered to possess the qualities that go to make a good German official, with the result that officialdom in these provinces was largely recruited from the unimaginative, square-headed stock from further east.

It is not surprising that the Prussian was not popular here. After a good dinner, washed down by several bottles of his native wine, a Rhineland landowner once so far forgot himself as to give vent to his feelings. "*Hier Rheinland*," he said, indicating the smiling countryside with a comprehensive sweep of his hand; then, shaking his fist towards the east, "*Da Schweinland.*"

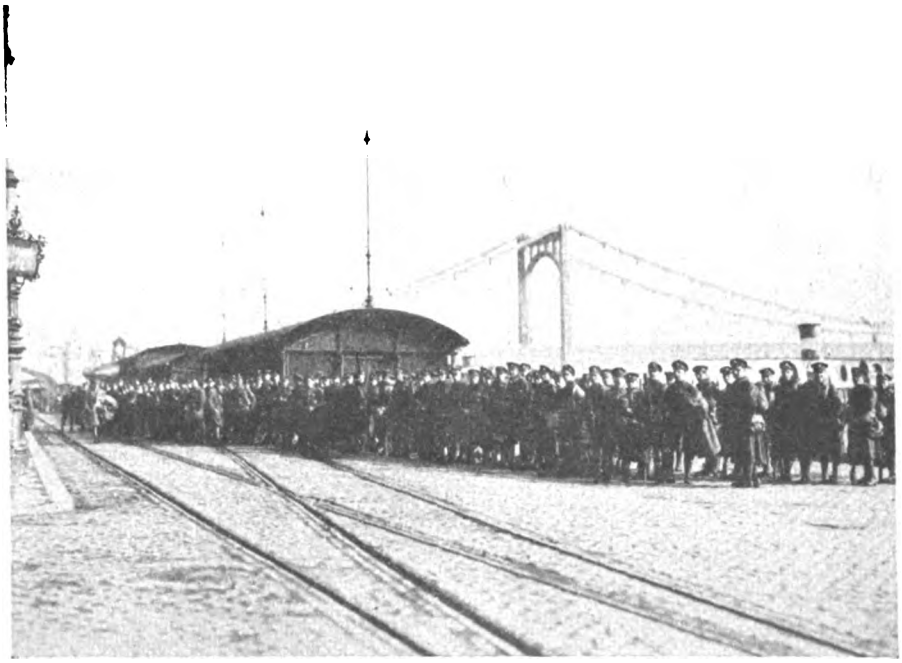

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

DEMOBILISATION IN STORE

A group of British Tommies waiting on one of the Rhine quays at Cologne for the steamer which was to take them to Rotterdam, *en route* for England and demobilisation. The photograph is dated March 31st, 1919, and falls in the period when those who had fought through the War were being replaced as far as possible by new drafts.

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The French were not slow to draw inferences from such outbursts.

But whether the Rhinelanders were so anxious to be united to France was another matter. Their dislike of the Prussians was rather in the nature of a family affair; after all, they were all Germans and spoke the same language. It is probable that the French, wanting the Rhine frontier from the bottom of their hearts for military reasons, and denied it by what they regarded as the unexampled obstinacy and pigheadedness of Wilson and Lloyd George, tended to exaggerate the natural affinity with themselves of the inhabitants of the region which they coveted.

The Rhineland Republic Scheme

As early as 1919, General Mangin made use of a certain Dr. Dorten—a Rhineland German—as a tool wherewith to call into being a Rhineland Republic, independent from Germany. Dorten did not inspire the confidence of his compatriots, the coup failed, and, in the upshot, Mangin was relieved of his command. But the French did not give up the idea of the Rhineland Republic.

"They went about their task by less open means. The threads were taken out of the blundering hands of the soldiers and united under the far more capable supervision of M. Tirard, the French High Commissioner at Coblence (known to the Germans as 'the old fox'). French propaganda was disseminated by all possible means—free classes in the French language, subsidised Press organs, French actors and singers brought to perform on the local stage, and French divines to preach in German pulpits. A Rhineland Exhibition was held near Wiesbaden. French officers went out of their way to cultivate relations with the inhabitants."[1]

In the British and French zones the positions were practically reversed. In our case, the official attitude, as exemplified in the relations between British officers and the German officials and inhabitants, was one of cold correctness and distance. Thomas Atkins, less susceptible to official "suggestion," "got on" with the Germans like a house on fire, and, as likely as not, braved the wrath of his Colonel by actually marrying a German girl, who in nine cases out of ten made him an extremely good wife.

The French officers, on the other hand, also under the influence of official "suggestion," seized every opportunity of fraternising. But the French soldier,

[1] B. T. Reynolds, *Prelude to Hitler*.

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

BAILLEUL: THE SQUARE

We have already shown several "Then and Now" pairs of pictures concerning this town, and not much remains to be said of it. The present illustration, and its modern counterpart opposite, show the great central square—a *place* actually far too large for the size of Bailleul, which contains less than 10,000 inhabitants.

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Photo: A. J. Insall.

A MASS OF EMPTINESS

Even on market-days this vast expanse is hardly filled by the stall-holders. The chief activity of the town is hand-made lace, but the woollen, linen, leather, pottery, soap, and cheese-making industries are all more or less in evidence. Before the War there were several historic old buildings, and also a museum of paintings and antiquities. That the extensive damage has been repaired is thanks mainly to Bradford, which "adopted" Baillieul after the Armistice.

more simple-minded than his superiors, was unable to distinguish the fine shade between one German and another. They were all Boches to him, and *sales Boches* at that.

In the first flush of victory he exercised the fascination that every conqueror throughout history has done over the women-folk of the conquered, and they were kind to him. But the glamour wore off, and they soon discovered that, unlike that of his British comrade, his conscript's pay did not cover the cost of many evenings out. In the end the *poilu* had few friendly points of contact with the people amongst whom he mounted guard on the Rhine.

Coloured Troops

To the British mind, too, the French appeared to make one capital mistake. Throughout the occupation they maintained a large contingent of coloured troops on the Rhine. The French attitude to the question of colour is quite different from our own. In peace-time they maintain a number of "mixed" divisions, containing Algerian, Moroccan, and other coloured formations, in garrisons in the south of France.

French and native soldiers serve side-by-side in these formations, and even in the so-called "metropolitan" (or pure French) regiments there are often to be found negroes and other coloured people—fully-fledged French citizens—doing their military service.

The French argued that if these men were good enough to live in France, and good enough to fight for France, they were certainly good enough for the Germans. They refused to listen to the indignant protests of German housewives who objected to having these coloured folk billeted on them, and thereby gave the Germans a wonderful handle for propaganda purposes—one which they were not slow to use.

In actual fact, the conduct of the French native troops was good, and whenever an unfortunate coloured man got out of hand he was punished with exemplary severity. But the fact that the Colonials were here at all was undoubtedly regarded by the Germans as an insult—and we should have regarded it no differently.

This probably went a long way towards undoing any effect that the deliberate fraternising of French officers with the Rhinelanders may have had, and tended to make the French soldiery as a whole unpopular with the Germans. The whole business was, to say the least of it, extremely unfortunate.

Now let us turn from the troubles of the various armies to see what was happening at Versailles, where the terms of the Peace Treaty were being hammered out. The War had raged over a large part of the globe. In Europe alone three mighty Empires had come crashing down—Russia, Austria-Hungary, and Germany—and the whole political map required redrawing. There were many incompatible claims to be reconciled.

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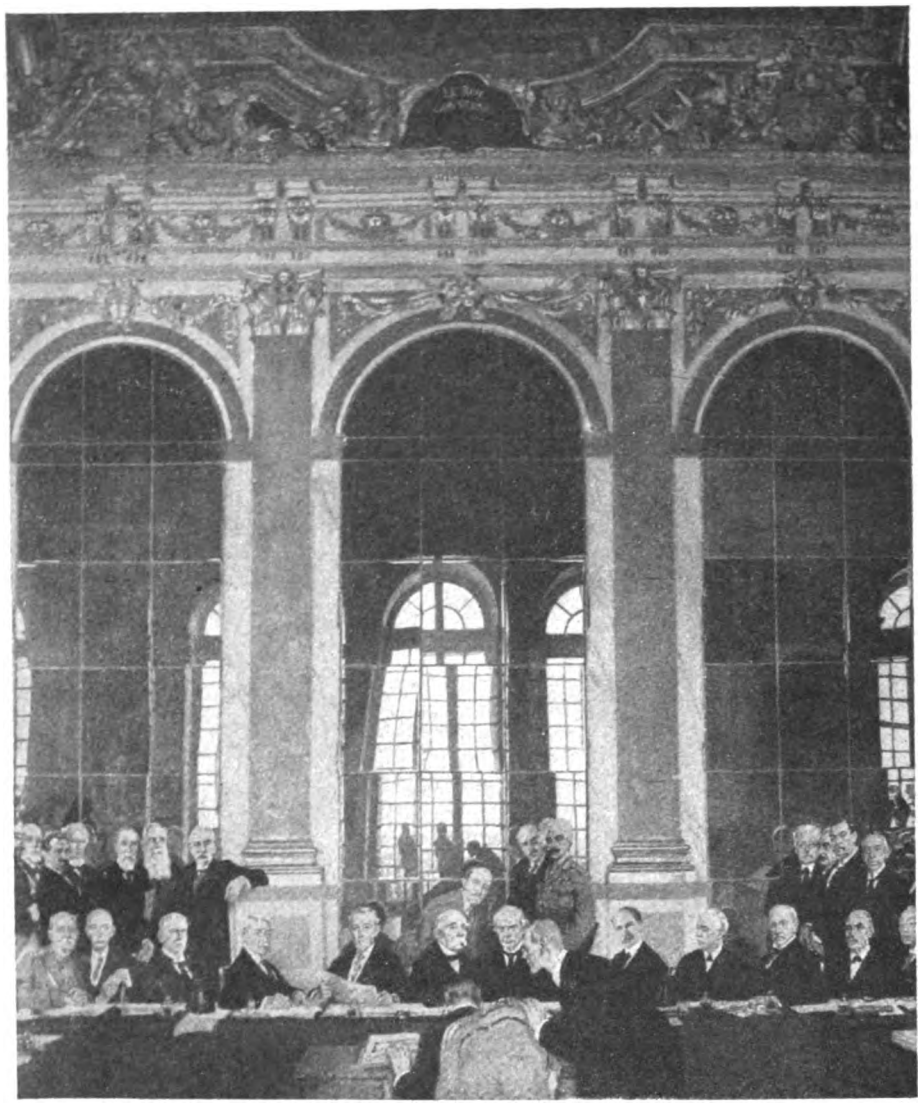

From the original in the Imperial War Museum.

THE SIGNING OF THE TREATY OF VERSAILLES

A painting made by Sir William Orpen in the Hall of Mirrors at Versailles on that fateful June 28th, 1919, which saw the signing of the Peace Treaty. In the foreground Dr. Johannes Bell, of Germany, is bending over the document with his back to the artist, while Herr Hermann Müller leans over him. The figures at the table include President Wilson, Clémenceau, Lloyd George, Bonar Law, and Arthur Balfour; and among those standing are Venizelos, Maurice Hankey, Edwin S. Montagu, the Maharajah of Bikanir, and W. M. Hughes of Australia.

The Treaty of Versailles

We have not space here to go into the terms of the Treaty of Versailles, which fill a stout book of over 300 closely printed pages. In these days it is the custom to deride the Peace Treaty, but, taking all things into consideration, it is doubtful whether the historian of the future will regard it as an unfair document. Germany lost a considerable amount of territory, with the resources that it contained, but she was not dismembered, and no purely German population was cut off from the Fatherland.

Perhaps the most unfortunate points about the Treaty were, first its financial clauses, by which the victors demanded in the form of Reparations astronomical sums which we have since seen could not possibly have been paid; and secondly the fact that it was a dictated peace. The Germans were presented with the document, and told to sign on the dotted line: no serious discussion of the terms was permitted.

Whether they would have been any more reasonable had they been in our place is another matter. It is, to say the least of it, extremely doubtful. But that does not excuse us for a blunder that is largely responsible for the unsettled state of Europe to-day.

The Treaty was actually signed on June 28th, 1919. Up to the last moment it was uncertain whether the Germans would put their signature to the document; and the factor which decided them to do so was that the Allies were prepared to take drastic action.

Marshal Foch had made all preparations. The Belgians, British, and Americans on the Lower Rhine were to move forward a distance of 60 miles at a single bound. The French Army, based on Mayence, would advance up the valley of the Main and join hands with the Czechoslovaks. The latter would draw a line of iron across the south of Germany, which would be continued by the Poles on the east. The whole of the German coast-line from Danzig to Bremen would be blockaded by the British fleet. By this means Germany would have been completely enclosed in an iron net, and there is little doubt that she would have been strangled into submission.

All the plans were worked out in detail, and the scheme was to be put into operation on what was called "J" day. Fortunately, the Germans signed, and the troops were able to stand down and carry on with their more peaceful pursuits.

Meanwhile, unoccupied Germany was in a very unsettled state, and the attempt on the part of the Government to disband a body of troops under reactionary leaders in the neighbourhood of Berlin led, in March, 1920, to the so-called Kapp Putsch. The troops marched into the capital, and the Government fled. The upshot was a general strike, and fighting in various parts of the country.

The Spartacist Rising

There was a Spartacist rising in the Ruhr, and the Governemnt were obliged to send a military force to suppress the disorders. In the course of the skirmishing, bodies of troops and of armed miners were driven over the border into the British zone, where they were quietly disarmed. The conflict was bitter, and for years afterwards the factory doors showed the marks of shells and machine-gun fire.

The Ruhr was in the neutral zone into which German troops were not allowed under the terms of the Peace Treaty; and the French seized on this infraction as an excuse for extending the Mayence bridge-head to include the town of Frankfurt. But the British Government objected, and Frankfurt was subsequently evacuated, although not before there had been some clashes between the population and the French troops, in the course of which the latter were obliged to open fire.

The War-time armies had now been demobilised, and the British garrison of

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Cologne had been drastically reduced to the strength of about a division of Regular troops. Subsequent applications of the economy axe were unable to effect any further serious reductions in this small force; and for all practical purposes the British occupation had now assumed its final shape.

Cologne came to be regarded very much as any other foreign station, with this curious difference, that time spent there did not officially count as "foreign service," although the troops there were officially "on active service." Incoming battalions would arrive full of fierceness and "Hun" talk, only to depart again at the end of a couple of years fully acclimatised to the prevailing atmosphere of benevolent tolerance towards all things German.

It was a pleasant life. The mark was already on the path which was to lead it in 1923 down the dizzy precipices of thousands, millions, milliards, and billions, until it was finally worth nothing at all. But for the moment there were innumerable opportunities of profiting by this state of affairs. Many a soldier was initiated into the mysteries of high finance, and was enabled thereby to live like a fighting-cock.

The Married Man's Paradise

Married officers and men were at first billeted on the inhabitants, but later the municipality built special quarters for the use of the occupying troops. Cologne was the married man's paradise, with free quarters, furniture, light, fuel, lodging, and even washing. Few old Rhinelanders will have forgotten the *Reichsvermögensamt* (literally State property office) from whose apparently inexhaustible stocks the Germans issued furniture, linen, and every other kind of household requisite on the production of a chit from the billeting officer.

It was a word to conjure with. A small English child was once heard to close a heated argument with its German nurse by asserting roundly, "Well, anyhow, we English are better than you. We've got a King whilst you only have a *Reichsvermögensamt*."

In 1921 another event occurred which gave us a foretaste of what was to come. The Germans were in default on their Reparation payments—a chronic state of affairs. It was decided to bring pressure to bear on them by applying what was known in diplomatic language as "a sanction." This took the form of the occupation of the three towns of Düsseldorf, Ruhrort, and Duisburg. French troops took the major part in this while the British and Belgians were represented by smaller contingents.

"The roads were full of long columns of French troops—cavalry, infantry, guns, tanks, and transport. I watched the column passing under a railway bridge over which two solid Westphalian workmen were leaning. A little French gunner waved his hand to them, shouting '*Deutschland Kaput.*' One of the Germans expectorated and muttered something in dialect which sounded remarkably like the local equivalent for a certain objectionable English monosyllable.

"... We were taking part in this sanction and the might of Britain was represented by a squadron of cavalry and a section of tanks. The British horsemen formed a striking contrast to the untidy ranks of our allies. But the long journey over the pavé roads brought out as many mechanical defects among our tanks as it did among the far more numerous French *chars*."[1]

The Royal Navy was represented at the taking over of Düsseldorf by several C.M.B.'s. A Belgian sentry, startled by the sudden appearance of this armada, loosed off his rifle and holed one of His Majesty's ships on the waterline. This was the only shot fired. The story ran that the captain saved his command from sinking by plugging the hole with a champagne cork.

Düsseldorf Grows Used to it

The Germans put up no resistance, and the excitement of this new occupation

[1] B. T. Reynolds, *op. cit.*

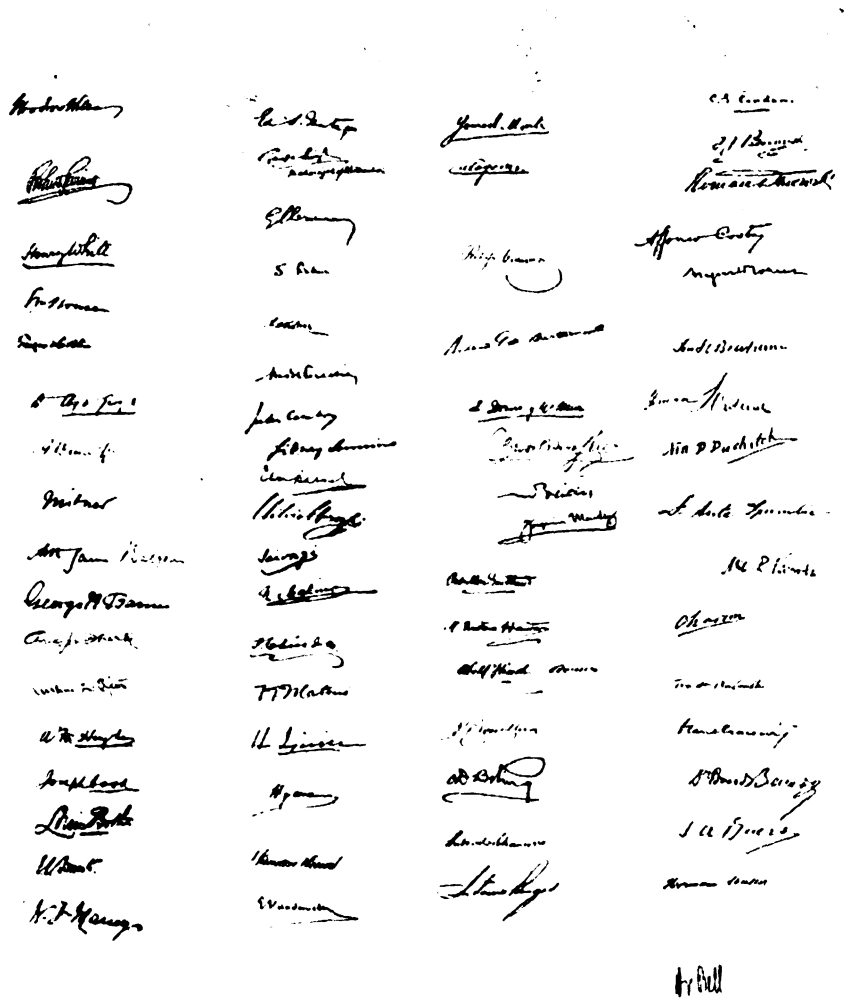

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

SIGNATURES

A facsimile of the signatures appended to the Treaty of Versailles. It has frequently been said that by its aggressiveness this peace treaty has caused as much distress as the War itself; and there is much in the political happenings of the last twenty years to bear out this view. On the other hand, it must be remembered—as critics do not always remember—that the tasks confronting the Versailles delegates were truly stupendous, and that other nations do not all, even to-day, by any means share the prevailing British view that after a victory it is neither politic nor humane to grind the former foe into the dust.

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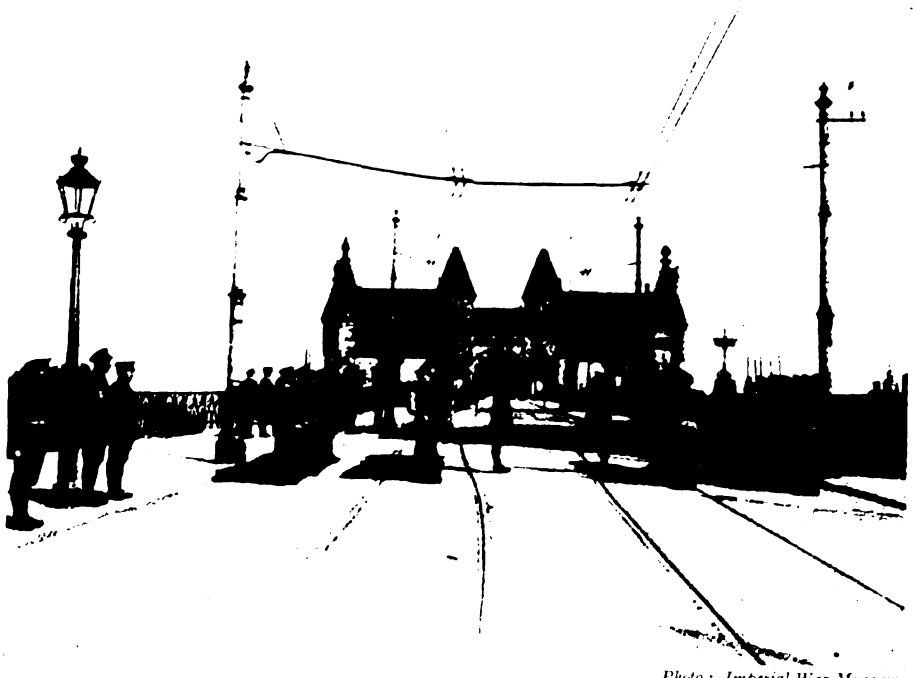

Photo: *Imperial War Museum.*

THE OLD AND THE NEW

A scene on the handsome Rhine bridge at Bonn when the new army was taking over from the old. This town, famous for its university, its ancient minster, and the house in which Beethoven was born, stands on the left bank of the river about 15 miles from Cologne. British infantry first crossed to the industrial district of Beuel, on the right bank, on December 13th, 1918.

soon wore off. The inhabitants settled down to their fate with the same not uncheerful resignation as their cousins in the Rhineland.

At about this time there was a plebiscite held in Upper Silesia, where the inhabitants were asked to vote whether they wanted to remain with Germany or go over to Poland. Both Germans and Poles regarded the result as a life-and-death affair, and were little disposed to allow the rival parties a fair field and no favour. Bands of armed irregulars, German and Polish, invaded the disputed territory, and soon there was a minor war on.

The French and British both sent troops to hold the ring, but Allied solidarity was rather shaken by the tendency of the French to side with the Poles and of ourselves to side with the Germans. In point of fact, the rights of the case were so involved that it would have taken something more than a super-lawyer to unravel them.

A British brigade from Cologne, known by the euphonious title of "Upsiforce," mounted guard over the coal mines on the borders of Poland and Germany for many months, and was subsequently reinforced by a second brigade made up from the Irish regiments about to be disbanded. The presence of these troops in this unsettled region did much to prevent Poles and Germans from flying at one another's throats.

Life still jogged along pleasantly in Cologne. The Germans did not relish our presence, now that their fears of revolution were over, but they preferred being "occupied" by us to having a French garrison quartered on them: and, with a little give-and-take on both sides, relations could be quite pleasant.

The German has the reputation of being a humourless soul, but this is not altogether true of the Kölner, as the following story, which was current in both British and German circles, will show.

Photo: *Imperial War Museum.*

A *SANCTUM SANCTORUM*

This photograph shows the editorial office of the *Cologne Post*, the daily paper published by the Rhine Army. The first editor was Capt. N. E. Rolston, who was installed in the post on February 24th, 1919; and the first sub-editors were J. W. Nevill and E. T. Moore (February 25th), followed by E. Ingham on March 1st.

Cologne Humour

"A British officer was going round the famous cathedral in company with a number of sightseers. The German guide led the party into the treasure-chamber and showed them a profusion of jewelled vestments, the bones of saints in jewelled caskets and all the wonders of the place. The Englishman's eye was caught by a curious object—a golden rat. He asked the German what it was, and was told the following story.

"Some time in the Middle Ages there had been a plague of rats in the town. The citizens tried every device to get rid of them. Finally the Archbishop had a vision, in which he was told that if he made a model of a rat in gold and placed it on the altar, the plague would cease. This was done, and the rats disappeared.

"The Englishman looked at the guide. 'Good Lord, man; you don't believe that story, do you?' he said. 'No, of course we don't,' said the guide. 'If

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we did, we should have made a golden Englishman long ago.' The officer laughed, which was more than a Frenchman would have done under similar circumstances." [1]

The early post-war years witnessed a sort of dog-fight between the French and the Germans: the former feeling that they were being cheated out of the fruits of victory, the latter feeling that they had had a "raw deal" at the Peace Conference, and determined to do as little as they could toward fulfilling the terms of the Peace Treaty.

The mark was constantly depreciating, and Germany was in a very unsettled state. Even if the Government of the Reich had wanted to meet its obligations under the Reparation clauses it would have found it difficult to do so; but it did not want, and there was constant friction.

From quite early days it had appeared to the French that, if they could only seize and occupy the rich industrial district of the Ruhr, with its coal-mines and steel works, they would be able to put an end once and for all to this constant procrastination, and to help themselves to the Reparations that German ill-will denied them. The Ruhr came to assume in their eyes the aspect of a sort of Eldorado, which they had only to enter in order to pick up enough gold to meet their bill.

French Invade the Ruhr

In January, 1923, following on the failure of the Germans to deliver large quantities of wood under the Reparation agreement, the French struck their blow. For some weeks they had been massing troops in Düsseldorf. On January 11th the invasion of the Ruhr began.

"The actual occupation was carried out in two stages. The first bound occupied the industrial area up to and including Essen. The second took the invaders to the limits of the Ruhr at Dortmund. The procedure was always the same. The cavalry moved up by road to the new line and occupied a covering position to screen the concentration of the infantry, who came up by rail and lorry. The infantry then took over the line and the cavalry withdrew. The whole operation was carried out on strictly military lines, with all precautions to guard against the possibility of armed resistance by the Germans. Happily, none was offered." [2]

For the first three weeks the Germans of the Ruhr behaved towards the invaders very much as the Rhinelanders had done. They supplied all the trains demanded of them by the French staff, without which it would have been difficult to have concentrated the troops and kept them supplied. One cavalry and five infantry divisions were not a large force by Great War standards, but none the less their transport and supply represented a considerable problem! The purely military part of the operation went off without a hitch.

But, as somebody once remarked, you can do anything with bayonets

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

INSPECTION

Two British tanks, preceded by an escort which includes a band, attracted many spectators as they made a ceremonial progress through Cologne for inspection by the commander of the VI Corps. Notice the Tommies among the civilians. The British Occupation was, throughout, of a peaceful nature, the moderation of the régime coming as an agreeable surprise to many Germans.

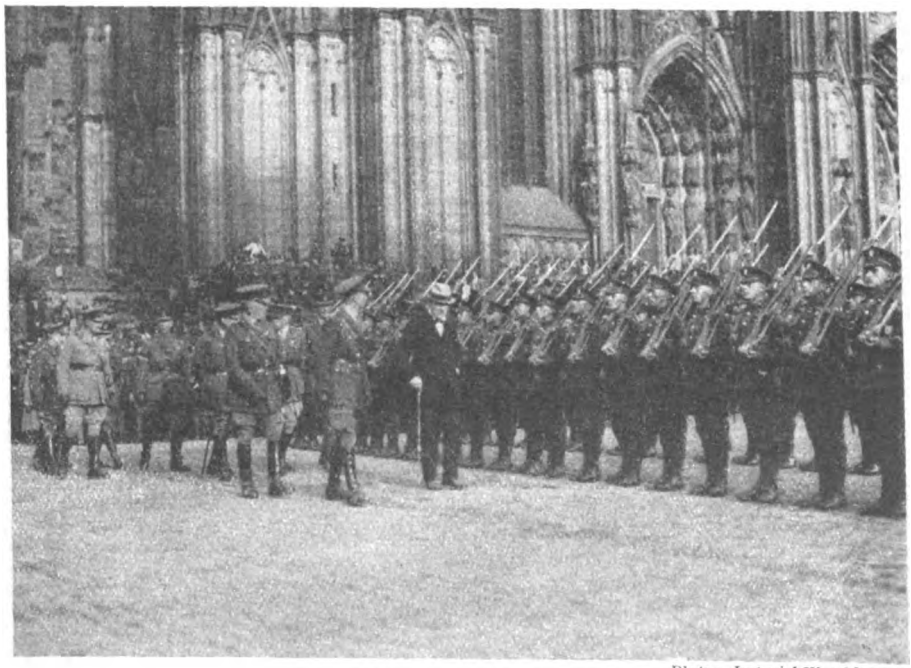

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

MORE INSPECTION

A real "posh" one this time, of the kind which sends N.C.O.'s hoarse and the rank-and-file into a cold lather of perspiration long before the event. The scene is again Cologne—the Cathedral may be observed in the background—and the inspecting "big shots" are Sir W. Robertson and Mr. Winston Churchill.

[1] B. T. Reynolds, *op. cit.*
[2] *Ibid.*

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except sit on them. The next part of the job was to extract reparations, and that was not going to be so easy. An ominous sign was that the headquarters of the great German Coal Trust in Essen packed up and cleared out with all their papers before the French troops hove in sight. There now began to arrive in Düsseldorf a motley host of French engineers and technicians of all kinds, these being the men who would have to do the job.

Successful Passive Resistance

Towards the end of January the storm broke. The invaders everywhere encountered passive resistance. It is interesting to see what this meant. "Demands of all kinds met with a blank refusal. Orders were not complied with. The German personnel of mines, steel works, and factories refused to appear at the summons of the French. They refused to answer questions or supply information.

"They ignored requisition orders, and even refused to open the doors of their establishments to the invaders, who thus found themselves left entirely to their own resources. The postal, telegraph, and telephone employees refused to assist them in any way. The railway authorities refused to run the trains required by the army. German officials of all ranks simply ignored them." [1]

The French were obliged to take over and themselves run all services such as railways, telephones, telegraphs, and so on. In the initial stages this led to chaos, and it was a long time before any kind of order was restored. The passive resistance movement spread to the Rhineland, and the French found themselves forced into taking repressive measures, gradually increasing in severity.

Fines, confiscations, imprisonment and expulsions to unoccupied territory were the order of the day. The whole life of one of the most thickly-populated industrial areas in the world was gradually brought to a standstill.

In this country we sometimes hear people of the pacifist persuasion advocating passive resistance as an alternative to war. In 1923 there is no doubt that the Germans would have resisted the invasion of the Ruhr by force of arms had they been in a position to do so. But they were not, and they adopted passive resistance as the only alternative to knuckling under to the French demands. But, if the Ruhr is any guide, passive resistance puts an almost intolerable strain on the temper of a civilian population.

The Germans are one of the most disciplined peoples in the world, and they kept their tempers under provocation which would have roused the ordinary Englishman to bloodshed in a week. But it was not long before incidents began to occur. A French officer with a small party of men found himself besieged in Krupps' factory, and had to open fire. French sentries

[1] B. T. Reynolds, *op. cit.*

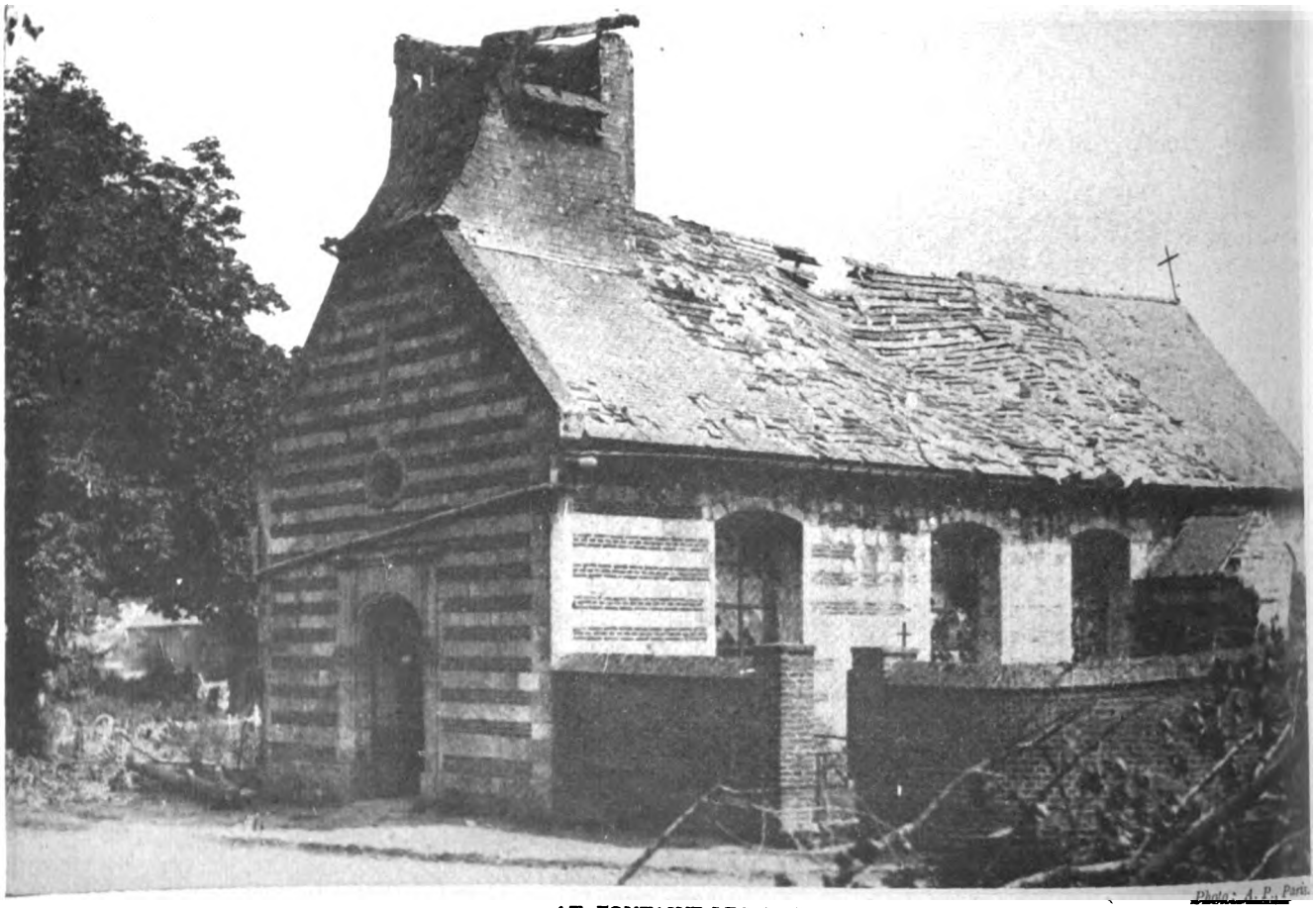

Photo: A. P., Paris.

AT FONTAINE-LES-CAPPY

This little place lies to the south of the main road which follows the left bank of the Somme from Péronne to Corbie, and is about 8 km. south-east of Bray. At the commencement of the First Battle of the Somme it lay a few hundred yards within the French line, being garrisoned by men of the 3rd Colonial Division. The above photograph of the church, taken on June 25th, 1916, shows it as it appeared on the eve of the offensive.

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Photo: A. J. Insall.

RESPLENDENT IN THE SUNSHINE

Fontaine-les-Cappy does not appear to have figured with any prominence in the March Retreat, its ruins being passed through by troops of the 39th Division during the retirement from the Fransart—Frise to the Rouvroy—Froissy line on March 26th. The village was retaken by British units on August 27th, 1918, when it lay near the southern extremity of our front.

were fired on. Someone would drop a brick on the head of a French soldier going home late at night; and reprisals were taken against the town.

Franco-German Bitterness

A bomb with a time-fuse was placed in the lavatory compartment of a Belgian leave train, and went off as the train was crossing Duisburg bridge, causing a number of casualties. French officers were hooted in a theatre, and used their sticks on the crowd. A German named Schlageter was caught sabotaging the permanent way where a troop-train was due to pass. He was tried by court martial, sentenced to death and duly shot by a French firing-party.

The bitterness engendered by this guerrilla warfare in the Ruhr is one of the factors underlying the attitude of Hitler's Germany toward France to-day.

While the population of the Ruhr and the Rhineland was engaged in passive resistance, it was obvious that they were unable to earn normal wages, and yet they had to be supported somehow to prevent them from starving. The Government was obliged to foot the bill.

The mark, as has been said, had been depreciating gradually since 1918, the budget was unbalanced, and there was an adverse balance of trade. But now the currency took a sudden jump, and it was not long before every printing-press in the country was hard at work turning out notes which lost their value almost overnight.

Wages always lagged a little behind the downward course of the mark, and the working population suffered appallingly. Middle-class people with a little money laid by in fixed interest-bearing securities lost everything that they possessed. A new class, whose only capital was its wits, sprang into sudden affluence. Goods of almost any kind were worth their weight in gold, and the great art consisted in obtaining these against payment of worthless paper marks, and then selling them to someone who could pay in foreign currency.

Meanwhile, the population was in dire want of food and the necessities of life. Starving women would sell themselves for the price of a cup of coffee. It is difficult to exaggerate the horrors of an uncontrolled inflation.

In the midst of this chaos the British zone stood out like an island of sanity. We took no part in the Ruhr Occupation, and the British High Commissioner at Coblence simply registered his protest at each new repressive ordinance that was passed by his French and Belgian colleagues. Being in a minority of one, he could do no more.

Neutrality Problems

In Cologne our relations with the Germans remained exactly as before, and the new ordinances did not run. However, we were soon involved in the difficulties that generally accompany neutrality. The Germans pointed out that, if we were to continue on a normal

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peace-time footing in Cologne, it would be impossible for them to work French troop trains, manned by French railwaymen, across the British zone.

Cologne was a vast rail-junction, through which all traffic west and east between France and the Ruhr and vice versa normally went, and this was an awkward decision. In the end, after much negotiation and one or two temporary arrangements which worked none too satisfactorily, the French were obliged to build a new line of railway passing round the perimeter of our zone.

Then, of course, the Germans inevitably attempted to make use of Cologne as a centre for running the passive resistance campaign in the territory outside, and much tact was required to stop this and preserve our impartiality. In the end the French completely encircled our zone with a series of posts.

"From the point of view of the average British officer, this state of affairs was distinctly trying. If he wanted to go anywhere outside our zone, he had to pass a French post. The personnel manning them was largely drawn from North African units; they could speak no European tongue, and seemed incapable of recognising any uniform other than a French one. . . .

"On one occasion when a car did not pull up fast enough, a coloured sentry flung his rifle, with the bayonet fixed, javelin-wise, and neatly transfixed the off hind tyre of the offending vehicle. The British officer inside with his wife and family registered considerable annoyance.

An Old Moorish Custom

"There was one post where the sentry on duty caused surprise by his habit of holding up in the air, at arm's length, the identity cards of the inmates of the cars that he stopped. There were many conjectures as to the meaning of this strange ritual. Some said it was a kind of magic practised in the Atlas Mountains, others supposed that the sentry was calling on Allah to curse the infidels whose names were inscribed on the cards.

"One day, a curious subaltern solved the mystery. He discovered a French N.C.O. seated in an arm-chair at the first-floor window of a house opposite, whence he scrutinised the cards through a pair of powerful field-glasses.

"All this sort of thing did not improve French-British relations, but it was a great deal worse for Franco-German ones." [1]

Ultimately, the French contrived to get the situation in hand. There were trains running; the mines were producing coal, which was being sent to France to make up for the lost Reparation deliveries. The strain was beginning to tell on the Germans. Something like 75,000 officials of one class and another (including railwaymen, who in Germany are government employees) had been expelled, and their houses handed over to French employees. Since in almost all cases the expulsion order included the man's family, close on a quarter-of-a-million people had been dumped over the border into unoccupied territory.

The German Government entered into negotiations, but the French would be content with nothing save unconditional surrender. Finally the industrialists of the Ruhr were obliged to open conversations direct with the French command. It looked as though disorder on a large scale might break out at any moment.

The French seized on this situation to launch a surprise. Early in September a movement broke out for separating the Rhineland from Germany. So-called Separatist "troops" were enlisted, and armed with the connivance of the French authorities. There was a reign of terror in Aix-la-Chapelle. A clash occurred between the Separatists and the German police in Düsseldorf, and French troops intervened to disarm the police after several hundred casualties had been caused.

Trouble—French-born

"Outbreaks occurred in most of the principal towns of the Rhineland, with the exception of Cologne. Owing to the chaos that ensued after the Separatists had seized power in any locality, and the complete lack of support from the local population, they were unable to maintain themselves for any length of time in the more populous districts. Even so, the German police and firemen displayed admirable courage. Disarmed themselves, they had to fight the fully-armed Separatists with truncheons and fire-hoses, all the time with the threat of expulsion hanging over their heads.

"Down in the Bavarian Palatinate the movement lasted longer, largely owing to the isolation of that part of the world and the fact that the bulk of the Separatists from the Rhineland went there after their services were no longer required further north. The matter was brought to a head in 1924 by the attempt on the part of the French section of the High Commission to have the decrees of the so-called Separatist Government in the Palatinate recognised officially.

"This called forth a protest from the British Government, and the British Consul-General in Munich was sent to report on the situation. The bubble was finally pricked for good and all by the action of the inhabitants of Pirmasens, who massacred the remaining Separatists after setting fire to their headquarters in that town." [1]

The end of 1923 marked the lowest ebb in the fortunes of post-war Germany. The negotiations between the French and the German industrialists dragged on interminably. Meanwhile, in addition to the Separatist movement in the Rhineland, there was a Communist revolt in Saxony, and Hitler chose this moment to launch the famous "Beer-hall Putsch" in Munich.

"However, the Reichswehr stood firm. The story runs that at an emergency meeting of the Cabinet General von Seeckt, the Minister for Defence, was asked by his anxious civilian colleagues, 'What will the Reichswehr do?' Everything hung on the answer to that fateful question. Von Seeckt, with his eye-glass firmly screwed into his eye, replied without moving a muscle of his face, 'Gentlemen, the Reichswehr will do precisely what I tell them.'

"That settled the matter; the revolts were put down, and a new Chancellor came to power. Stresemann set himself, not only to put Germany's house in order, but also to bring about a *détente* in Franco-German relations. The Rentenmark made its appearance, and, by a miracle or a confidence trick, according to which way you look at it, the mark was re-established. The Dawes Commission commenced their labours. Lord D'Abernon, the British Ambassador in Berlin, strove mightily for conciliation." [2]

France's Barren Victory

The French were also disposed for peace. They recognised that they had won a barren victory. Poincaré fell from power, and was replaced by Briand, pledged to a policy of conciliation.

We have devoted some space to these events which were going on all round the Cologne zone, and in which we took no part. But, in spite of their inactivity under what were sometimes rather humiliating conditions, the two British brigades on the Rhine pulled their weight just by "being there." Had it not been for the existence of the peaceful island of Cologne, it is quite probable

1 B. T. Reynolds, *op. cit.*

1 *Ibid.*
2 *Ibid.*

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Photo: Imperial War Museum.

THE RUINS OF CHAVONNE

Chavonne, on the north bank of the Aisne, was illustrated on page 642 of this volume; but the present picture, which was taken on April 30th, 1917, shows the river itself beyond the scarcely-distinguishable ruins, and also the bridge broken by the Germans in 1914, when, as earlier related, the 2nd Coldstream were sent to secure the passage. The temporary bridge can be seen on the right of the other.

Photo: G. T. Watson.

CHAVONNE FROM THE RIVER

This very delightful scene was photographed from the bridge which has replaced the broken one of War days. Chavonne, captured by the French on April 18th, 1917, during the Second Battle of the Aisne, fell on the first day of von Conta's "push" in May, 1918, when the British IX Corps and neighbouring French troops were powerless to stem the 28 enemy divisions making the assault.

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that the work of Stresemann and Briand, together with Locarno, and the improvement which occurred in Franco-German relations, would never have been realised.

The French troops were now gradually withdrawn from the Ruhr, and everything possible was done to get back to normal conditions. The Germans put in a strong request for the evacuation of the Cologne zone; this, under the terms of the Peace Treaty, being due five years after its signature. Eventually it was decided to make a great effort to carry out the evacuation by Christmas, 1925.

The process was delayed for some time owing to the report of the Control Commission, whose duty was to carry out the disarmament of Germany under the terms of the Treaty, that war-material factories still existed, a camouflaged General Staff had been kept in being, and the Reichswehr were still passing a number of short-service volunteers through their ranks.

There is no doubt that this was true, but the fact remained that Germany had destroyed since the War 33,000 guns, 87,000 machine-guns, 4,500,000 hand grenades, 38,000 shells, and 490,000,000 rounds of S.A.A., and that she was certainly not in a position to wage war at that time. It was finally decided to carry on with the evacuation of Cologne, in spite of the gloomy forebodings of the French soldiers.

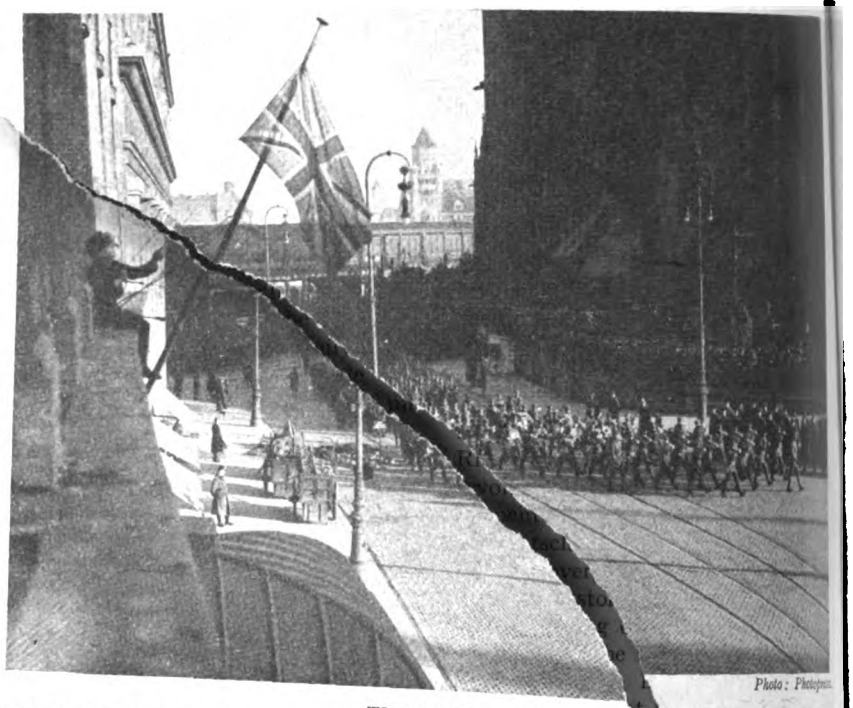

Photo: Photopress.

THE LAST HOUR

While the last British soldiers, reduced to the dimensions of a single la… rge brigade, leave Cologne for … Wiesbaden, thousands of German hearts throb with pride as the Union Jack is finally hauled down, … and the city becomes the Fatherland's once mor… stre.

Evacuation of Cologne

Everything possible was done to speed up the move. Battalions were shifted singly to the new area at Wiesbaden, to take over from the French garrison there as soon as the barracks were vacated. At last the long-expected day arrived. There was no ceremony about our leave-taking. …th The last company of … ced arms on the Dom … the K.S.L.I. presen… which had flown over … Square as the flag w… for seven years was … the Excelsior Hotel … troops marched the … hauled down. The t… station in dead … short distance to the a… … silence.

That night—January … 31st, 1926—… the population of Colog… gne gave them-… selves over to rejoicing … There were … bonfires in the Dom … Square, round … which they marched a… nd sang and … danced till dawn came. … We had left … few scars or bad memories … behind, and … the manner of our going … had been in … keeping with the way in w… which we had … conducted our occupation. … But, when … all was said and done, we w… ere at best … foreign conquerors. … ne Army

It was a much reduced Rhi… esbaden. … that took up its quarters in Wi… nd men … Out of close on 15,000 officers a… south, … in Cologne, a bare 9,000 moved … home … the remainder making their way … ward, … *via* Ostend. From this time on … erent … too, the occupation was of a diff… had … type. Many of the old privileges … an, … gone with the advent of the Dawes P… ur … and the general idea now was that o… … presence in Germany should be made a… … invisible as possible. To the great … relief of officers, they were at last permitted to wear plain clothes when … duty.

The French, too, conformed to the new tone. All idea of an independent Rhineland had come to an end. The

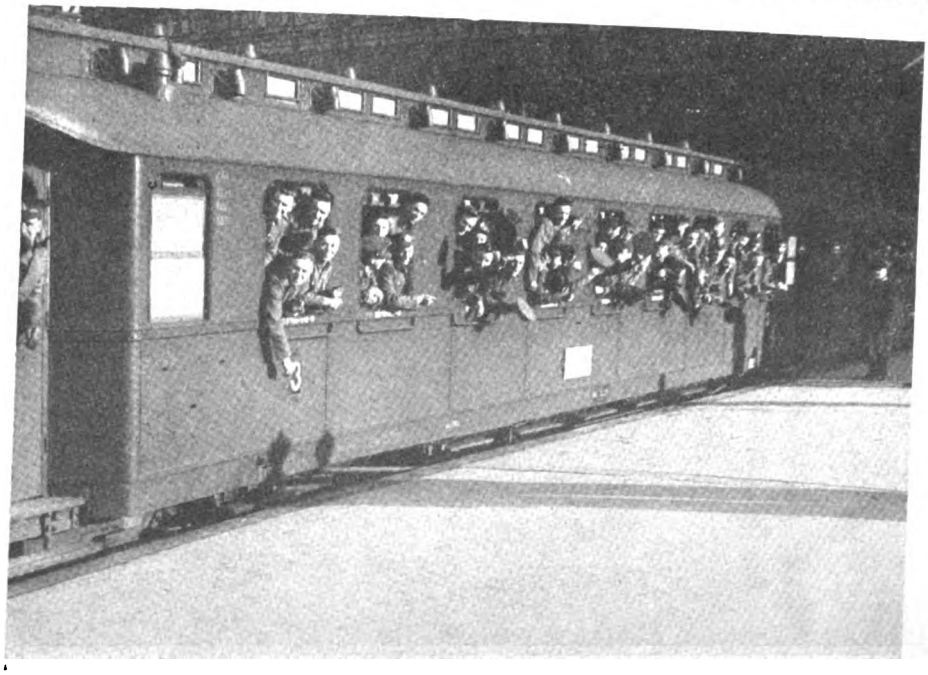

Photo: Photopress.

ALL ABOARD FOR WIESBADEN

Crowding from the windows of the steel-built third-class coaches, the last consignment of Tommies to leave Cologne waves and shouts a rousing *Auf Wiedersehen* to friends and sweethearts. After its departure, the city's whole population not unnaturally gave itself up to a frenzy of rejoicing.

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Photo: Graphic Photo Union.

A MIXED BAG

A cheerful group of soldiers in various stages of undress, and with a flavour of childhood about it, cheers the photographer as he clicks the camera on Wiesbaden's strand. There are some 30 hot springs at the resort.

Allied—or perhaps, since Locarno and the admission of Germany to membership of the League, one should say the ex-Allied—troops were still on German soil under their Treaty rights, but one now felt that there was a measure of uncertainty about our tenure.

We had ceased to be actors in a drama, with a rôle of our own to play, and had become pawns to be moved about, or even whisked off the board altogether, by the real players—the statesmen in Paris, London, and Berlin. Stresemann was working for the evacuation of the Rhineland. At last the War was being liquidated; and at Thoiry he and Briand came within an ace of succeeding. Had they done so, history might have taken a different course.

Highlanders in Wiesbaden

Wiesbaden was a very different town from the great industrial city which we had left behind. It was a watering-place with a population of some 150,000 people, most of whom relied for their living on visitors coming to take the cure—a sort of south German Cheltenham or Bath. They were glad enough to exchange their French garrison for a British one. When the first battalion—of Cameron Highlanders—arrived practically the whole town turned out to see them. The Cameron sentries who took over from the French guard on the Schloss were nearly mobbed by the crowd, eager to gaze at and touch this novel variety of soldier.

For about a week or more the Camerons were the only British troops in an area which had lately held an entire French Army Corps. A story of the taking-over well illustrates the difference between the French and British points of view.

One afternoon the British liaison officer had to take the senior remaining French officer to pay an official call on the senior British officer in the town. "The Frenchman had on his best uniform, covered with gold lace and medals. He wore white gloves and carried a sword. After the preliminary salutations the conversation flagged, and the Frenchmen made a gallant attempt to fill the ensuing pause by inquiring how many troops we had in the town.

"The reply came back: 'One battalion, Monsieur.' I saw the Frenchman wince. He thought of the Army corps that had just marched out; of the tricolour being hauled down; of the incomprehensible light-mindedness of these English, whose one idea of soldiering was spit and polish and who simply didn't begin to understand the Boche. He was miserable. But with an effort of will he pulled himself together. This was the occasion for a gesture.

"He rose to his feet, flung out his chest so that the medals jingled, and declaimed in sonorous French: 'But, my Colonel, you have your flag, and that is worth all the battalions in the world!' It was a great moment, but my compatriot was constitutionally incapable of rising to the occasion. He turned to me with a surprised look on his face and said, 'Eh, what's that he says?'" [1]

[1] B. T. Reynolds, *op. cit.*

Photo: Graphic Photo Union.

AT BIEBRICH

Biebrich is a small river port on the Rhine three miles south of Wiesbaden, which in turn is 80 miles south-east of Cologne. The above photograph shows the Royal Welsh Fusiliers at church parade in Biebrich with their goat-mascot, Billy. Note the interest of the local inhabitants.

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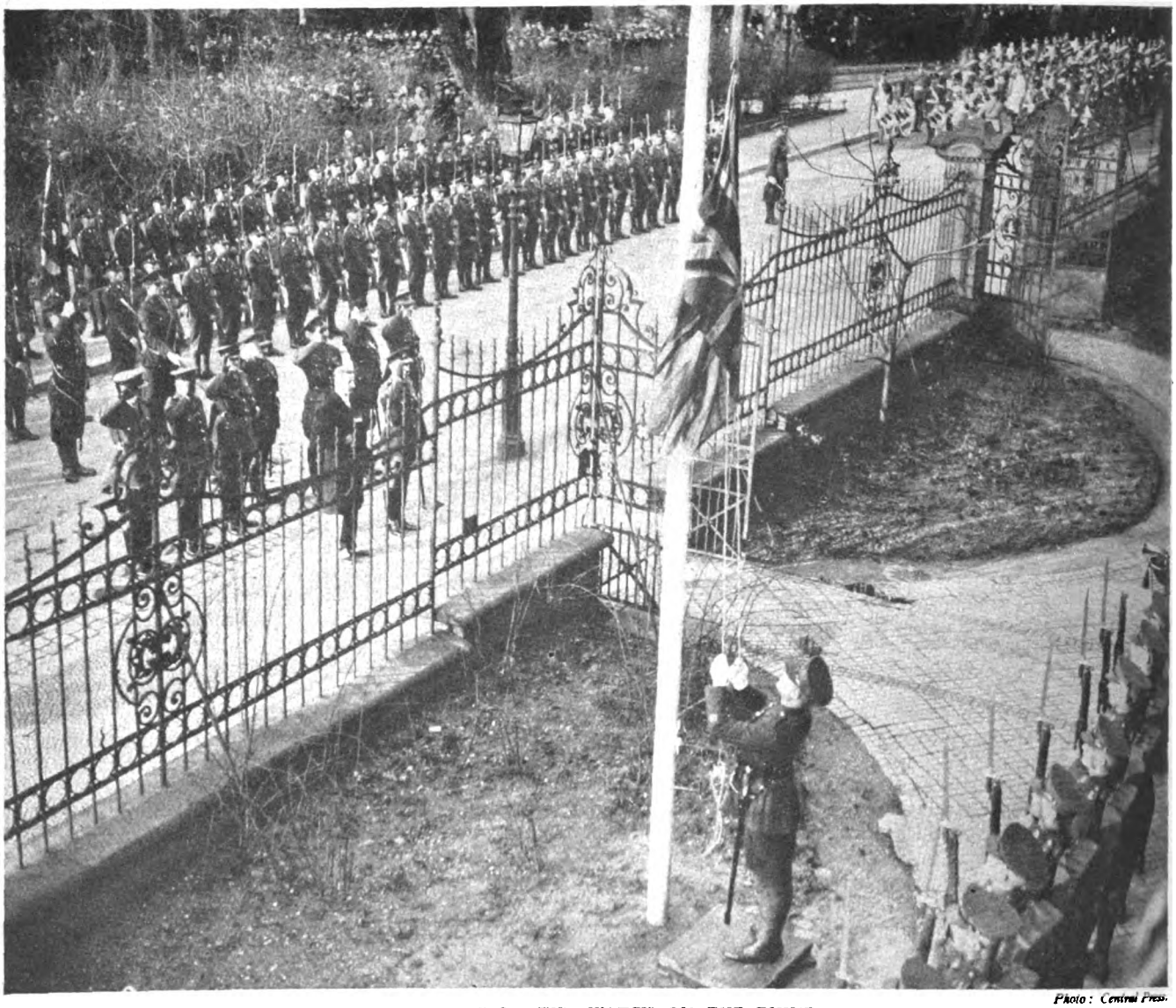

Photo: Central Press.

WINDING UP THE WATCH ON THE RHINE

The British evacuated Wiesbaden on December 12th, 1929—the last unit to go being the 2nd Royal Fusiliers, which had been among the first to enter Cologne with the old 29th Division eleven years earlier. Here we see the final scene. Just before the departure, the Union Jack is lowered by R.S.M. Saunders, while Lieutenant-General Thwaites and his officers salute, a guard of honour presents arms, and the band in the background plays the National Anthem. The flag was afterwards presented to the commander of the Royal Fusiliers, Lieutenant-Colonel Howlett.

Scattered Among the Resorts

The troops were a good deal more scattered in the new zone than they had been in Cologne. The 2nd Leicesters found themselves at Koenigstein, a pleasure resort perched up in the hills overlooking Frankfurt, where in winter there was ski-ing. An enterprising tourist agency ran a motor-bus every Sunday to take the Frankfurters to watch the Leicesters' Church Parade. Curiously enough, the village monuments in the country round showed that many of the Hessians who had fought in the British campaigns of the 18th Century came from this part of the world.

The 2nd Dorsets were at Bad Schwalbach, a place whose waters are supposed to be good for expectant mothers. At first they scandalised the inhabitants by parading in shorts every morning in the Kurhaus Gardens for P.T. When the *Bürgermeister* explained that the town's lady guests found this embarrassing, the Colonel obligingly chose another site for the battalion's "daily dozen."

The 2nd Welsh Fusiliers and the gunners were at Biebrich, a suburb on the Rhine, where an old house bore an inscription "here Richard Wagner wrote his Opera the Meistersinger."

The Hampshires were at Bingen, where from the wooded hills on the east bank of the river the great statue of Germania, cast from captured French guns to commemorate the German victory of 1870, gazes over the Rhine towards France. In the early days of the occupation the French had attempted to blow it up, but their gun-cotton had made little impression on the colossal gunmetal figure. Now, on fête days, the Germans would repair there to drink beer and let off fireworks.

Perhaps the thing that will linger longest in the memory of the Weisbadeners is the goat of the Welsh Fusiliers.

The rifle ranges were tucked away in secluded valleys in the hills around, but there was nowhere in the area where the gunners could indulge in their annual practice. Eventually arrangements were made for them to do their shooting at Bitche, over the French frontier. On one occasion the 8th Hussars even took part with the French Army in its annual manœuvres.

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Photo: Keystone.

ON THE WAY TO THE STATION

The 2nd Royal Fusiliers, with bayonets fixed, salute the French colours as they pass the small force of their ex-allies turned out to bid them a ceremonial farewell on the way to Wiesbaden station. The British band is just disappearing from view; but R.S.M. Saunders and Sergt. Mawby can be seen with the colours folded over their arms. The faces of the watching Germans were not unfriendly; and when *Auld Lang Syne* was sung, some of them tried to join in. The French band played this air as the troops were entraining. Its own turn to evacuate the Rhineland was to come not quite six months later.

The Unobtrusive Belgians

We have said little about the Belgians. Quartered in the extreme north-western corner of the Rhineland at Aix-la-Chapelle (Aachen), close to the Belgian frontier, they were perhaps the most unobtrusive of all the armies of occupation. They sent a contingent to assist the French in the occupation of the Ruhr, and the first outbreak of Separatism in 1923 occurred in their zone. But the Belgian Army soon withdrew its support, and the movement fizzled out.

Now they had brought the "invisible occupation" to a fine art. A British officer who had to go to see the Belgian Staff on some business got out at Aix-la-Chapelle station and was unable to find a single German taxi-driver on the cab rank who knew where Belgian headquarters were to be found.

There is little more to be told. The British Army of the Rhine remained quietly on at Wiesbaden for another four years. There were few excitements, everything was very peaceful, and towards the end there was a general feeling that the Rhine had become a quiet backwater.

In 1929 the French evacuated the Coblence Zone, which had been due for ten years' occupation under the terms of the Treaty. The tricolour was hauled down from the flagstaff on Ehrenbreitstein, where it had replaced the Stars and Stripes in 1923, and the flag of Germany was run up.

The withdrawal of the few remaining battalions in Wiesbaden had been decided on, and one by one they slipped unobtrusively away, bound for Catterick Some were sorry to go, others less so. As for War hate, that had utterly disappeared. As one young soldier put it. "I only heard of one case of a fellow putting it across the Jerries, saying we had won the War and they were a lot of skunks, and he got put outside to cool down by his mates."

Appropriately enough, the last unit to go was the 2nd Royal Fusiliers, who had been among the first to enter Cologne with the old 29th Division. "A roll of drums, and all eyes were directed towards the two Union Jacks still proudly fluttering, one on the roof and one by the gateway. Slowly, ever

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so slowly, the flags were lowered while the National Anthem was played and hats were removed on all sides. At Cologne the Germans had not uncovered; here they stood bareheaded.

The Last Britons Leave

"A word of command. Glinting bayonets. Boots striking the macadam. The band played Auld Lang Syne. The locals tried to join in. The British tenure of the Rhine was no more. Through avenues of silent but friendly faces the ghost of the B.E.F. passed to the station.

"General Guillaumat and a battalion of French infantry were waiting on the platform. A French band played Auld Lang Syne as they were entraining. Formality ceased for a fleeting minute before the guard's whistle, as the Fusiliers pushed their heads out of the windows and sang 'Take me back to dear old Blighty.'"[1]

The British left Wiesbaden on January 12th, 1929, after eleven years on the Rhine. Less than six months later it was the turn of the French. As with our own the units were gradually withdrawn one by one, until there remained only a battalion of the 8th Infantry in Mayence.

"The final mounting of the guard at the Ducal Palace on the eve of the departure showed how tense was French feeling, from General Guillaumat downwards. The latter appeared unexpected and approached the last guard. 'My friends,' he said in a low voice, 'you are the last who will come here. You were children when the War started. You feel as I do that this day is unforgettable. Remember what you have seen here and what you have done. I say no more. Good-bye, my friends.'"[2]

Next day, the tricolour was hauled down and the German flag run up. It was a poignant moment for the French. The Germans had turned up in their thousands, and the last *poilus* had no easy passage through the streets. The band playing the Sambre et Meuse could not drown the sustained chorus of hoots, hisses, and catcalls, and the shouts of "*Heraus!*" ("get out!"). The Mainzers were getting a bit of their own back. A few hours later a German police battalion, headed by its band, marched in amidst scenes of delirious enthusiasm.

The Historical Perspective

This is not an account of post-War Franco-German relations, but we must say a final word on the historical aspect of the occupation. The wars of the eighteenth century were affairs between small professional armies which used to spend much of their time in other people's countries without occasioning any great bitterness amongst the local inhabitants, whose ideas of nationality were not strongly developed. The era of national wars may be said to have begun in the nineteenth century, and the first foreign occupation of that time was when Napoleon's Grande Armée occupied Prussia after Jena. Ten years later the Allies who had beaten Napoleon at Waterloo brought back Louis XVIII to his capital, and 150,000 troops remained at Paris under Wellington. By 1817 their numbers had shrunk to 30,000, and there was an outcry amongst the French that the dynasty was being maintained by foreign bayonets. By the winter of 1818 the indemnity had been paid and the last foreign soldier had gone home.

The next occupation was after the war of 1870, when a German army of 47,000 men under General von Manteuffel remained on French soil two years. Again the indemnity was paid up and the troops departed.

The occupation of the Rhineland after the Great War was a compromise between the French demand for the Rhine frontier, and the British-American refusal to agree to the dismemberment of Germany. It was designed to minister to French security, and simultaneously to serve as a hostage for the payment by Germany of Reparations.

In the event, like most compromises, it failed to secure either end. Of Reparations enough has been said and written: we know now that the figure we were asking was impossible of fulfilment. French security was another matter, and before we blame our neighbours for the Ruhr, for Separatism and for other unfortunate matters, it is well for us to remember with humility that they were induced to renounce their claim to the Rhine frontier only on the express promise of a British-American military alliance, which never materialised.

The French "Hold the Baby"

The French alone could not have won the War. If the Americans had not come in when they did, it is doubtful if the French and British together could have done much more than fight the German armies to a standstill in 1918. In that case the conflict might well have ended in a negotiated peace. The arrival of the American armies in the line, and, even more, the knowledge on the part of the Germans that the Allies were now in a position to tap a fresh and almost inexhaustible supply of man-power, had the effect of tipping the scales speedily and decisively, and made possible the imposition of a victorious peace.

Then, when the Treaty of Versailles had been duly sealed, signed, and delivered, forty million Frenchmen found themselves "holding the baby"—responsible for the maintenance and enforcing of a contract that it had taken a world in arms to impose on sixty-six million Germans. So long as Germany was disarmed, all was well. But the French were constantly haunted by the spectre of what might happen when the Germans recovered from the effects of their defeat.

A League of Nations with no armed forces at its disposal did not impress the logical-minded Frenchman as providing a very sure shield for his exposed eastern frontier. In default of the promised British-American military alliance, the French used every means in their power to weaken Germany and to secure their position by means of treaties and alliances with those countries such as Poland and Czechoslovakia, that owed their existence to the peace treaties.

Since the Advent of Adolf

To-day, since the advent to power of Hitler, the tearing up of the Peace Treaty, and the reoccupation by German troops of the zone of 50 kilometres to the east of the Rhine which was supposed to be neutralised for all time at Versailles, the question of security has once more become an acute one for our French neighbours.

Perhaps, in the last resort, one might say that not only the Rhine occupation, but the whole of our post-War policy towards Germany fell between two stools.

When you have fought a man and knocked him down, there are two courses open to you. The one is to finish him then and there on the old principle that the only good enemy is a dead one. In the case of a country this means breaking it up into a number of small states. The other is to help him to his feet, shake him by the hand, and let bygones be bygones. The first method might or might not have been possible in 1918, but the last is the most congenial to the ordinary Englishman; and it would in all probability have succeeded if it had been put into practice then. The mistake that we and the French made was to shilly-shally between the two.

[1] Ferdinand Tuohy, *op. cit.* [2] *Ibid.*

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They shall grow not old,
as we that are left grow old:
Age shall not weary them,
nor the years condemn.
At the going down of the sun
and in the morning
We will remember them.
LAURENCE BINYON

Photo: Graphic Photo Union

THE FIELD OF REMEMBRANCE

Two soldiers, veterans of the Great War, caught by the camera as one of them plants a cross in the Field of Remembrance beneath the walls of Westminster Abbey, November 10th, 1937. The Field is laid out annually at Armistice-tide on one of the grass plots near the Abbey's north door, and is divided into sections corresponding with the different regiments and other formations, naval, military, and aerial. The little wooden crosses each bear a Haig Fund poppy on the front, and often the purchaser writes the name of the fallen warrior on the wood.

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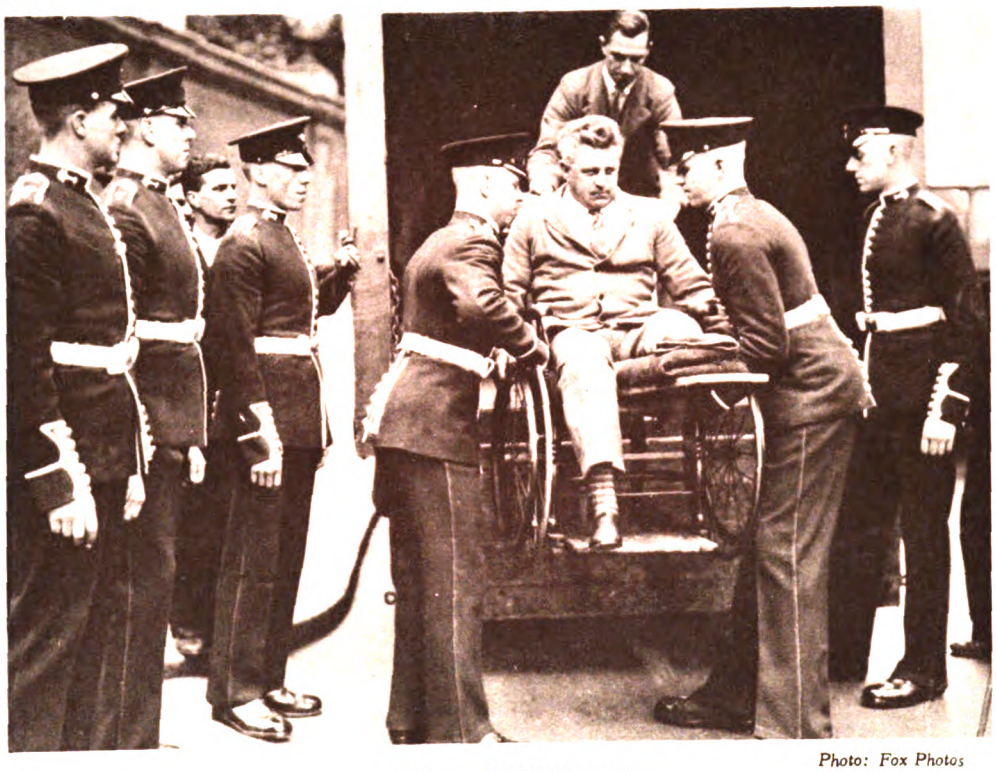

Photo: Fox Photos

"NOT FORGOTTEN"

Queen Elizabeth was present at the Coronation tea-party held by the Not Forgotten Association in the Riding School at Buckingham Palace on June 1st, 1937, when this photograph was taken. The guests consisted of as many as possible of that very large number of ex-Servicemen who are still, after twenty years, undergoing treatment in hospital. The picture shows one of the veterans being assisted by Guardsmen on arrival.

THEIR MAJESTIES [illegible]

The King and Queen are here seen driving through the Servicemen held, as part of the Coronation [illegible]ies, in H 1937. The total number of British Empire [illegible] is given whom rather more than 800,000 came from the British for the wounded and 3,000 and

LAYING A WREA

King George VI, ascending the steps the Ce reigning monarch, lays his wreath at his father The Whitehall ceremony of November 11th, 19 only as the first Armistice Day of the reign, bu disturbance which marred Two M

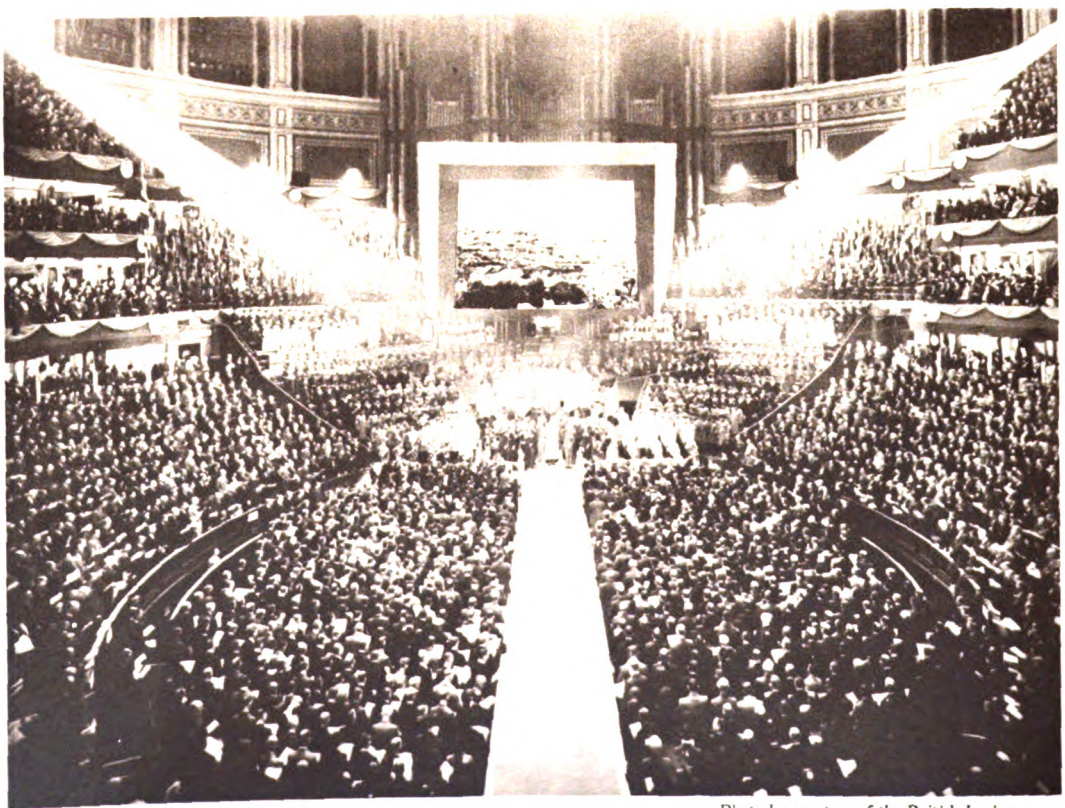

Photo by courtesy of the British Legion

AT THE ALBERT HALL

A fine photograph taken during the 1937 Festival of Remembrance held at the Albert Hall, London, by the British Legion. The Legion, which is an association of both men and women who participated in the Great War, was formed in 1921 by the amalgamation of several ex-Service societies. The organization is non-political and non-sectarian, and its aim is to watch over the welfare of all War veterans. Its principal source of revenue is the annual sale of Flanders Poppies on Armistice Day.

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YDE PARK

gh the lines at the huge parade of ex-
s, in Hyde Park, London, on June 27th,
is given as slightly under 1,100,000, of
British Isles. The respective figures
00 and 1,850,000.

Photo: Graphic Photo Union

REATH

he Cenotaph for the first time as
father so often laid one before him.
th, 1937, will be memorable not
ign, but because of the unfortunate
Two Minutes' Silence.

Photo: Fox Photos

Photo: Fox Photos

MEN OF THE SENIOR SERVICE

A general view of the march past which was one of the principal events at the mass rally held by the Royal Naval Old Comrades' Association at Chatham naval barracks on May 31st, 1936, the twentieth anniversary of the Battle of Jutland. Vice-Admiral Sir Edward Evans ("Evans of the Broke"), Commander-in-Chief of the Nore, is here seen taking the salute after inspection. Note the Royal Marine Band

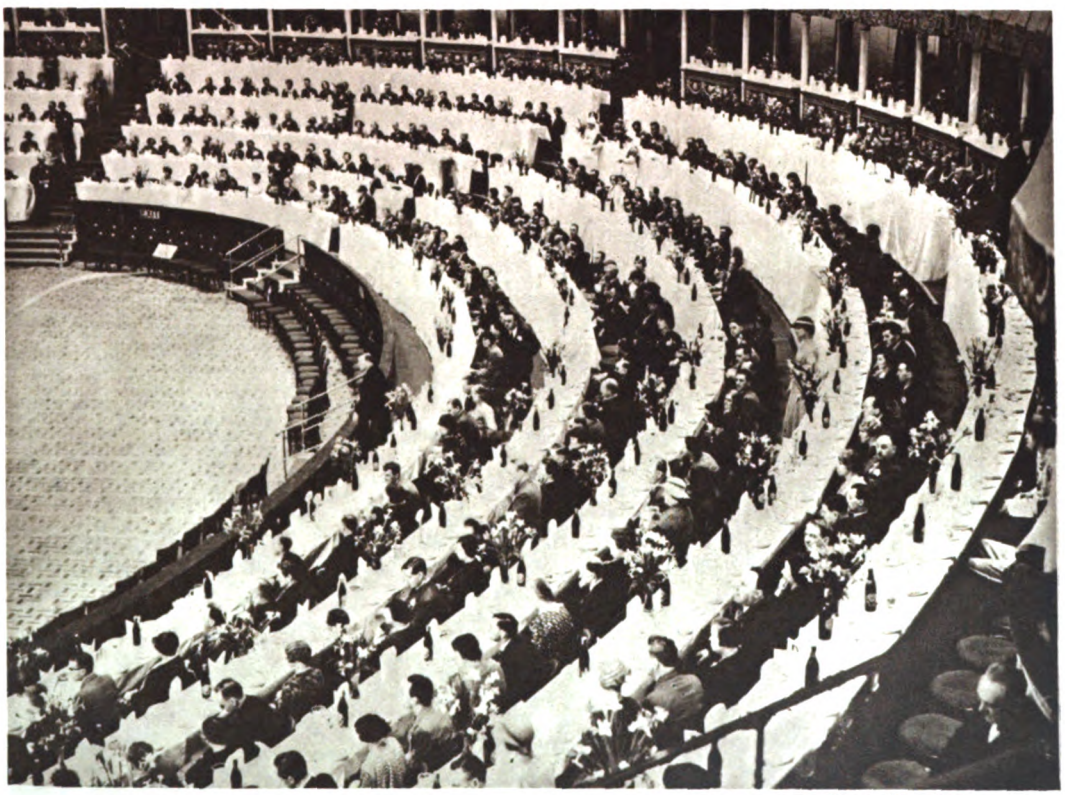

Photo: Central Press

A REUNION OF THE BLIND

Another scene at the Royal Albert Hall, this time showing some of the 500 war-blinded men of St. Dunstan's lunching at their Jubilee reunion in June, 1935. This was the largest gathering of blind ex-Servicemen ever organized in this country, and was attended by the Duke of Windsor (then Prince of Wales), who was given a warm welcome. St. Dunstan's was founded in 1915 by Sir Arthur Pearson, to care for men of all the Services who should lose their eyesight in the Great War or any other;

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Photo: Central Press

EX-SERVICEMEN AT WORK

This photograph was taken in a workshop run by the Ex-Servicemen's Welfare Society at Milner House, Leatherhead, Surrey. The organization is among the several which have been founded with the object of helping along the ex-soldier in the difficult economic conditions which have made the world of peacetime in some ways much harder for him than the bloodstained world of war. The object in the centre of the picture is a "model of special electro-magnetic sweating bath" made by the men "for exhibition at the centenary meeting of the British Medical Association."

Photo: Photopress

IN THE HEART OF POPPY-DOM

A busy scene in the British Legion poppy factory at Richmond, whence the millions of Flanders poppies sold every year all emanate. The work continues the whole year round, and thus provides regular employment for a considerable number of ex-Servicemen. The workers in the photograph are engaged in fitting together the various cloth, metal, and wire parts of the flowers after manufacture. Notice the crutch leaning against the pillar on the left, and the walking-sticks on the extreme right.

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CHAPTER XLV

THE PART OF THE PADRES

Soldiers, no matter to which branch of the Service they may belong, know precisely what their rôle will be on the declaration of war. Far different was the situation of the Chaplains who, in 1914 and later, were sent overseas in ever-increasing numbers. They were, in those days, by no means certain as to the part they were expected to play, nor in every case, when they arrived at the Front, were they received with acclamation. But the Padres were not to be denied. If in the beginning they were faced with difficulties and confronted by obstacles, they lost but little time in achieving their rightful place, not merely as readers of the burial service, but as the comforters of those distressed and in trouble. Nor did this apply only to Padres of the Church of England, but, as the following chapter shows, to Padres of all denominations.

In the early hours of August 4th, 1914, a German liner slipped out of the harbour of Singapore without her papers, bound for an unknown destination. Her action, the result of secret information, warned those of us who were stationed out there that war was inevitable, but few could have realised what that war involved.

Embarking at Singapore

It was only when some of us were ordered home, and embarked at the beginning of September on the P. and O. liner, that we began to realise how world-wide was the effect. For here we found men from the most isolated parts of the Far East, who had sacrificed all they had in order to reply personally to Kitchener's call. They had already given up much, and were prepared to give up more ; and I also began to realise what we must be prepared to give. When we were held up at Penang, with other liners, for 30 hours because of the movements of the *Emden*, some men showed considerable annoyance at the delay, fearing that we might miss the connection at Colombo and arrive too late for the War.

The thoughts and desires of those days seem like a strange dream : the eagerness for news, the conversations, the men one met—rather like ships that pass in the night, for few of us ever crossed one another's paths again. Destiny seemed to be carrying us all somewhere, but whither we knew not, and few cared. It would possibly be the same if a similar crisis arose to-day ; and in spite of much talk to the contrary, many of the old stock would not fail to rise to the occasion.

My feelings were no doubt much the same as those of others. I wondered what claims the call of the moment would make upon me. As a Regular chaplain one's position was assumed, but when I saw so many around me giving up so much, I also wondered whether I ought to give up my assured position as chaplain and enlist or seek a combatant commission.

Many seemed to take for granted that a chaplain would be entirely unnecessary, or even a luxury, and that the men who really counted would be those who could lead others into battle, man a gun, or shoulder a rifle. I had this well rubbed into me all the way over ; in fact, we did not appear to come into the picture, and I was almost led to believe that I should be a shirker if I remained a chaplain.

This question was brought still more vividly before me on my joining a cavalry brigade at Messines in October, when I found that G———, on the strength of his experience in the South African War, had transferred from the Chaplains' Department to the 4th Dragoon Guards. G——— had felt called to do this on account of the shortage of officers after Mons and the Aisne, but I still wondered whether there was not work for the chaplains, even apart from the taking of occasional services and caring for the dead and wounded.

Working Out Salvation

Later, I found there was. We had to work out our own salvation and that of others, and there was nothing stereotyped on which to build. Little advice was given, and we were dumped in a brigade and told to do the best we could. But gradually, in the stress of war, the demands of the moment, and the countless needs which soon appeared on every hand, we were able to sum up our position, adapt ourselves to the new conditions of trench warfare, and appreciate what could be done and what must be done.

What was asked of us chaplains was that we should be men who could see beyond the nauseating atmosphere of the trenches, and with a ready sympathy and understanding help others to get a Higher Vision and so hold on to the best in Life. This chapter will, I hope, show that our work was worth while.

My collaborator (" Tubby " Clayton, of Toc H) will tell you how the call came to the Church as a whole, and how the civil chaplain rose to the occasion ; and other chaplains of all denominations will tell of their experiences. First, then, Tubby :

" My orders are simply to throw the reins of ordered speech on the neck of memory. I am not to attempt in these few paragraphs to generalise, but rather to narrate the way in which the need of Army chaplains came home to us in parishes in England.

" When the storm broke, and for the first few months of its raging, the parish clergy did not hesitate. Hundreds of names were sent in to the War Office ; incumbents, junior clergy, even ordinands, attempted to invade the crowded corridors and to get speech, if only for a moment, with the Chaplain-General and his subordinate staff officers.

" The luckiest got interviews, in which a series of somewhat old-fashioned questions were put and answered. Amusing rumours spread, devoid of much foundation in fact ; but fact in war-time is not essential. A few—a very few—men were promptly taken, and given status for the most part as 4th class temporary chaplains, finding themselves attired as captains, and in receipt of the pay of second-lieutenants —which was, however, more than they had received in their parishes.

Maritime Disasters

" The first winter came, and the lists were rumoured within the home parishes to be hopelessly full. I was at Portsea then, where seventeen curates with athletic tendencies were eager to be chosen ; but the vicar, with wise strength, enjoined patient waiting. Meanwhile, the dockyard town was in dire need, for ill news came apace—*Cressy*, *Hogue*, *Aboukir*, *Good Hope*, and

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Monmouth, and then on the last night of the old year, a little way down Channel, the *Formidable*, which carried below with her at least 200 youngsters we had known.

" The homes of sailors needed visiting, brave in their sudden grief, or tense with terrible anxiety, and with no time for negligence ; and those who stayed upon the Portsea staff deserved more praise than those who were that spring released to undertake the work in Flanders.

" Then came the gas, which altered our perspective. A few weeks later, in the month of May, 1915, Llewellyn Jones and I, like Mutt and Jeff, were sent for and reclothed; and 48 hours later we found ourselves in France. Wholly unversed in Army etiquette, we walked together in the streets at Havre, saluting with both hands or with either hand as fancy prompted ; but the British Army survived the shock, for it had work to do.

" King's Regulations, as we studied them, seemed to regard all chaplains in a war as being persons whose activities should be restricted to the proper conduct of funerals, together with due work among the dying. Death, and not life, composed our solemn duties.

" But the civilian chaplain later on began to prove his worth among the troops. The jokes against him took a happier turn ; divisional concert-parties delighted to introduce him as one about to hold a little service.

" Having climbed up from the position of undertakers into the stage of voluntary worship, the chaplains felt that they had gained promotion. There was a further stage. Many became not only students, and not merely censors, but good companions, who, if they endured, discovered to their joy that they were trusted as friends who would not forsake. These were permitted to share at least some elements of hardship, some portion of the peril of the men whom they had learnt by then to love and to serve."

A Padre V.C.

Noel Melhuish, V.C., writes as follows : " In September, 1915, I was sent to join the 3rd Division, and to report to the Northumberland Fusiliers. The battalion was up the line, and the quartermaster at the 'detail' camp made it clear that he didn't want me at all. Nor did the colonel when he came out, very tired and done ; and the C.O. of the field ambulance, to which I was then sent, appeared likewise to have little use for me.

" So after a while I found a lodging at Kruisstraat, nearer the line, where my servant Robbins and I started a night club. We collected an odd assortment of crockery from broken houses and dustheaps, and each night, dog-tired people, coming down from the line, dropped in for a rest and such entertainment as we could give.

" What a wonderful person the infantryman was ! He went up, slipping in the slime, falling into holes, looking like a jumble sale, loaded like a pack-mule. Pack, haversack, overcoat, gas-bag, rifle and two bandoliers, 200 rounds of ammunition, rations, often a petrol-tin

Photo : Imperial War Museum.

AMID THE REMNANTS OF DELVILLE WOOD

Chaplains of the English, Presbyterian, and Dutch Churches combined in conducting the South African memorial service, a scene from which is shown here, at Delville Wood on February 17th, 1918. It is an ironical commentary on the ungodliness of war that within six weeks of this scene of mourning for South Africa's fallen, the remainder of her Western Front brigade was also wiped out.

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of water, a bundle of firewood or a bag of coke, a few funny-looking home-made bombs, and often the whole surmounted by an enormous flat Belgian loaf.

"During those months I got to know a good many of my parishioners, and many of them knew Deptford. Eventually the division went out to rest, and after a day or two I was invited by the colonel of the 4th Royal Fusiliers to come and live with him, so I had a home at last. And although twenty-two years have gone by, I still belong to them, for they have honoured me by making me Honorary Chaplain to the Corps of Royal Fusiliers.

"Early in 1916 the Powers that be ordained that our brigade should attack a very strong point, called the Mound, in front of St. Eloi. We had very few officers, for life in the Salient was short at its best, and the slaughter of Loos was not long past. On March 26th, we moved up after dark. All was very still. Messages came to say that all was ready, but it seemed an age till zero hour.

St. Eloi, March, 1916

"At four o'clock the heavens were rent by a roar, as five mines went up; and our artillery behind began to blast away the enemy defences. But in only a matter of seconds the answer came from hundreds of German guns, from right, left, and in front of us. At once all telephone lines were broken; and finally, after an agony of suspense, a sweating runner brought the news that our objective had been reached, but that almost every officer was killed or wounded. By the time the German counter-attack was spent, we had only three young officers left, all of them so badly shell-shocked that none was fit for duty.

"Throughout the day and night the colonel and the adjutant in turn took charge of the forward posts, and our men held out. But the shelling went on until my mind was numbed. Rain was continuous, and little could be done to help the wounded. Our dead and the enemy's were lying together.

"White flares, red flashes, deafening reports, screaming shells, and the groans of the wounded haunted us, while we the living and the dead were glued down in the awful mud of that Hell.

"A man, led by another, staggered towards me, making sounds with no words, for his whole face was gone, and he had no lips by which to take the drink I offered. By the light of a flare, I saw something white and round lying at my feet. It was a skull, newly flayed by high explosive. I do not think I should have left that crater, if Robbins had not grasped me and with his great strength lifted me out of the mud. Towards morning the enemy fire slackened, and our relief came up.

"That night, thirty volunteers of the 142nd Field Ambulance went up to save the wounded. All night long they worked, but carrying through the mud was cruelly exhausting work, and many were still left lying when the day broke, So on the third day sixty men of the Royal Fusiliers—cooks, grooms, and officers' servants—volunteered to try and save their mates. One was killed and some were wounded, but we were all wonderfully helped. The 91st Psalm was real to me in those days.

"As we were carrying the last man down to the little railway, daylight came and the German gunners saw us. One shell fell in front and another behind, and then a miracle happened. It began to snow, we were hidden from their view by a veil of white, and we all got safely away."

Photo: Central Press.

AT OPPY WOOD

A scene at the unveiling of the Hull City memorial at Oppy Wood during 1927, with civil, ecclesiastical, and French military dignitaries all conspicuous in the picture. The wood, which lies some ten or a dozen kilometres north-east of Arras, will be remembered as the scene of heavy scrapping in April, 1917. Notice the Jewish double-triangle engraved in the stone just behind the mayor; this symbol is rarely seen in conjunction with the Christian cross.

Neville Talbot Reminisces

Neville Talbot, then chaplain of the forces, later Assistant Chaplain-General

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Photo: A. P., Paris.

ON THE LUCE

The tragic spectacle of these dead British artillery horses comes from Thennes, a village on the south bank of the Luce 2 km. east of its confluence with the Ancre, and separated only by the width of the stream from Berteaucourt, on the north bank. The photograph is dated March 27th, 1918.

5th Army, now Bishop of Nottingham, records some memories:

"From the day war began, there had to be won for the padres an established position, not only with the hospital units but with the fighting units. They had to have a place where they could be linked with the men by friendship and spiritual service, and be identified with them in their sufferings.

"Such an established position began to be recognised officially by the end of 1915. The pioneer efforts were made by individuals; later on, the place of the padres alongside the fighting men was firmly and generally held.

"Tributes to the work they did on the spot come readily to mind. A divisional general, whose division lost the services of three chaplains killed in the Battle of Passchendaele, said to me as chief chaplain of an Army: 'My padres are worth an extra battalion to the division.'

"It is hard to estimate what the ministry of Father Eustace Hill meant to the South African Brigade. It got about that the South Africans would hardly have held Delville Wood but for him.

"The experience of the C.-in-C. and of other leading generals could be matched by that of many who held other ranks in the fighting units. These found that the padre was a vital element in the sustaining of hope and courage. What I have written was strikingly illustrated in the case of the R.F.C.

"The R.F.C. began in a very small way, but it multiplied like kittens. Since no place was provided in its establishment for chaplains, it was not, I think, till the end of 1916 that anything was done spiritually for its men. Mostly located near such towns as Amiens, and faced with the tremendous exactions of their mode of fighting, they had special need of the services which the best type of chaplain could render to them.

"I remember the attitude of one of their colonels, when I suggested that he should adopt a first-rate padre for his flight.—'A Padre? For the R.F.C.? You've come to the wrong ship.' He allowed me, all the same, to send the padre to live with one of his squadrons.

"Some weeks later, he acknowledged handsomely, though rather shamefacedly, 'All I can say is, when one of my squadrons goes a bit dud, I get on the telephone and ask: "Where is that fellow Dugdale?"'

Work Without Publicity

"So the history of chaplains in the Great War is one of great initial handicaps in real measure overcome. There is much else that might be said. Much that was done by padres in all sorts of ways, in friendship and comradeship with the living, in helping the wounded and the dying, in contributing to recreation, can never be recorded. Some of the best work done at all times by ministers of Christ does not make 'Copy' for publication.

"I would not exaggerate what was achieved. There were many failures, many opportunities missed. Being responsible for the chaplains (C. of E.) of an Army, I had knowledge of ministers

Photo: A. J. Insall.

AT THE PARTING OF THE WAYS

The stone memorial here seen stands exactly on the site of the iron crucifix whose base is visible in the upper picture. In 1918 the Germans just failed to reach Thennes, which at the end of the spring offensive was in our second-line defences. It is interesting to note that the German account of the last two days (April 4th–5th) states that the long-range heavy guns could by then reach the Longueau sidings, only just short of Amiens.

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Photo: Imperial War Museum.

ON THE AISNE

This photograph was taken at Oulches, a village near the eastern end of the Chemin des Dames, 2 km. south-east of Hurtebise Farm. At the time of the First Battle of the Aisne, September, 1914, the place lay just beyond the right flank of the British I Corps, in the area of the French XVIII Corps.

attached to all units. A great many divisions, with their teams of chaplains, passed through the Army.

" I made a rough estimate that about 25 per cent. were first-rate and of proven value; that 50 per cent. were doing their job quite well; that 25 per cent. were no good and were unable to get upsides with a most formidable and difficult job. On the whole, I look back with thankfulness for what was done under God, by the chaplains in the Great War."

The Rev. George Kendall, O.B.E., a well-known leader in the Methodist Church, tells stories of chaplains of all denominations known to him. Some of these tales will help any doubters to realise that the padre did see it through.

" The Rev. Guy Cecil Ford, Chaplain of the London Scottish, was shot dead by a sniper when on an errand of mercy, Father Looby, of the 6th Northumberland Fusiliers, a special friend of mine, was blown to atoms at Ypres.

" When I was at Mudros, the base for Gallipoli, I heard how Father William Finn of the Dublin Fusiliers died. They began to land on the Sunday morning. He was told that he was not to go ashore until they had established their positions; but when the boats put off and the terrible fire from the Turkish batteries began to find them, and the few officers who had managed to reach the shore were decimated, he rushed to the commanding officer and asked his permission to follow the boys.

" He was not forbidden, but was appealed to not to risk his life until the trenches had been cleared out. Father Finn replied: ' A priest's place is beside the dying soldier '; and, leaping into a boat crowded with men, he was pulled to that terrible shore.

An Irish Priest at Gallipoli

" He reached the land, and ran towards the nearest group of fallen Fusiliers. But he had not gone many yards before a bullet hit him in the head. Another hit him in the thigh, and still another in the chest, yet he kept on. By the time he reached his men he was literally riddled with shot. One hand had been torn by a shell.

" Nevertheless, disabled as he was, and in spite of terrible pain, he crawled along the beach from dying man to dying man, giving Absolution and consolation to every one. A piece of shrapnel shot off what was left of his right hand as he was blessing one dying soldier, and, lying on his side, he gave blessings and Absolutions with his left, which in turn was shot off as he raised his arm again and again for his men to see.

" Another piece of shrapnel crashed into his brain, and the soldier who leaned over to help him heard his last words in that one short conscious moment before the end comes: ' Are our fellows winning? '

" On that same shore, the Rev. A. Gillison, chaplain to the 4th Australian Battalion, gave his life in rescuing the wounded. It was just ten days after the big battle which followed Suvla landing that Knoll 60 fell. During the night after the conflict there were many Australian wounded lying on the for-

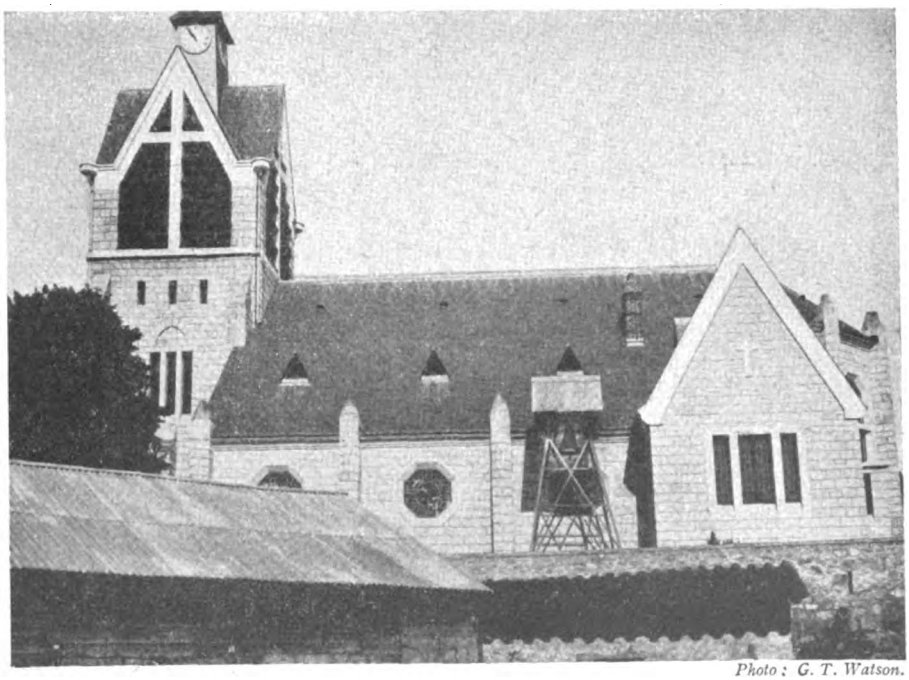

Photo: G. T. Watson.

BUSINESS AS USUAL

Alterations were in progress when this picture was taken; hence the temporary bell-shelter beside the church wall. There was no trace of the war-time communication-trench so prominent in the earlier view. Among the five divisions (8th, 19th, 21st, 25th, and 50th) of the IX Corps which fought in this sector in May, 1918, the 1/4th King's Shropshire L.I., 2nd Devons, and 5th Battery R.F.A. gained especial distinction.

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ward slope of the gully, exposed to rifle fire, and Padre Gillison worked through the night bringing them in.

" Next morning, he was reading the Burial Service over the slope of the hill, when he heard the cries of a wounded man over the crest. He went out, and found a wounded British soldier suffering terribly from ants which were crawling over him ; so he returned and got two stretcher-bearers to follow him.

" The three crept forward and reached the wounded man, who was lying opposite the enemy's trenches, and had managed to drag him a short way when Gillison jumped up and stumbled a few yards into the gully. A bullet had severed all the ribs down one side of his spine. He died in the casualty station on the beach."

Haig's Praise

Sir Douglas Haig, then Commander-in-Chief, wrote to Mr. Kendall from General Headquarters on the 20th February, 1919, as follows :

" I am glad to have been given this unique opportunity to express for myself and many thousands who have served under my command our appreciation of the wonderful work which Ministers of religion of all Churches have carried out with so much steadfastness and courage through four and a half years of war.

" To the chaplains of all denominations serving with our forces, the War was a Crusade, and the inspiration of their teaching has been felt through all ranks of the Army.

" They taught our soldiers what they were fighting for, strengthened their resolution in time of trial, comforted the stricken, and at all times set an example which had a powerful influence for good upon the daily life of all. No man can lightly estimate how much they had contributed to the triumph of our cause."

The Rev. O. B. Milligan tells something of his work with the Jocks :

" When the chaplain ceased to be known as the chaplain, all was well. He had then become the padre, and that is a different matter. ' The chaplain ' was associated with compulsory church parades, which always involved such cleaning up of uniforms, polishing of buttons, and blacking of boots as called forth a good deal of adjectival comment, so that he, as a contributory cause of the trouble, came in for his share of recrimination.

" Besides, to stand in formation for a long half-hour listening to an address that is inaudible, and attempting to sing without words or music, tends to cause bitterness rather than refreshment of spirit—and for this the ' Chaplain ' suffered again.

" But with the padre it was another story. It is good to think how many ways there were in which he gained contact. In the rest-areas he as often as not become a concert organiser, a theatrical manager, or a sports director ; and whatever the office happened to be, the great thing about it was that it gave him real touch with the man.

" But the real opportunity of the padre lay in the fact that though he wore the badge of an officer, he could be a man with the men to a far greater extent than the officer, for reasons of discipline, could afford to be.

A Padre Among Scotsmen

" The padre could go and sit with the men in their dug-outs ; he could exchange ideas with them as to the respective merits of Flanders mud and Fife coal-pits ; he could spell Auchtermuchty, see the purple heather on the hills of home ; yes, and he could write and tell the ' wife ' things that Jock could not have expressed—and would not if he could. Through these contacts he could —sometimes—bring some vision of the eternal realities to eyes that the tragedy of war had made blind to the things of the spirit.

" If the padre loved his men, and the

Photo : A. P., Paris.

ON THE OUTSKIRTS OF ARRAS

The battered church displayed to view here is that of Ronville, a *faubourg* or inner suburb of Arras on the south-eastern side, astride one of the roads which encircle the perimeter of the town. The place never saw actual fighting, but was near enough to the line to be fairly severely shelled, as witness the photograph—taken on June 30th, 1917.

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men, through those human contacts, had got to know their padre, all was well. The door was open for 'moments' which had an abiding significance both for man and priest. Such were the hours when we remembered the comrades we had left behind on some stricken field. Such were the hours when, standing at the edge of death, we gave and received the symbols of Our Saviour's broken body and outpoured blood.

"One such scene comes vividly back. A group of Jocks were standing on the banks of a canal. There was no House of God. The padre's Communion case became the Table of the Lord. The wine gave out; but the Presence was there. . . . There were things found by the padre and his men in the heart of war for which to this day they render thanks to God."

The Rev. Michael Adler, D.S.O., then Senior Jewish Chaplain, has contributed some of his memories:

"My own period in France ran from January, 1915, to July, 1918, but my experience was shared to the full by my brother chaplains in other theatres.

"It must be borne in mind that 1914–18 marked the first time in English history that the War Office had attached Jewish chaplains to an army in the field. Therefore we had no traditions to guide us, no established routine by which to direct our operations.

"This absence of past experience may have proved to be of real value; for our men, scattered here and there in every kind of military unit, regarded us as one with themselves, enlisted 'for the duration' on a similar job, wearing His Majesty's uniform in order to be able to be among them and to try to keep burning the light of their ancestral faith.

"The Wandering Jew"

"In their daily lives as soldiers they were completely identified with their brothers-in-arms; there existed, as we everywhere noted, a spirit of genuine comradeship with their pals. Differences of religious belief were disregarded as they stood shoulder to shoulder in trench or in battery.

"But each man's loyalty to his own creed remained unshaken. The Jew was glad to be friends with the Christian chaplain of his unit, who was wonderfully kind to him; but he naturally looked forward with eagerness to joining in prayer with his own padre, to meeting his brother Jews at services, and to having the ministrations of his own chaplain in time of sickness or death.

"This association with members of his own religion, brought about by the chaplain, was warmly appreciated by the men, as countless letters proved to me. I also became the liaison officer between the Jew at the War and his folks at home. I was given every man's address, and a letter was at once sent.

"How the parents or the wives or the children expressed their gratitude for the chaplain's attention, how relieved they were to know that spiritual influences of their own community were heartening their men to do their duty as Jews and as Englishmen! The flood of letters that came to me—in two cases addressed as O.C. Jewish Army in France—proved how welcome were our services, and, especially, how much comfort we were able to bring in the hour of sorrow.

"I wore upon my cap and tunic the novel badge of the Shield of David, which I introduced into the Army. I was constantly being asked, 'What is that strange sign?', and I would answer, 'This is the badge of the Wandering Jew, and I am he.' For, in the intervals of being close at hand near the big battles, I journeyed up and down from Dunkirk, in the north, to Ham, in

Photo: A. J. Insall.

DULY REPAIRED

There is nothing much to distinguish the new church of Ronville—nor, for that matter, Ronville itself, which does not possess even a British cemetery to interest the Anglo-Saxon pilgrim. The damage done to the place, however, was not quite so wholehearted but that some buildings are still recognisable, the church being a case in point; so let the prospective visitor (ex-Service) not be too pessimistic about the opportunities to reminisce.

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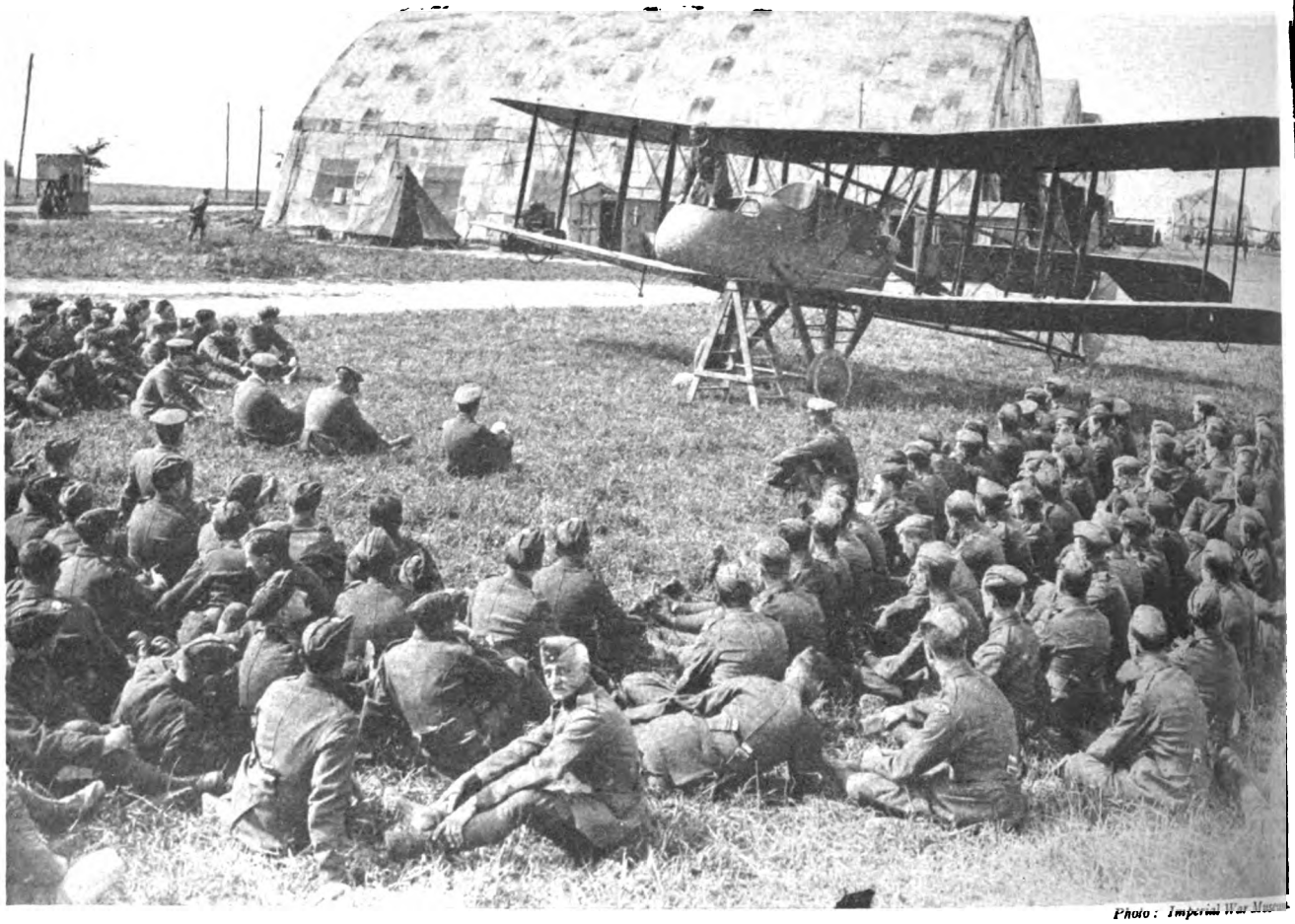

Photo: Imperial War Museum

AN R.A.F. PADRE "ON THE JOB"

The pulpit from which this padre is preaching the Gospel is the nacelle of an "F.E.2b," an aeroplane adapted for dropping bombs by night. The scene is No. 2 Aerodrome Supply Depôt, the date being September 1st, 1918; and one may note that the men are still wearing R.F.C. uniform. The task of the clergyman at the front was no easy one, nor was it made easier when, on June 29th, 1916, it was officially intimated in Parliament, on behalf of the Government, that the aims of the New Testament and those of the military machine were incompatible. That the padre became in so many instances the soldier's best friend is a fine tribute to his sincerity and tact amid the most difficult surroundings.

the south, along the lines of the five armies, meeting groups of my men in and out of the trenches.

He Knew All Their Troubles

"As many as 1,500 came to the principal services, and everywhere they gave me a cordial welcome. They would pour out their troubles to me; they would entrust me with all kinds of missions and confidences. Some asked me to obtain a bit of leave for them. One man stated that his wife had written a distressing letter on the subject of rats in the house; another showed me his marriage licence (he had been hurried out with a draft a couple of days before his wedding); a third spoke slightingly of his Sergeant-Major.

"I acted as prisoner's friend at courts martial. I obtained the services of Jewish officers who were lawyers to defend other men. In one case the C.O. of a M.G. unit stated that the application for my help made by one of his gunners when charged with some serious offence was unique in his experience.

"There was no more agreeable hour in the day than that of the small gatherings which followed Divine Service, at which my principal topic was the necessity for Jewish soldiers to uphold the good name of their people under all conditions. I would tell the men to take out their smokes, and would light up my own pipe. We had a good talk to each other.

"They would relate their adventures with their battalions; they would grouse in the true British style, and I would cheer them by giving my latest jokes and recounting my experiences. We parted with a smile and a warm handshake, which was all the more sincere as we knew we might never meet again.

"It was undoubtedly this warm-hearted personal contact that made the relations between soldier and padre so human and so satisfying; and they have continued in the British Legion and in other ex-Service men's societies. An infusion of this brotherly spirit into all ranks of men in civil life would go far to establish a bond of sympathy among us, and to make the world a happier place for people of all faiths and all political views to live in—as children of the One Father who has made us."

M.C. and Two Bars

I cannot close this article without reference to the Rev. J. Thom, who got the M.C. with two Bars, and who was always in the thick of everything. He says: "The standard of value of chap-

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lains in the estimation of others was inclined to be either excessively high or extremely low. Sometimes they got far more credit than they deserved, and at others a good deal more blame then was their due.

" Probably one of the best bits of incidental work they did was their visits to isolated posts. In active operations the sense of isolation was often very acute. It was amazing how utterly cut off parties in posts of this description could be. For hours they might be completely segregated from others except through their runners, and absolutely without knowledge of what was happening elsewhere.

" Such separation is very hard to stand at any time, but in circumstances like these almost unbearable. When the chaplain or anybody else arrived with some news, it had a wonderfully cheering effect, and acted in the nature of a tonic to strained nerves and boredom.

" In this, as in all other spheres of action, the chaplain's special function of spiritual administration played a primary part. This is so obvious that it has not been dwelt upon, but perhaps no little of the service that he was able to render in his particular line is best summed up in a soldier's remark once overheard : ' I like to see the padres in the camp, and I like to have them with us when we move, because it reminds me that God is with us no matter where we are.' "

There is so much that I could write about the work of chaplains in the War. I have by me an article concerning those in the Cavalry Corps, illustrating the close contact which prevailed everywhere between the padre and his men ; and that spirit of understanding and adaptability which was so essential to every member of the Cloth. This article, written by an old friend—the Rev. A. H. Boyd, M.C., T.D.—who was Senior Chaplain of the Cavalry Corps, shows the close human touch which was characteristic of him and all who worked with him.

At the Armistice there were 3,475 chaplains still serving, while 176 had been killed in action, or had died of wounds or as the result of War service. The proportion of casualties may appear small, but, considering they were chiefly amongst brigade chaplains, the figure is not so much out of proportion.

In the Back Areas

It should also be realised that a chaplain had to go where he was sent. Those in hospitals and back areas carried

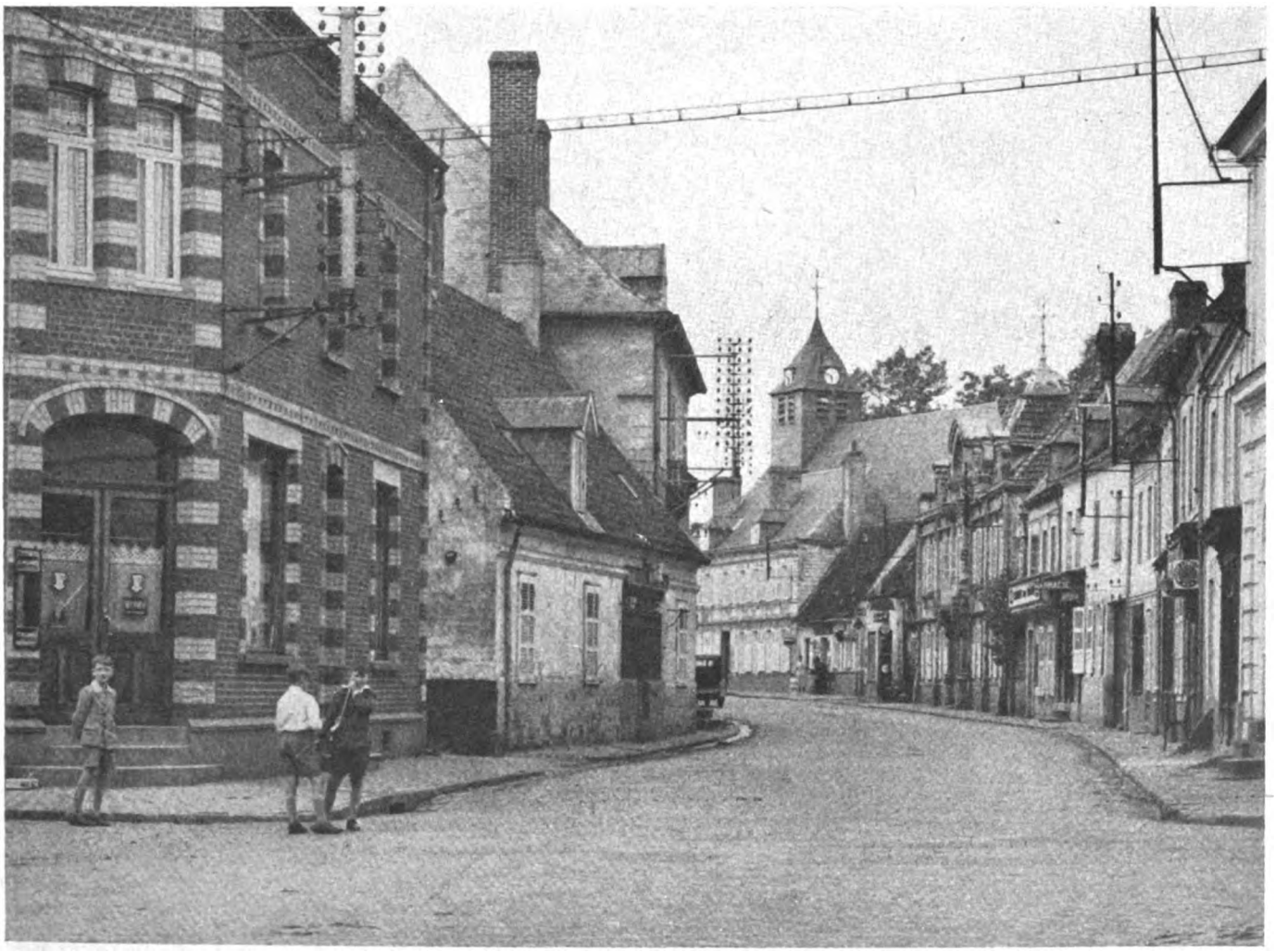

Photo : A. J. Insall.

A FAMOUS RAILHEAD

The large village of Aubigny, of which the above is a modern picture, lies just north of the Arras—St. Pol highroad, about 15 km. north-west of the former town. To-day an important junction (the Lens—Frévent and Arras—St. Pol lines here intersect), it was an even more important railhead during the War. R.F.C. and R.A.F. men will remember it as well as any, for the lorries and tenders from Savy aerodrome were for ever in its streets, collecting supplies from the station sidings.

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out their duties with the same earnestness and thoroughness as those in the front line, and, though they may not have experienced the same dangers, they would have been equally prepared to face them if called upon to do so.

In the Passchendaele battle of 1917, a London rector, well over 45 years of age, came to me at corps headquarters for posting. He had to fill a vacancy with a gunner brigade in front of Vlamertinghe. They were having a hot time, so I was not entirely surprised when, after a week or ten days, he came to me and begged me to get him placed elsewhere. He had been badly shaken, and the whole thing had already become a nightmare.

I told him I could get him sent back if he felt he could not stand it, but would he forgive himself for having turned his back on the job he had come to do? Those stationed in that brigade had to stick it, however much they may have hated it all, so what about trying another week?

He decided to accept my advice, and went back that afternoon. Within a week I went and saw him, and found he had acquired an entirely different outlook. Nothing would move him henceforward; having found himself, he was prepared to "stick it" whatever happened.

The Church may have been slow to awaken to the nation's call, but when she realised the desperate need, she held back no man from the loving service of those who gave themselves for England's sake. Her failures were not then, but afterwards—perhaps owing to the loss of so many great teachers who might have done much toward the building of a better post-War world.

Though twenty years have passed, the 1914–1918 experiences have woven themselves into later life in curious ways—not only in prolongations of the happy comradeship of the past, but also in unexpected gratitude for what was done then. To give one of many incidents which have come to my notice:

In 1932 the Rev. Peverley Dodd, who served in Malta during most of the War, found himself engaged in raising money for Church fabric. As usual, it was hard going, but news of his appeal reached one who thereupon called to see him, and after enquiry produced a handsome contribution.

"My name is ——. You may recall my late son?"

Mr. Dodd did recall him, for the young man had been one of the first to receive his commission when serving in the ranks overseas. His father had written to the padre asking him to advance such funds as the boy might need. This had been done, and the temporary loan promptly repaid, as Mr. Dodd now pointed out.

"Yes," said ——, "but there are some loans that are never fully repaid. My boy had to lay down his life, along with so many others; but we still cherish his letters telling of kindnesses received. Shall we call this a little on account, with more to follow if required for the scheme?"

A fragrant aftermath after many years. . . .

Photo: A. J. Innell

ALBERT

In case readers have never heard of it, this is a town situated on the Western Front, somewhere between Amiens and Bapaume; and the above photograph shows a contemporary market-day scene in one of the upper streets leading down to the cathedral. Modern Albert is a dull place, its population of 8,300 being more than usually preoccupied with their material, as opposed to their æsthetic, requirements.

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CHAPTER XLVI

"WE WILL REMEMBER THEM"

Many pages of this work commemorate the exploits of brave men. It is fitting, therefore, that we should make reference to those who returned home no more, and who sleep in some foreign land. Nor should we forget that great organisation, the Imperial War Graves Commission, whose work for the fallen can be referred to here only in terms of praise and of gratitude—praise and gratitude for all that has been done and for all that, even to-day, is still being done with reverence and with care. Those of us who served are grateful for the honour paid to our friends who are gone. The graceful memorials and the quiet cemeteries that are everywhere to be found where men of the Empire fought are the outward proof of the fulfilment of Laurence Binyon's promise that "At the going down of the sun and in the morning we will remember them."

THE scene is the Menin Gate. The speaker, Lord Plumer. The occasion, the unveiling of that great memorial. "They are the Empire's half-a-million missing, with no known graves."

The Half-million Missing

Fifty-four thousand of these missing are recorded on the Menin Gate. The rest, 462,877, are named in perpetuity on 85 other memorials.

In all the theatres of the Great War, fortune dealt unequally between man and man in this: to one it gave a place of burial, either known and named from the day of his death, or discovered later by search or accident, while to another it denied this honour.

From the beginning it was felt that to leave uncommemorated even one of the dead would be a failure in duty. It was therefore decided to record, not only on paper, but in stone or bronze, the names of those who lie buried in unknown graves, beneath either the battlefields or the sea. And so there arose these 86 memorials, each sharply contrasting with the others in size and design, according to the nature of the site and the numbers commemorated.

In Europe they stretch from the Belgian coastline to as far south as the Marne, forming a chain as indicative of the course of the battles as any contemporary trench map. From them, indeed, you may piece together a full history of the Great War.

There are, besides, over 70 divisional, brigade, and battalion memorials, as well as scores of plaques, each a poignant reminder, erected in our own church of St. George in Ypres. Whereas the 86 monuments set up by the War Graves Commission commemorate only the missing, these divisional, battalion, and other memorials, privately subscribed for and built, pay honour to all the dead, identified and otherwise, of the units they represent.

Thiepval, for two very good reasons, is our first point of call. The Somme memorial in that still-stricken commune is the largest of all our monuments, and records the greatest number of missing, covering the Somme and Ancre fighting from July 1st, 1916, when the first battle of the Somme—the longest single engagement of the whole War—was mounted, to March 20th, 1918, the eve of Ludendorff's spring offensive.

The choice of Thiepval as the site was inevitable. This village, garrisoned for two years by Württembergers, and transformed in that time into a bristling fortress, was, of all the positions assaulted on July 1st, 1916, the strongest and the most stubbornly defended. Not until September did it capitulate, and then the dead of July 1st still lay in heaps where they had fallen during that scarlet dawn.

"Here Stood Thiepval"

Almost alone, moreover, out of all the devastated settlements, was it threatened with permanent annihilation—"Here stood Thiepval." Even to-day you will find only a few scattered houses, and, in place of those that have not been rebuilt, shell holes, craters, gaunt and blasted trees, and other grim echoes.

Thirteen years after the battle, when the foundations of the memorial were being dug, tunnels and dug-outs, once part of the German second line, were struck, and a box of German bombs was unearthed, still in perfect condition for starting another war. After these discoveries, digging was continued to a depth of 19 feet, and a raft of concrete laid 10 feet thick.

The monument took four years to build, is 150 feet high, and bears nearly 20,000 more names than the Menin Gate. On the sixteen lofty piers, 123 separate units have recorded their slain warriors. Above the 73,000 names of the Missing are inscribed French place-names which have passed into the history book: Beaumont-Hamel, Mametz, Delville ("Devil's") Wood, Pozières, Le Transloy, Flers, Montauban—each is now carved in stone.

From all these resurrected Somme hamlets and woods, and from scores more besides—from every compass-point, indeed—the memorial appears etched on the skyline as a great beacon. You do not ask your direction on the Somme; you take it from Thiepval.

The skyscraper of Picardy rises out of a 40-acre War Park, planted picturesquely with Cornish elms, silver birches, and pyramid oaks. At the foot of the pile is an example of that ever-green Allied bond, a joint Anglo-French cemetery, containing 300 graves of each nation.

Across the way from Thiepval is the high Ulster tower, like a castle which has run to height and overlooked its breadth, built to mark the deeds of the famous 16th Irish division, and entirely different from any other memorial. From the summit you may see, below, the chalk lines of the opposing trenches on the hotly-contested Schwaben Redoubt. Even now the sites of these long-since filled-in ditches are clearly visible, with their No Man's Land that was so very, very narrow.

In Memory of the March Retreat

At Pozières, an easy walk from Thiepval, the tragic tale of the Somme

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Photo : Photopress.

TENDING THE GRAVES

Members of the " battalion which never comes home " tending the graves of some of those who likewise will never come home. The burial-ground in this instance is Ypres Reservoir Cemetery, where lie 2,248 Home Country, 346 Overseas, 1 German, and 7 unidentified fallen, of the period October, 1915—November, 1918.

slaughter, written at Thiepval up to March 20th, 1918, is carried on until into April, when Ludendorff's hammer-blow had spent itself at the very gates of Amiens. Standing on the western (Albert) fringe of an elongated, T-shaped hamlet, it is far from being the memorial originally planned. The Commission wished to build a second Menin Gate across the road in the village, but the French Government, so generous to us in all other respects, could not see its way to sanctioning the plans : so instead we built a memorial wall in the cemetery.

Nearly 15,000 officers and men are here commemorated, 12,700 of whom fell during the 16 days of the German offensive, and were accorded no known graves. The total casualties sustained by British arms in March and April, 1918, exceeded 180,000 killed, wounded, or captured. And Pozières is the Home of nearly one-tenth of that number.

The Tank Corps' memorial is also at Pozières.

We cannot yet leave this scarlet Somme, where the Vis memorial adds another chapter to the tale. Here are recorded the 9,900 who fell on the Somme and became missing between August 8th, 1918—Ludendorff's "black day "—and the time of the Armistice. Call this period that of the Advance to Victory, if you like. Officially it is named the Battle of the Hundred Days.

The Battles of Amiens, " Second Somme," and " Second Arras," the actions of the Hindenburg (or Siegfried) Line, of the Selle, Valenciennes, and the Sambre—all are the province of the Vis-en-Artois monument. In that long list of engagements, 32,000 officers and men of the First (Horne), Third (Byng), and Fourth (Rawlinson) armies lost their lives, of whom the 10,000 missing recorded at Vis form a little under one-third.

The counterpart of the 1918 Vis memorial is that erected at La Ferté-sous-Jouarre, on the north bank of the Marne, to commemorate the missing of the Old Contemptibles in the first two

Photo : Central Press.

AT LA FERTÉ-SOUS-JOUARRE

On the south bank of the Marne, near the bridge which carries the Paris road over the river at the above-named village, stands this memorial to the 3,888 missing of the " Old Contemptibles " who fell in the Battles of Mons, Le Cateau, the Marne, and the Aisne, during 1914. The photograph shows the unveiling ceremony in 1928.

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months' fighting. Nearly 4,000—lost at Mons, Le Cateau, the Marne, and the Aisne—are named, a figure which constitutes one half of our total dead during those first skirmishing weeks of a war which was to be "over by Christmas."

Two smaller monuments respectively on the right and left banks of the river, mark the ends of the floating bridge built by the Royal Engineers of the 4th Division for the passage of the British left wing after the battle of the Marne.

The Aisne and the Marne

The story of the losses incurred on the Aisne and the Marne nearly four years later is retold in the Soissons memorial to the 4,000 missing on those fronts in 1918, when comparatively small bodies of British troops played a conspicuous part, first in defeat and later in victory. A cenotaph, before which stand the figures of three soldiers, lies between the cathedral square and the bridge built by our own Sappers, which is still known as the Pont des Anglais. Since the monument's erection, a number of contiguous streets have been cleared to form a public square.

The day which saw the unveiling of the Vis memorial saw also that of the Dud Corner Cemetery Memorial to the 20,000 Missing of Loos. This Loos memorial, set among the mines of Picardy's "Black Country," stands almost on the site of a German strongpoint, the Lens Road Redoubt, captured by the 15th (Scottish) Division on the first day of the battle, September 25th, 1915. Small wonder that the Black Watch, the Camerons, the Gordons, the Highland Light Infantry, and the Scottish Borderers, contribute so many of the 20,712 names.

Rudyard Kipling's only son is here commemorated, and shortly before his death Kipling arranged to ensure, by endowment, the nightly soundings throughout the years, of the last Post at this memorial.

What famous names the monument

Photo: Imperial War Graves Commission.

TO FLYING MEN

We have already illustrated (Volume One, page 302) the great Faubourg d'Amiens Cemetery and memorial to the missing at Arras; but the present photograph will be of special interest to airmen, for it shows the column dedicated to all the missing of the R.F.C. and R.A.F. on the Western Front.

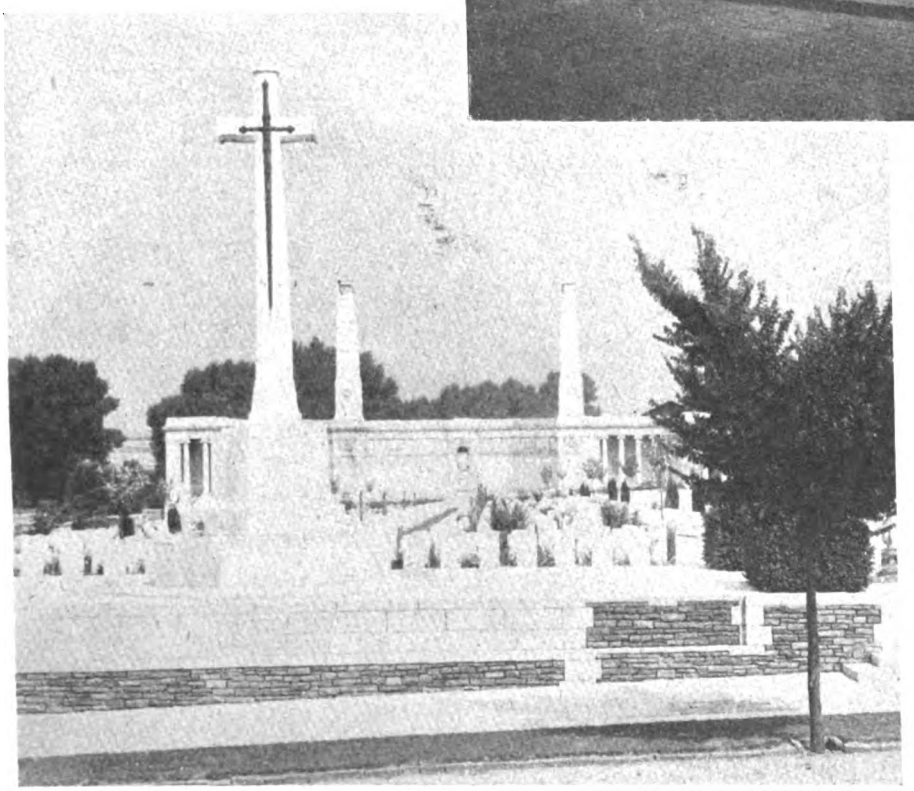

Photo: Imperial War Graves Commission.

AT VIS-EN-ARTOIS

Vis-en-Artois is situated 12 km. south-east of Arras, on the road to Cambrai, and was captured in August, 1918, by the Canadians, who began the building of the present British cemetery. This contains the graves of 1,749 United Kingdom, 573 Canadian, 9 Newfoundland, 6 Australian, and 2 South African dead. The memorial, also shown above, commemorates 9,903 missing who fell in the final advance in Artois, and in the Battles of Picardy, the Hindenburg Line, and the Selle.

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recalls! Hulluch, the Hohenzollern Redoubt, Lens, La Bassée, Bois-Grenier, Béthune, the notorious Fosse 8 . . . a visit to Dud Corner must have many a man fighting these actions over again.

Nor can you make pilgrimage to the Louverval memorial without sharply recalling that glorious thrust that won for us Bourlon Wood, and all but gained Cambrai. In those operations—the "soldiers' battles" of Bourlon, Fontaine-Notre-Dame, Gouzeaucourt, and Villers-Guislain—the Third Army lost 20,000 dead in 14 days; and it is on the Louverval memorial that the 7,000 missing among them are named. The monument is 10 miles west of Cambrai, north of the main road to Bapaume. The British front line before the battle was rather more than a mile to the east of it.

The Airman's Monument

On July 31st, 1932, was unveiled, in the Commission's European home-town, the Faubourg d'Amiens memorial, a monument to 35,000 men of all ranks, and 1,000 pilots and observers of the R.F.C., R.N.A.S., and (later) R.A.F., who lie in unknown graves. In this respect, it is the chief monument on the Western Front to the Flying Services.

The two main engagements responsible for the memorial were the British offensive launched from Arras in the spring of 1917, when the enemy retreated to his prepared Hindenburg Line and Vimy was fated to be a highlight, and the final German assault on the city a year later.

The unveiling of Walter Allward's 50,000-ton giant on the topmost pinnacle of that great bastion of the Western Front is recent enough to be still in the minds of all. No public act of ex-King Edward drew such masses; no War pilgrims ever came in such numbers over so great a distance (the journey from Montreal to Havre and back is 6,000 miles); and none of the 85 other monuments took so long (14 years) in the building.

The whole of Europe was searched for a stone that, in such an exposed position as Vimy, would weather and endure for centuries to come. It was found in a disused 4th-century quarry at Spalato (modern Split), on the eastern Adriatic coast, not far from Serajevo. From this quarry, which once furnished the materials for the wonder-palace of the Emperor Diocletian, 9,000 tons of stone were shipped to Vimy.

A German and a Canadian soldier lying hand-in-hand in death, and the body of a German general, were grim discoveries in the decade-and-a-half taken to complete the memorial. At the top of the pylons the architect erected a vast steel studio, specially reinforced at such a height against the gales that still sweep the ridge of

A MARVEL OF BALANCE

The French caption on the back of the original photograph laconically observes: "Fargny. Effect of bombardment on a house." This seems a mild comment on the extraordinary spectacle presented by this two-storey building, of which the first floor is apparently balanced on a single partition-wall, and the roof supported by a solitary chimney-stack. Fargny is the name of a lone farm, unmarked on the majority of road-maps, about 1 km. west of Curlu, at the apex of the horseshoe bend here described by the Somme. The former buildings included a mill.

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death. In no other way could he have worked in that exposed position.

As sundown wraps in sleep the facing spur of Notre Dame de Lorette, you see, stabbing the twilight air to guide home the spirits of the fallen, the beacon of the French lighthouse memorial to her 100,000 dead on and about Vimy heights.

Australia at Villers-Bretonneux

Now, of the Dominions, only Australia lacks her memorial. But the omission is fast being repaired. Soon after the War, a position was secured at Villers-Bretonneux, almost on the site of the "Diggers'" night-assault on the town on April 24th/25th, 1918, when our line was restored and Amiens saved.

The memorial was originally to cost six figures; but when the crisis supervened, the Commonwealth Government called a halt, and for years, like the château in "Villers-Brett," the foundations of the monument lay derelict, until at last our own War Graves Commission, at the Dominion's request, has begun to build anew.

Experts declare Sir Edwin Lutyens' design to be his finest conception. In its simple austerity, this will be one of the greatest memorials ever raised to the fallen. In the centre of a wall corresponding to the battle-line held by the Australian forces in 1918, will be a great tower, rising more than 100 feet above the surrounding countryside. An "O.P." or observation-room, at the top, will command a panorama almost the whole of the old Fifth Army battleground.

Steps, carefully graded so that even the aged may climb with ease, will lead to the tower's base. The total of Australian missing to be recorded (it will not include those lost in Belgium) will exceed 10,800. Thus will the long chain have its final link forged.

South Africa and India were among the first of the Dominions to remember their missing. The Union's memorial in Delville Wood, not a rifle shot removed from Longueval of sinister memory, breathes the very spirit of tragedy. On the archway connecting the two flanking turrets, two massive bronze figures are depicted on either side of a wild horse, which, in "union," they are taming. It is a noble example of the sculptor's art.

Each turret, liberally signposted with arrowheads fixed to the circular stone balustrades, names many of the famous "warm corners" of the Somme, including High Wood, Flers, Gueudecourt, Bapaume, Le Transloy, Les-bœufs, Morval, Ginchy, Guillemont, Waterlot Farm, Trones and Bernafay Woods, Arrow Head Copse, Montauban, Pozières, the Bazentins, and Thiepval.

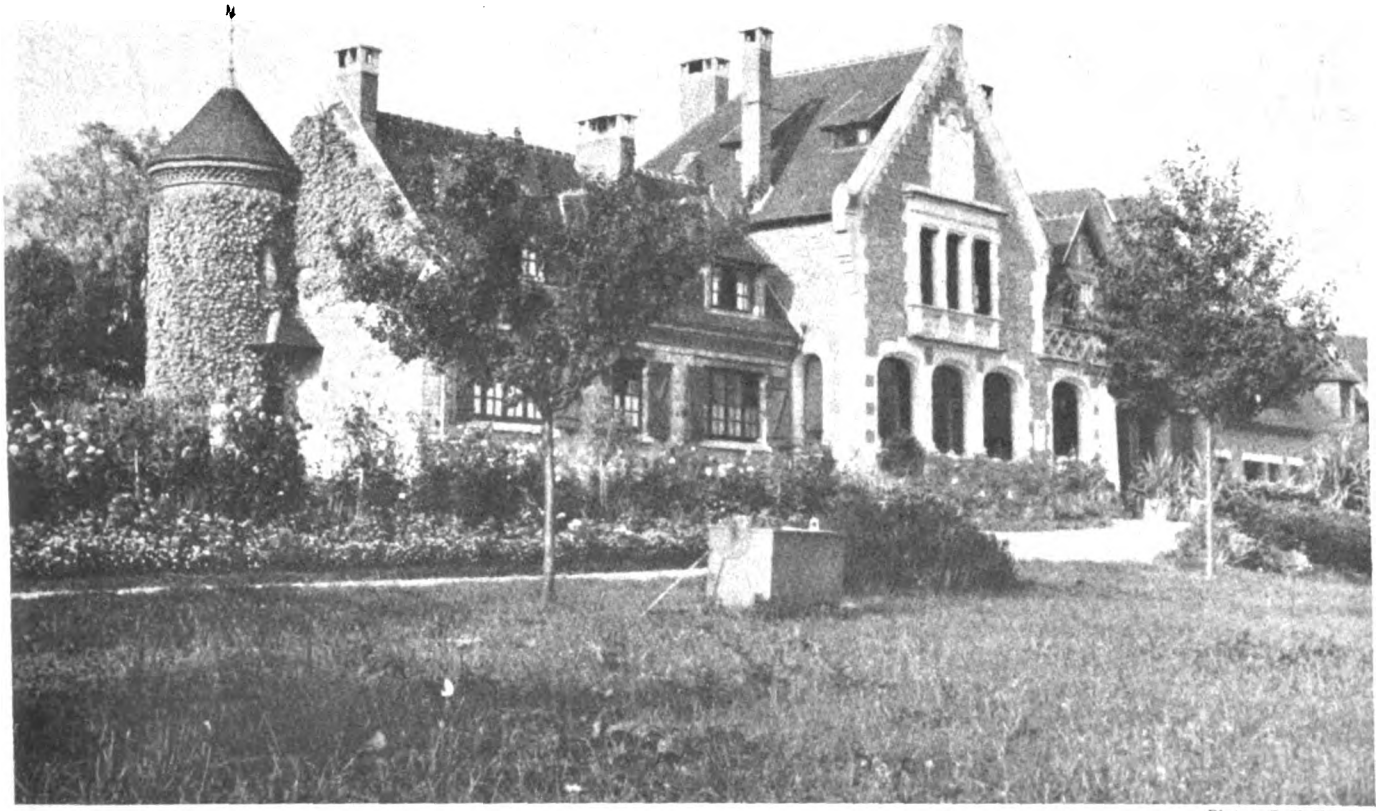

Photo: G. T. Watson.

A VERY HANDSOME FARMSTEAD

On July 1st, 1916, Fargny lay in the foremost line of the French 11th Division (XX Corps) defences, and was therefore the jumping-off point for the first (unavailing) and second (successful) attacks on Curlu upon that date. The night of March 25th, 1918, found the British VII Corps line established from Curlu northward, so that Fargny was among the first places to be lost when the stubborn resistance of the 105th Brigade (35th Division) proved insufficient to prevent a retirement on the 26th. To-day the new farmhouse, an exceedingly fine building set in the midst of beautifully-cultivated gardens, is the headquarters of a farm which is the last word in up-to-date equipment.

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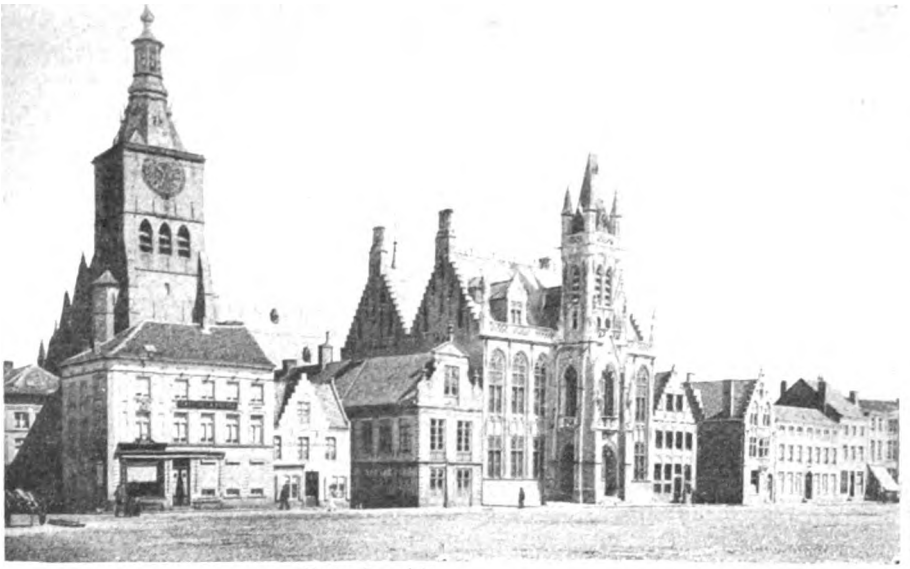

Photo: Copyright.

PRE-WAR DIXMUDE

Dixmude—meaning, in its Flemish form, "the mouth of the dyke"—was until 1914 a quiet little town of quaint, gabled houses, a 15th-century church, and the very handsome Town Hall seen in the foreground of this picture.

In Delville Wood

The memorial, standing in Delville Wood itself, is approached from the Longueval-Ginchy road by a wide turfed drive, planted, in "parade ground" lines, with South African oaks grown from seeds taken from the wood by emigrants to the Cape. Not for many a year, however, will they grow into the giants which once we knew.

The whole of the new "Devil's," and not only the monument, is part of the Union's way of remembering. In the old drives which still intersect "Devil's" little cairns perpetuate the war-time nomenclature bestowed. Thus you come upon your Campbell Street and your Rotten Row, your Princes Street and your Regent Street.

The Indian memorial at Neuve-Chapelle is the most characteristic of all those erected by or on behalf of the Overseas troops who came to the Mother Country's aid. In the foreground is a column nearly 50 feet high, surmounted by a lotus capital and crown, and flanked by two tigers. Column and tigers are supported by a pedestal, on the near side of which is carved "India, 1914–18," and on the far side the Battle Honours of Indian units on the Western Front. This striking design, inspired by the East, records 4,800 missing—roughly half of the Indian infantry, cavalry, and labour personnel who died in France and Flanders.

The cross-roads site, 500 yards from the village of Neuve-Chapelle, was known early in 1915 as "Port Arthur." In the north corner stood the martial-sounding "Auberge de la Bombe," and near the south corner "Pioneer Keep," made by the foe when he held this ground in 1918.

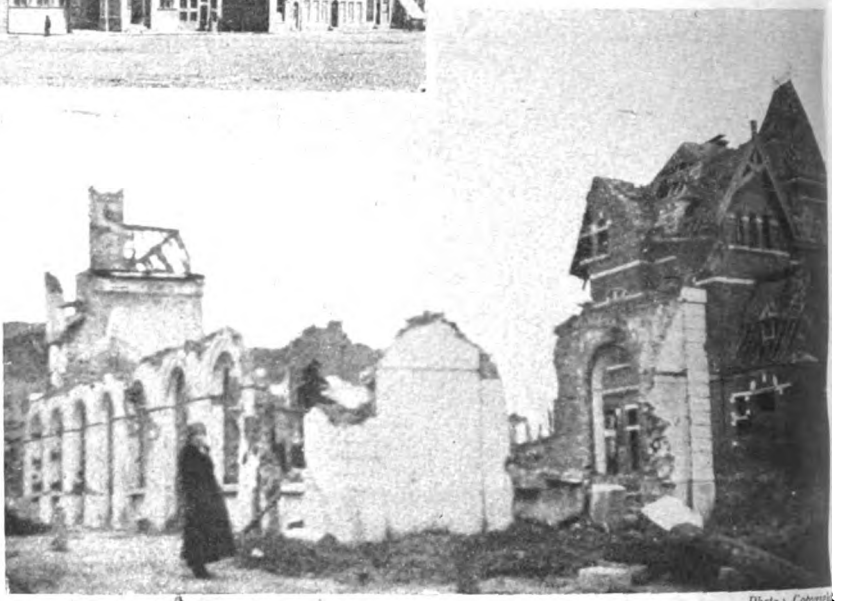

Photo: Copyright.

DIXMUDE IN WARTIME

The position of Dixmude is 20 km. due north of Ypres; and, like its southern neighbour, it bears the unenviable distinction of having been in, or nearly in, the battle-line from one end of the War to the other. Here we see the Grand' Place in 1919.

Photo: A. J. Insall.

DIXMUDE RE-ARISEN

On November 10th, 1914, the Germans took Dixmude after a battle lasting three weeks, and from then onward, for the next five months, it was one of the focal points of the bitter fighting on the Yser. The enemy retained possession of it, however, and was not evicted until he withdrew from before the advancing Belgians on September 29th, 1918. The town's earlier history includes capture by Louis XIV in 1680.

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The Indian memorial stands on one side of Richebourg-l'Avoué, at the top of an isosceles triangle formed by Béthune and La Bassée at the base, and the British Le Touret memorial at the apex.

The Le Touret monument, a loggia surrounding an open rectangular court, serves an area enclosed on the north by the Lys and a line through Estaires to Fournes, and on the south by the First Army boundary at Grenay; it covers the period from the arrival of the II Corps in Flanders in 1914 to the eve of Loos, 1915. Over 13,400 names appear on the roll.

Photo: A. P., Paris.

RUINS OF A FACTORY

This photograph shows the ruins of what had once been the Usine Bullot, a factory for making wicks, at Corbie on the Somme. The village itself has been illustrated more than once in our pages, and recently, also, in a photogravure section. The above picture is dated May 25th, 1918.

Photo: A. J. Insall.

THE FACTORY REBUILT

The Usine Bullot had to be entirely rebuilt after the Armistice, but to-day it is once more a thriving concern, having, indeed, only four rivals in the whole of France. This illustration, taken from just inside the gates, shows the front of the new building.

The "Plugstreet" Memorial

This particular sector, which we may aptly call border country, is thick with memorials. Here, a few kilometres north of Richebourg l'Avoué, we are at "Plugstreet" and Hyde Park Corner, and yet another monument. Once again "hot spots" and "windy corners" are brought back to mind. The actions of Armentières, 1914, Aubers Ridge and Bois-Grenier, 1915, Fromelles, 1916, and Estaires, 1918, are all represented by the "Plugstreet" memorial, as well as the towns of Hazebrouck, Merville, and Bailleul. Nearly 11,500 missing are named on the colonnade.

The new Menin Gate, standing on a site whose history goes back many centuries before the War, consists of a Hall of Memory, 120 feet long and 66 feet wide, covered in by a coffered semi-elliptical arch in a single span. At each end is a 30-foot-wide archway, with flat arches on either side. In the centre of the sides are broad staircases leading to loggias running the whole

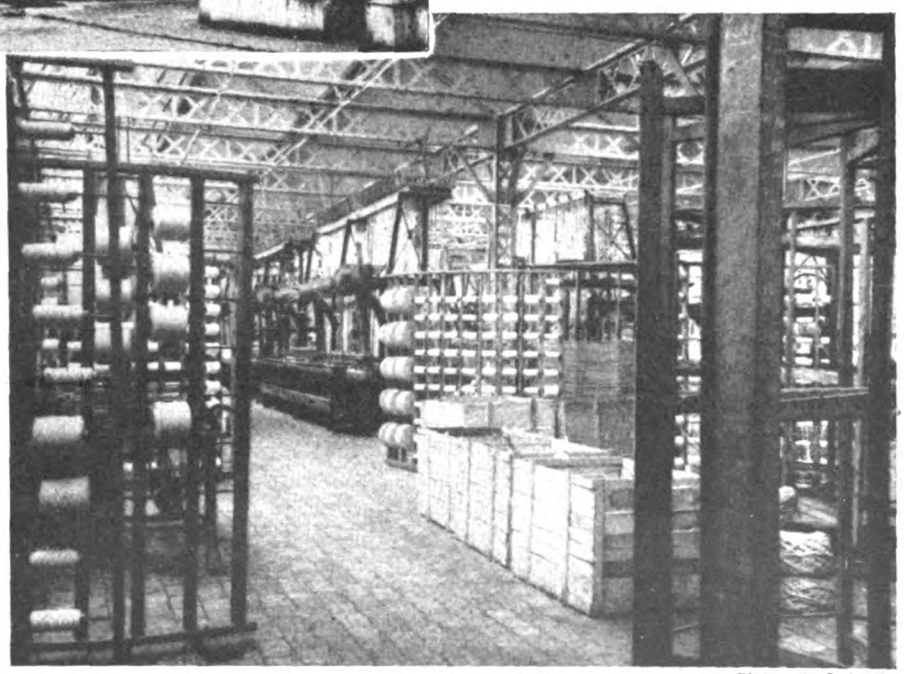

Photo: A. J. Insall.

WHERE THE WICKS ARE MADE

Our photographer was privileged in being allowed to take the above picture, for the factory is strictly closed to visitors; and readers of *Twenty Years After* must thank M. Thibaut, the owner, for this peep into the premises after the workers have left for the day. Wicks are made for all kinds of lamps, petrol-lighters, etc., and bands are manufactured for the insides of cycle-rims. The foundation celebrated its centenary in 1931.

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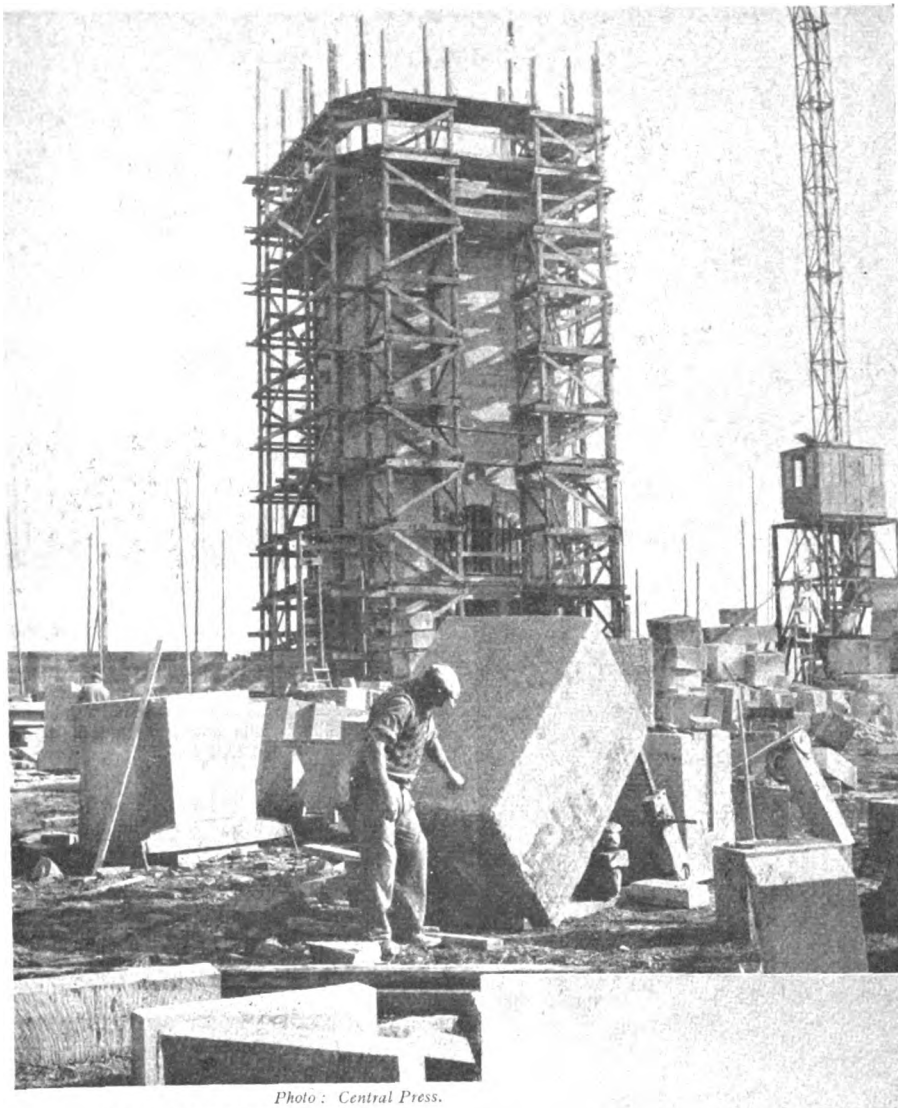

Photo: Central Press.

LAST BUT NOT LEAST

Almost certainly the last of the great national War memorials, Australia's monument at Villers-Bretonneux is still incomplete nearly twenty years after the Armistice. The four pictures on this and the next page show various phases of construction, while overleaf will be found an architect's drawing of the finished pile.

length of the building, and to the ramparts.

The names of 54,896 officers and men are chiselled in Portland stone panels fixed to the inner walls of the Hall, up the sides of the staircases, and inside the loggias. A recumbent lion, on the eastern side, faces out over the Salient, as though still guarding it; and a sarcophagus, with a flag and wreath, appears in the same position on the side facing the city.

The inscription over the two main arches reads: "To the Armies of the British Empire who stood here from 1914–1918 and to those of their Dead who have no known grave."

"Here," reads a second inscription over the two staircases leading out of the main hall, "are recorded names of officers and men who fell in Ypres Salient but to whom the fortune of war denied the known and honoured burial given to their comrades in death. They shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away."

The Menin Gate was a natural site: indeed, it almost chose itself. Hundreds of thousands of men passed through it to the inferno and the shambles beyond, and it represented, also, the deliberate obstinacy with which the British Empire, for four years, refused to surrender a small but priceless corner of Belgian soil.

The foundations presented much the same problems as those of the gigantic Vimy and Thiepval structures, and, to sustain the great weight of our Gate built across the moat, many concrete piles were driven.

The Missing of Tyne Cot

Another 35,000 who were missing in the Salient have Tyne Cot, astride the trail to "Passion Dale," for their home and memorial. A division of the names between two sites was not only desirable, but inevitable; and it was historically fitting that Tyne Cot, close to the farthest point reached by British arms until

Photo: Central Press.

AT WORK IN THE CEMETERY

Villers-Bretonneux Military Cemetery and the Australian National Memorial adjoin one another, and are, strictly speaking, not in "Villers-Bret" itself, but slightly to the north of it, on the road to Fouilloy. The cemetery contains 1,085 United Kingdom, 770 Australian, 263 Canadian, 4 South African, and 2 New Zealand fallen, and includes no fewer than 15 special memorials, of which one is here visible.

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nearly the end of the War, should be chosen as the Menin Gate's counterpart.

It remained only to apportion the names between the two memorials, and the night of August 15th/16th, 1917, the eve of the Battle of Langemarck, was the deciding factor. The missing in Flanders before that date appear on the Menin Gate; the rest are named at Tyne Cot, on a wall that stretches in a wide arc across the top of those green slopes. As many as four line regiments contribute over 1,000 names apiece to the roll—the Lancashire Fusiliers, 1,303; the Northumberland Fusiliers, 1,098; the Royal Warwicks, 1,035; and the West Yorkshires, 1,109. Second only to the Lancashire lads is the Machine Gun Corps, with 1,181 names among the total.

Our pilgrimage draws to its curtain. There are many "lesser" memorials to which you and I should go together—that of the 2nd Worcesters at Inverness Copse, which reminds you how that battalion put Gheluvelt back into British keeping when the foe was almost through; the 18th Division's at Clapham Junction; the 4th Division's at Wytschaete; and scores more.

The smallest of all perhaps expresses the most adequately the spirit and purpose of the remainder. It is only a tiny plaque in the wall in the War Park at Beaumont Hamel, and you might well miss it. The inscription reads:

Tread softly here, go reverently and slow!
God help us if we fail to pay our debt!

Fifty of the 81 places where we "tread softly" as part of our debt are in areas of Europe other than France and Flanders, in Asia, and in the East. The Basra (Iraq) Memorial covers the longest period of warfare of any, and in numbers recorded takes third place after Thiepval and the Menin Gate.

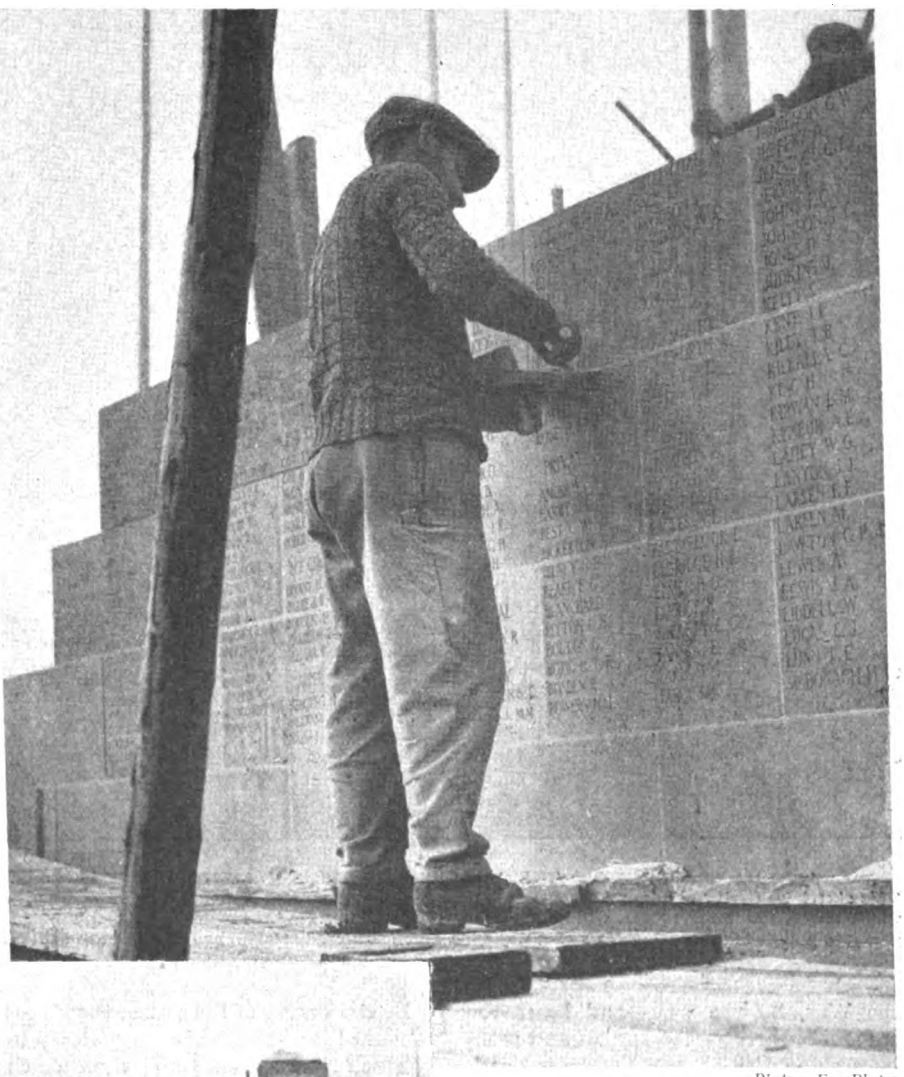

Photo: Fox Photos.

LAYING THE STONES

Here a workman is laying some of the blocks of Portland stone which will form the long walls of the monument (*see* sketch overleaf), and will bear the names of the 10,860 Australians who lost their lives in France (but not Belgium) and whose graves are unknown. The names are carved on the stones *before* assembly.

Photo: Fox Photos.

SAWING BY HAND

The Villers-Bretonneux memorial was originally planned in 1928, but the financial crisis of 1930 interrupted work on it, which was not resumed until 1937. It was then estimated that the monument would be completed by the spring of 1938—just twenty years after the great German offensive in which many of the "diggers" commemorated fell. The cemetery may be seen in the background of this view.

The Huge Toll in "Mespot"

It covers the operations in Mesopotamia from 1914 to the end of August, 1921—the legal termination of

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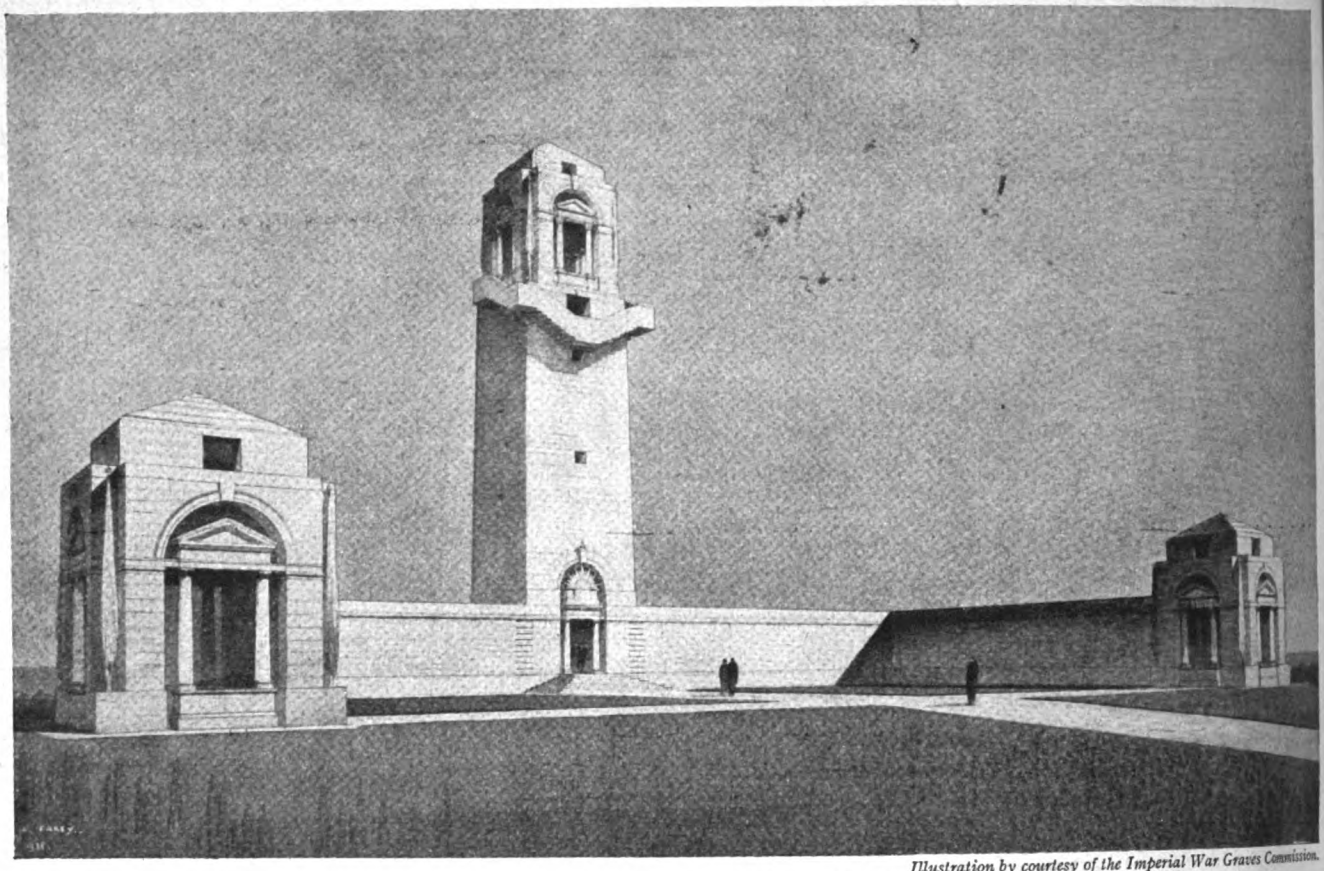

Illustration by courtesy of the Imperial War Graves Commission.

HOW THE VILLERS-BRETONNEUX MEMORIAL WILL LOOK WHEN FINISHED

This sketch by Cyril A. Farey makes clear the design of the Australian National Memorial, whose architect is Sir Edwin Lutyens. The great central watch-tower, 100 feet in height, will be flanked by long walls bearing the names of the missing, and terminating in dignified pavilions. Tower and pavilions will be of dressed Ashlar stone, while the walls, as already stated, are to consist of Portland stone. The names of the 6,141 Australians who were missing in Belgium are already inscribed on the Menin Gate.

the War, by the way—and bears the names of nearly 33,500 Indian and more than 7,600 British and Overseas dead. They fell in the occupation of Basra and Qurna, 1914; the Turkish counter-offensive known as the Battle of Shaiba, the advances up the Tigris and the Euphrates, and the Battle of Ctesiphon, 1915; the Kut drama, 1915–16; the capture of Baghdad, 1917; and the rebellion of 1920.

The Gallipoli memorials own to an even more pathetic distinction: 34,000 Empire troops (or the equivalent of half the Turkish losses) died on the Peninsula and in the Dardanelles, and of these the graves of 27,000 are unknown. We shall never know them.

On no other front was there so high a proportion of missing to total killed. They are commemorated at Chunuk Bair, Hill 60, Twelve Tree Copse, Helles, and Lone Pine. Of these monuments, that at Helles, on the ground where the original British landing was made and the last troops were evacuated, records 20,000, or almost the entire army of the unknown. The remaining four are Anzac memorials.

By the Treaty of Lausanne, the Helles memorial is established in perpetuity to overlook the land and the sea on which for 3,000 years Europe and Asia have fought, and on which, 20 years ago, the fiercest conflict of all began and ended. It is a memorial to the dead of an unsuccessful yet supremely glorious campaign.

On a 100-foot obelisk are inscribed also the names of the battleships, battle-cruisers, and cruisers which fought in the Dardanelles, as well as those of the other vessels, including the *River Clyde*, which took part in the fighting.

The Seaman's Share

That is the first mention of the Navy in these despatches. To find its memorials, we must recross the Channel, which its unceasing vigilance made so safe for the land fighter, and visit Chatham, Plymouth, and Portsmouth, where the monuments erected by the War Graves Commission record respectively 8,541, 7,268, and 9,750 naval missing.

At Tower Hill, by the Pool of London, stands the memorial to those of the Merchant Navy and Fishing Fleet who gave their lives for their country and whose graves are at sea. There are 12,674 names on the panels of this monument; and unless one is entirely devoid of imagination or gratitude, it is difficult to pass by the Tower without a thought for the valour of these warriors who were not by trade fighting men, but peaceable members of our Mercantile Marine.

The 1,100,000 Who Did Not Come Back

"Hostilities will cease at 11 a.m." The Order which put a period to the business of killing and silenced for ever the orchestras of the Great War marked the beginning of the greatest problem of all, and of a task which is not yet ended. It can never end.

That task is the care of the dead—the 1,100,000 who marched out and did not march back. It was, and will remain, the greatest saga of the aftermath. Not even the planning of the First Battle of the Somme—the "Blood Bath," as the foe called it—or of Passchendaele, in which tens of thousands of men laid down their lives,

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called for greater organisation. It was a problem, moreover, without precedent, and one not confined to the cockpit of Europe. No wonder Kipling called it "the greatest bit of constructional work since the Pharaohs."

The Commission, however, labours wherever an Empire soldier fought and fell, and on every far-flung battle-front of the War. Though "The Largest Garden in the World" has its centre in France and Flanders, parts of it are planted as far afield as Gallipoli and Greece, Italy and Aden, Palestine and Persia, Kenya and Cape Verde. And even that is not the half of it. In Guatemala, the Leeward Islands, St. Helena, Czechoslovakia, Estonia, Lithuania, and many other out-of-the-way places, there are little British gardens. From Europe to Asia, from New Zealand to the Americas, from the West Indies to Africa, there are 15,846 burial-grounds containing War graves!

Sixteen hundred of the 2,316 burial-grounds in Flanders (437) and Picardy (1,879) are communal cemeteries and churchyards which existed before the War, and which contain relatively few War graves; the rest, numbering 814, are new military cemeteries, and it is in them that the constructional epic of the Commission's work is to be read in all its wonder and glory. One-hundred-and-eighty-eight are in Ypres—Armentières sector, 101 around Albert, and nearly 90 on the Bapaume—Péronne front.

The total number of names registered is 1,104,890. Of this number, 587,117 have been identified and buried in known graves, while 517,773 are recorded as missing. Of this total, however, 180,861 are missing only in a technical sense; they have been found, but not identified, and therefore buried as "Unknown." The names recorded on the 80 memorials to the missing, in every corner of the globe, include those lying in "Unknown" graves.

At the busiest early post-War period of operations, as many as 500 cemeteries, each containing anything from 40 to 10,000 graves, were under simultaneous construction; 2,000 soldiers' beds were being planted each week. Try to imagine the co-ordination, organisation, and plant-production demanded in those earlier years!

A Variety of Problems

Many problems had to be faced and overcome. Sometimes there was the water. Always there was every possible variety of soil to contend against. There were sand-dunes to be held

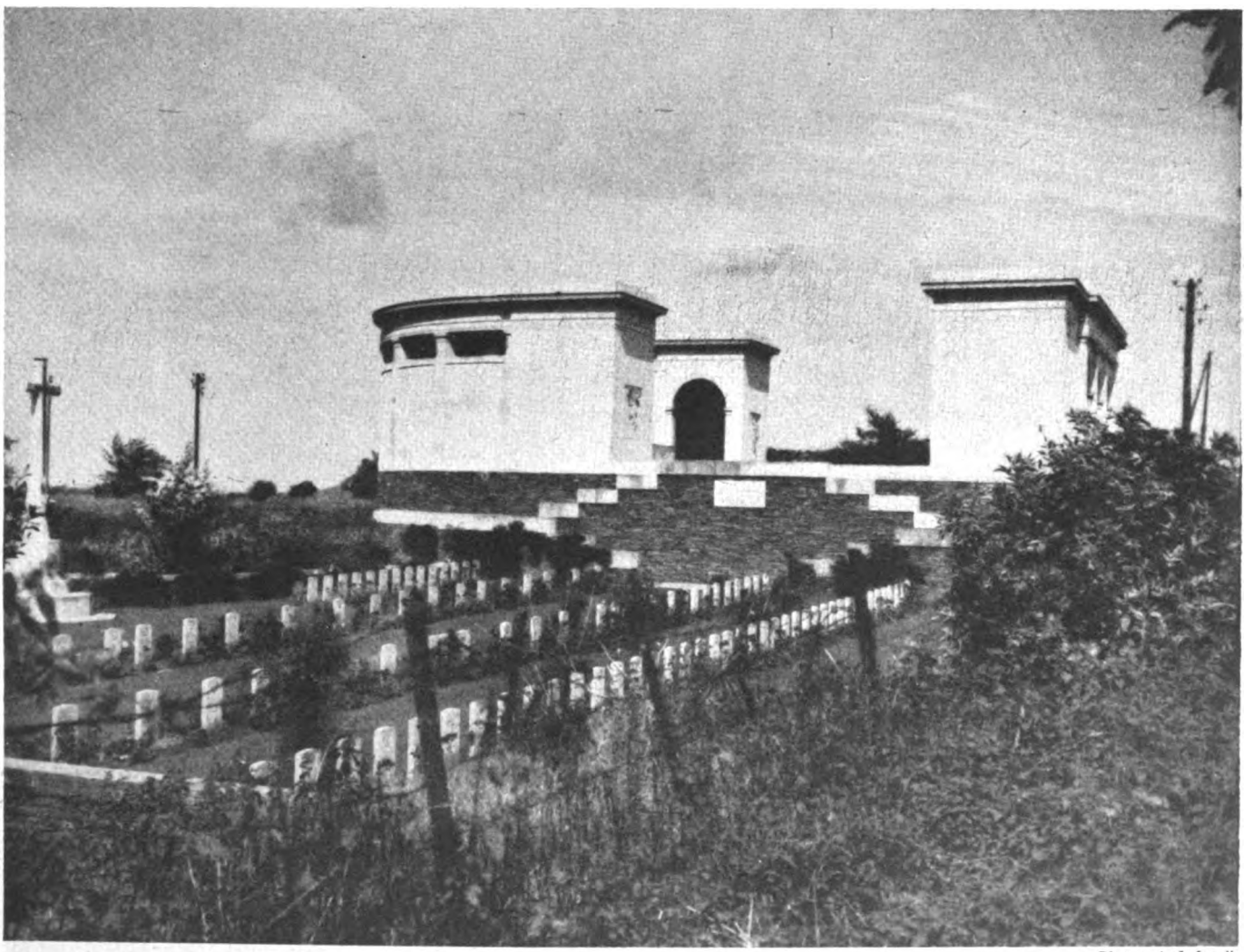

Photo: A. J. Insall.

LOUVERVAL: CEMETERY AND MEMORIAL

Louverval is a hamlet in the commune of Doignies, and lies 12 km. east-north-east of Bapaume on the well-known Cambrai road. The cemetery contains 118 United Kingdom, 4 Australian, and 2 New Zealand dead; the memorial commemorates the 7,048 missing who fell during the Battle of Cambrai, November—December, 1917.

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Photo: A. P., Paris.

BETWEEN DOUAI AND DENAIN

The photograph shows some of the mining-gear at the head of a pit in Aniche, an industrial village in the fork of the Douai—Bouchain and Douai—Denain roads, about 13 km. slightly south of east from Douai. The date of the picture is October 31st, 1918, when the Germans had recently inflicted their farewell destruction.

back and covered with whatever growth would live on them. Some of the cemeteries were in old orchards, and others on bleak hillsides, with the worst possible aspect and no shelter from the weather. And so on.

The advance of the dunes at Les Baraques, near Calais, was arrested by the planting of some three acres with Marram grass and various sand-loving shrubs, all of which have done well. At Coxyde, in Belgium, the same problem was overcome in a remarkable manner. Corrugated iron on long poles diverted the wind, checked it, and broke it up, and then was planted a grove of *pinus maritima*, all raised from seed, and now making a very fine show.

Photo: A. J. Insall.

FORBIDDING WALLS

French industrial and residential preserves partake of a common habit of surrounding themselves with enormously high walls such as the above—a circumstance which makes photography sometimes rather difficult. Aniche has little military history: occupied by the enemy early in the struggle, it was held without interruption until the third week in October, 1918. The nearest British cemetery is at Auberchicourt, 1½ km. to the west.

On the Western Front are 533 caretaker-gardeners, comprising the greater part of a Battalion of Rescue which will never come home; for there are £5,000,000 laid by to ensure that the headstones and flowers, the lawns and peace of the dead, shall never be neglected or forgotten. Each caretaker is an ex-soldier—many of them front-liners—chosen for his horticultural experience and skill.

They have planted over 70 miles of hedge, more than 300 miles of cemetery flower borders, and sown 600 acres to grass. In one twelvemonth over 1,300,000 plants were propagated in the Commission's nurseries in Arras, Albert, and Ypres, and distributed from them to our French and Belgian cemeteries. The seven nurseries existing in 1927 had been reduced by 1928 to four; now, with each cemetery more self-supporting, there is only one nursery, in Arras.

What of the cost? Again we have to "think big." In the year ended March, 1935, the salaries, wages, and allowances of the horticultural and maintenance staff in France and Belgium alone exceeded £174,000!

These 500 gardeners—and many more who have been "axed" as constructional work has ended—have shouldered tasks and responsibilities often far removed from their actual horticultural duties. They have been the helpers, in every kind of trouble, of those who came their way.

The Pilgrim's Best Friend

They have led the blind up to the graves they sought, and, from a vast experience, have advised the hour most suitable for photographing the little flower-beds and the incised letters of the headstones, which disappear or stand out according to the position of the sun. They have aided unsteady hands to take a photograph of a grave, and, at the request of a relative, have planted in his cemetery bed some favourite plant of the man beneath. They have been guides, philosophers, and friends indeed, as well as expert gardeners.

Several of these men, although working in the same cemetery area for six years, had not met until the social welfare clubs opened by the Commission brought them together! There is one club in Béthune, and others in Arras, Albert, Cambrai, Le Cateau, and Ypres.

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Books and magazines are sent out to these centres from home, just as, during the War, we used to get them in the mail and read how the struggle was going and who was winning it. This is almost the sole English reading matter ever seen by the gardeners "billeted" in the more isolated villages. Some of them live in just the kind of a farm in which we used to dream of being billeted in the old *sanfaryan* days. Their pay is sent by post from Arras.

Seven gardeners, in the past five years, have been rewarded with the medal of the Order of the British Empire.

Over them all is the Chief Horticultural Officer, and immediately under him are five regional horticultural officers, at Ypres, Béthune, Arras, Albert, and Abbeville respectively. Next in rank come nine travelling superintendent gardeners, who distribute supplies, transport the motor lawn-mowers, and inspect and advise. Each motor-mower, by the way, does 2,000 miles a year over the cemetery lawns.

Under these superintendents, the gardener-caretakers are divided into groups, which vary in size according to the distance that the head gardener in charge of each group may cover by motor-cycle. These more or less self-contained units are the foundation and strength of the organisation. The head of each local group arranges the distribution of the work to suit the horticultural needs of the seasons.

Captain J. S. Parker, O.B.E., who recently retired from the onerous post of Chief Horticultural Officer, had previously succeeded Mr. A. C. Blunt, who was in charge of horticultural work on our graves during the War years, when Sir Arthur Hill, of Kew, was bringing his unique knowledge and experience to the development of an efficient and economical system of cemetery planting and care. In those days the work now done by the Imperial War Graves Commission was in the hands of "The Directorate of Graves Registration and Enquiries." Commander Patrick Mackenzie, D.S.C., R.N., has succeeded Captain Parker.

The Dead are still being Found

In 1919, the present secretary of the Royal Horticultural Society, Lieutenant-Colonel F. R. Durham, C.B.E., M.C., joined the Commission; and the same year saw him become Director of Works, an appointment which he held until his resignation in 1926.

Twenty years after, the work consists of maintenance rather than of construction, with one vital exception: the dead are still being found, and this means adding other colourful flower beds to the existing 770,000.

In 1932–33, 45 bodies were recovered in Belgium, and 872 in France; in 1933–34, the figures rose to 98 and 1,208, to drop in 1934–35 to 85 and 887—1,000 bodies found, after two decades, in a single twelvemonth! One thousand new headstones to be cut, shipped, and erected; 1,000 little beds to be planted out and tended for all time.

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

WORSHIP SUSPENDED

Here we have all that remained of the church at Locre, 7 km. north-east of Bailleul, in August, 1918. This notorious spot, on the Ypres—Bailleul road just inside the French frontier, figured very prominently in the fighting of April—May, 1918, and to-day possesses three British cemeteries, including part of the churchyard.

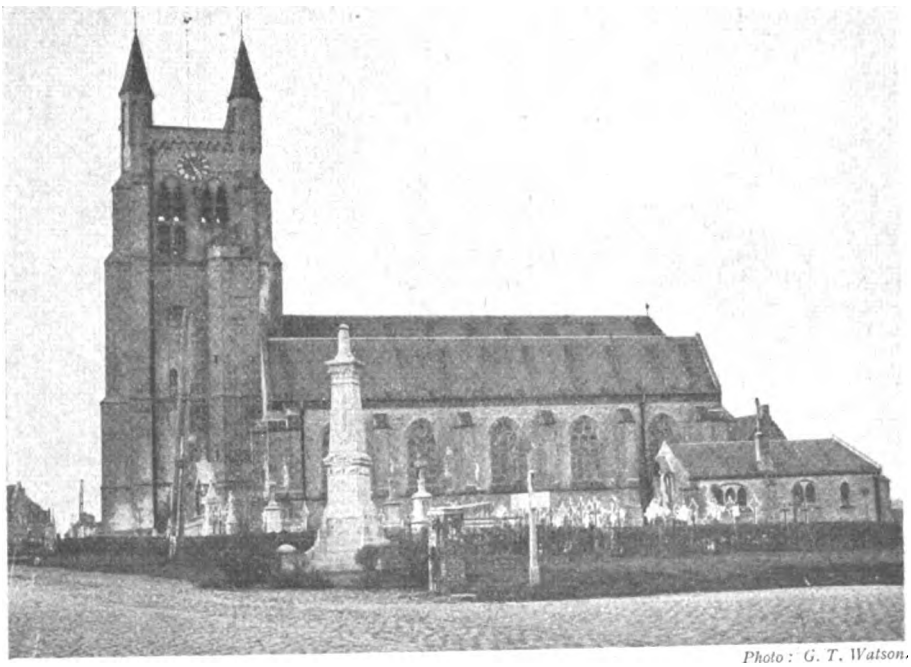

Photo: G. T. Watson.

A COMMODIOUS PILE

The French troops who had fought in the two Kemmel battles of April, 1918, were driven out of Locre by the famous *Alpine Corps* on April 29th, during the Battle of the Scherpenberg, but regained most of the ruins the same day. There were then recurrences of heavy fighting, involving both French and British troops, throughout May, the severest being on May 20th. Earlier in the War, many British field ambulances had known Locre.

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These long-lost fallen are being taken home to a last abiding rest in London Cemetery, facing High Wood, Longueval. There, as I paused awhile last summer with the newly-found slain, hundreds of wooden crosses were awaiting replacement by the familiar grey-white headstones. Each week there are burials opposite the Bois Foureaux, as the French call the stretch of timber which changed hands several times in one day's fighting during the "Blood Bath."

Only a few bodies are identified. I tread softly down the rows, and read, "An Unknown Soldier of the Northumberland Fusiliers," or "A Soldier of the Hampshire Regiment." Over there it is the Manchesters, or the Durhams. More often than not it is just, "A Soldier of the Great War." For that is all we know. . . .

And thus will it go on. The battlefields have not yet given up all their dead; bodies still lie in the mines, in the deeper trenches, and in the woods. Still more will be found and reburied in the few cemeteries kept open for that purpose. These include, in addition to London Cemetery on the Somme,[1] Bedford House Cemetery, Zillebeke, and Canadian No. 2 Cemetery, Neuville-St. Vaast.

A Lonely Grave

The French peasants receive a ten-franc reward for each body found and reported to the Commission, and dig with this pecuniary object in view. They have even perfected a special tool, with which, I learned last summer, at Delville Wood, they can tell whether, in their labours, they have struck wood, steel, or bone.

The strangest and loneliest grave of all lies in the corn between Flers and Gueudecourt. "This way to Lord Feversham's Grave," a tiny hand-lettered signpost by the roadside informs you. A quarter-of-a-mile through thigh-high crops brings you to a little lych-gate built over a stone flag inscribed:

> Charles William Reginald, 2nd Earl of Feversham, Lt.-Col. commanding 21st King's Royal Rifle Corps, killed in action *on this spot*, Sept. 15, 1916.

The italics are mine.

Many of the original gardeners married French or Belgian girls and reared families. The children had to be educated, so a school, designed by Sir

[1] This should not be confused with the other London Cemetery, at Neuville-Vitasse.

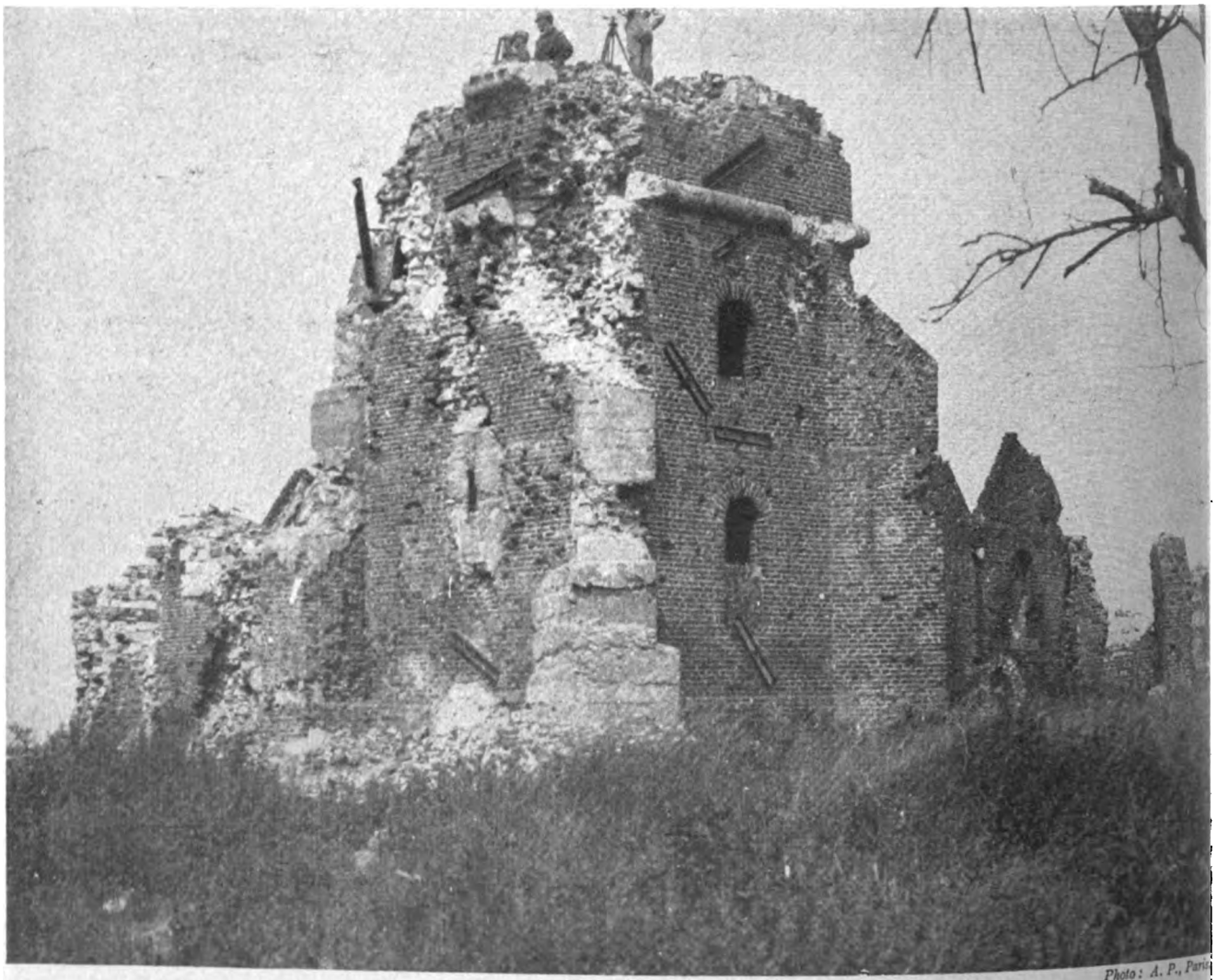

Photo: A. P., Paris

WARTIME WATCH-TOWER

It is not often that the camera of War days caught a church-tower actually in use as an "O.P.", but in this picture a group of French observation officers and their instruments are plainly visible on the top of the ruins. Needless to say, in view of their exposed position, the spot was well behind the lines at the time of the photograph—June 16th, 1917—and was, in fact, the shattered church of Villers-lès-Roye, a village on the Moreuil road 5 km. west of Roye itself.

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Reginald Blomfield, R.A., was built at Ypres by Eton College, as a memorial to the 1,020 Old Etonians killed in the War. To-day, over 130 children, 80 per cent. of them the sons and daughters of the cemetery gardeners, attend the Eton memorial school, there to receive, at the hands of tutors specially furnished by the London County Council, a sound English and foreign education, intended to fit them for an after-life spent either in "Blighty" or the land of their birth.

Before the Ypres school opened, and for four years afterwards, a second English school for Commission families existed in Arras, European headquarters of the "battalion" since its ten years' sojourn in the former G.H.Q. town of St. Omer. Unlike the Eton memorial building, this was but a house converted; and in 1933, owing partly to lack of sufficient support, but mainly to the transport problem, it was closed down.

The widely-scattered area which it served—all northern France where the dead are being tended—made adequate transport an acute problem. Now a system of grants to aid the lower-paid Commission personnel to send their children to English schools has taken the place of the Arras *école*, while at first such of the latter's pupils as remained in France took correspondence classes in English, sponsored by the Parent's Educational Union.

A Unique Church

Education was only one of the major and permanent needs of the Battalion of Rescue. There was the question of worship; and it was for these "exiles," as well as for other settlers and for the never-absent pilgrim, that our very own church was built and endowed. It is as unique among churches as is the school among schools, and its "parish" embraces all Flanders and Picardy where a Commission employee and his dependants are settled. Then there's health. A woman doctor is retained by the Commission to tend wives and children, while patients suffering from serious illness are taken to the Hertford British Hospital in Paris.

While, as the veterans of the fighting line grow old, the personnel must inevitably change, the "Battalion" remains, reinforced by new drafts as retirements create vacancies. Already, indeed, the first staff changes "in the field" are taking place, and fortunate indeed is the Commission in finding such excellent new material for replacements.

The "battalion" which is tending and caring for the graves has never lacked for able and distinguished advisers.

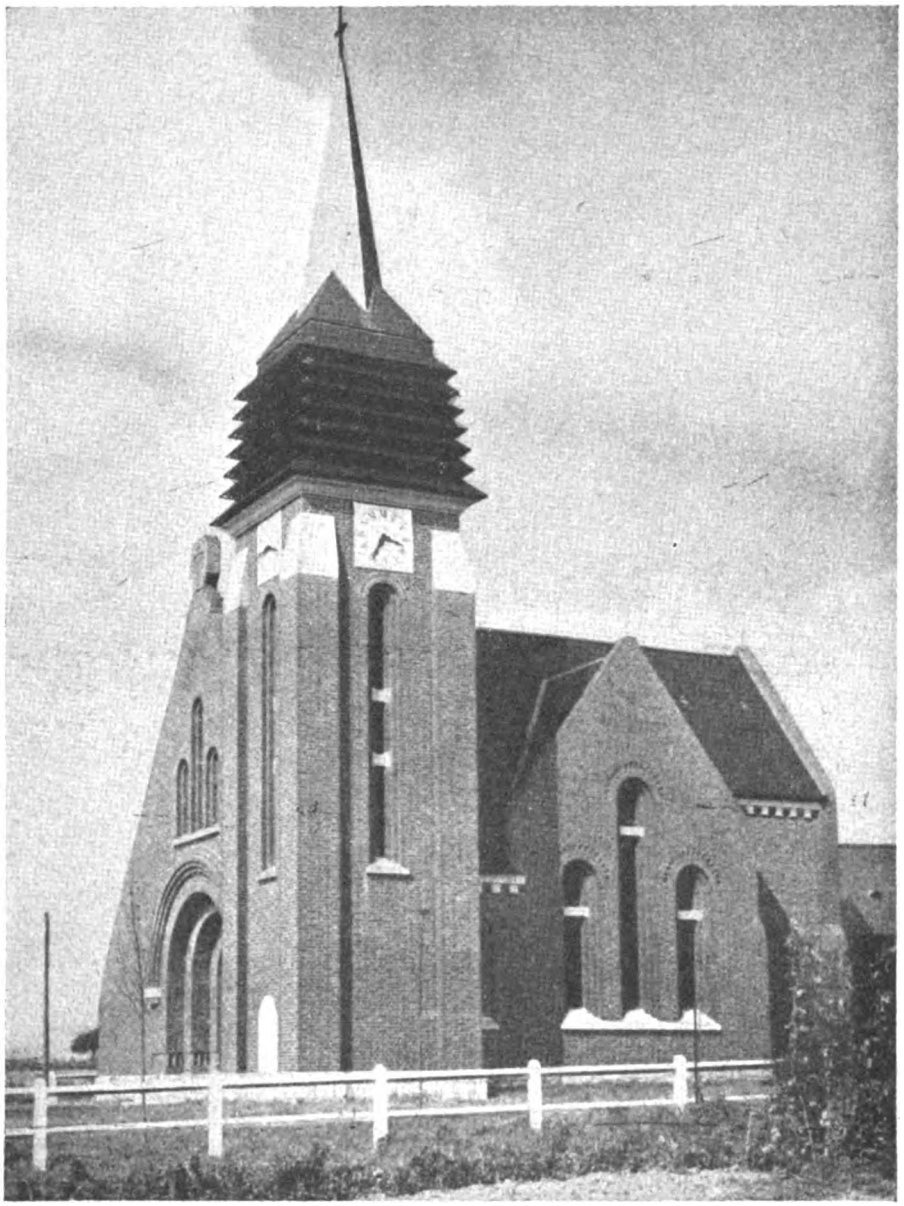

Photo: G. T. Watson.

MODERNITY PERSONIFIED

At the time of the First Battle of the Somme Villers-lès-Roye lay just within the German lines; and, since the area of the Allied attacks did not extend as far south as this, it was not until the withdrawal to the Hindenburg Line that the village suddenly found itself among the French back-areas. On March 26th, 1918, the Avre, which flows through Roye and passes 1 km. south of Villers, became the boundary between the French left and British right. The village, undefended at the time, was re-entered by German troops early in the morning. The 36th Division (XVIII Corps) was the nearest British formation.

King George V personally enquired into, and made himself familiar with, every one of the Commission's plans, and anxiously watched their development; so much so that it was in more than a spirit of due loyalty that the Commission treasured his approval and quickly learned to value his advice.

In 1922 His late Majesty decided to go out to France and Belgium to see personally the progress of the work, and to satisfy himself that those of his subjects who fell in the Great War were being worthily honoured; and exactly a year after this first tour, he visited, in company with Queen Mary, the British War cemeteries in northern Italy and the Asiago Plateau.

H.R.H. The Duke of Windsor, as Prince of Wales, was in a literal sense the founder of the Commission. On the Western Front during the War he had interested himself actively and constantly in the care and formation of the cemeteries, visiting them in all sectors. In 1917, when the Imperial Conference met in London, he addressed to the chairman a letter, enclosing a memorandum from the then

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Photo: Imperial War Graves Commission.

A CEMETERY THAT IS STILL GROWING

The photograph shows Bedford House Cemetery, Zillebeke—about 2 km. south of Ypres—which is notable for the fact that it is enlarged every year to accommodate the bodies still yielded up by Belgian soil. Naturally the missing who are recovered north of the French frontier are many fewer than those found in the vast battle-areas south of it; but between the summer of 1932 and that of 1935, 228 fallen and hitherto lost Britons came to light in Belgium—and the annual figure tends to rise rather than to diminish. Eight years ago Bedford House Cemetery already held between 3,000 and 4,000 dead, their nationalities including Home Country, Canadian, Australian, New Zealand, South African, Indian, British West Indian, and German.

Director-General of Graves Registration and Enquiries, and asking the Conference to consider the creation of a joint Imperial body, to be composed of representatives directly responsible to each of the Governments of the Empire, for ensuring the permanent care of the War graves.

In response to this suggestion, and after formal deliberation by the Imperial Conference, the Imperial War Graves Commission was established under Royal Charter, with the Prince of Wales as its first president, henceforth to become one of its most active members.

A Vacant Post for Royalty

On his accession to the throne, he appointed the Duke of York to succeed him to the presidential office; and now, following the Abdication, that high post again awaits a new occupant. Whichever member of the Royal Family fills it will, we know, bring to it the same high sense of duty and devotion as his illustrious predecessors.

Rudyard Kipling was another grand bulwark of the Commission, and the inscriptions on our headstones and memorials throughout the world were all written, approved, or selected by himself. Probably the best known of these is that carved on the graves of the unidentified: "A Soldier of the Great War, Known unto God."

An event of outstanding international importance in relation to our War graves was the signing in Berlin on December 20th, 1935, by the Commission and its ex-Allied and ex-enemy counterparts, of the Anglo-German-French Agreement.

This provides, *inter alia*, for the continued maintenance of British War graves in Germany by British personnel, in accordance with British principles and practice; guarantees liberty of inspection, and the free import into Germany of whatever may be necessary for the proper maintenance of the cemeteries; and ensures that, for all time, the 6,500 British dead in that country shall rest in their present graves.

Reciprocal rights are given as regards German graves on British soil. In France (i.e. on British soil) there are more than 5,000 German graves in British cemeteries; and while the French Government is responsible to Germany under the Peace Treaty for their care, the Imperial War Graves Commission, in fact, and as a matter of practical administrative convenience, has maintained them on behalf of our Allies. It is this interweaving of responsibility which made inevitable, in the long run, the formation of a joint committee of British, German, and French representatives, such as now exists.

Finally, in our pilgrimage, let us go

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out east, and see the different problems which had to be faced in the Oriental theatres.

In Italy and the East

In Italy, in five British gardens on the Asiago Plateau, 4,000 feet above sea-level, the headstones rise from green-sward in which is planted cyclamen, gentian, columbine, and other wild flowers of the district, with local rock-plants growing on the cemetery walls. The fact that these cemeteries are under snow from October to April renders their upkeep especially hard.

In Egypt, too, problems arose which did not exist in other cemetery areas. Plant-life, for example, could not live until water had been specially provided; yet now, in Qantara Cemetery, eucalyptus trees are doing particularly well. While neither the Flanders poppy nor the flowers of the Judaean hills are here to beautify these desert resting-places, there is always the rich green of the grass which has been sown; and the stripling trees that have been planted are growing and maturing.

Arid desert surrounds all our Egyptian cemeteries. But the staff of the Commission in these parts has dispelled the difficulties, as it has learned to dispel the others presented by a world problem for which there is no precedent to guide it.

The eucalyptus tree again, and palms, oleanders, roses, dodones, tamarisk, and Persian lilacs, have been intensively planted, and thrive, in our Iraq and Persian gardens. At the Basra cemetery in Iraq, in order to bring the whole area under grass, some 200,000 cubic feet of salt earth had first to be removed and replaced with sweet soil.

And Gallipoli. To quote the words of Sir Ian Hamilton: "In spring every open space becomes covered with the most exquisite floral carpet. . . . In thirty-one watered and well-tended parks for the dead, grass and flowers have leisure and space perennially to spread and multiply. . . . Countless cool lilies suck blood from the breasts of 30,000 slain warriors."

In East Africa—Kenya, Northern Rhodesia, Tanganyika, Nyasaland, and Uganda—our 3,300 graves have more the appearance of well-kept gardens than that of burial-grounds. In this distant area of the Empire the League of Mercy plants native flowers on the graves, and in other ways helps to keep the plots neat and tidy.

Such, these twenty years after, is the saga of a "battalion" without counterpart: a saga as evergreen as many of the plants which those half-a-thousand gardeners have propagated, and as beautiful as any of them.

Photo: Central Press.

A SILENT CITY OF GALLIPOLI

On Gallipoli's lone and mournful peninsula there are 31 British cemeteries, containing a total of 22,471 graves, of which the extremely high proportion of 13,503 house unidentified bodies. It has before been explained that the curious shape of the headstones in the Minor Theatre burial-grounds is a mark of deference to Moslem opinion; and it remains only to state that the above is a view of Twelve Tree Copse Cemetery, which appeared in the distant background of a photograph published on page 472 of Volume One.

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CHAPTER XLVII

LABOUR ON THE WESTERN FRONT

It would not be fitting if in a comprehensive work such as Twenty Years After *the end should be reached without adequate reference to the work of the Labour Corps. In other and earlier wars it was generally found that armies could provide all the labour required by the simple expedient of detailing combatant troops. In a conflict on such a huge scale as the Great War, however, it speedily became apparent that special labour would be required. Accordingly, such units were recruited, and right well they carried out their multifarious duties. Nor was the work of the Corps always carried out under conditions of safety. Many casualties were sustained as a result of bombing and long-range shell-fire. Nevertheless, those devoted men of many races gave invaluable services and deserved well of the Empire.*

BEFORE the War the necessity for the formation of special labour units had not been faced. It was officially accepted that the troops would be able to perform, by means of "fatigue parties," all duties entailing manual work outside the area of actual fighting; and these parties were to be heavily reinforced by "civilian labour."

An Urgent Problem

But what this phrase meant had never been really studied, much less examined in detail. In every campaign prior to 1914 all necessary civilian labour had been found in the actual theatre of operations. No sooner had the B.E.F. reached France, however, than it instantly became clear that some far more drastic and practical solution of the "labour problem" was urgent. Accordingly British "A.S.C. Labour Companies" were formed for the growing work at the ports of disembarkation and lines of communication depôts. These A.S.C. companies were each to number 536 of all ranks, and were to be commanded by a subaltern. The first of these arrived at Havre on August 26th, 1914. For the rest, French and Belgian civilian labour was engaged on an increasing scale to cope with the rapidly accumulating tasks falling to this department.

Throughout 1915 there was a steady increase of the A.S.C. companies. But these did not suffice to meet the requirements of trench warfare, and another class of unit had to be raised and brought into the fighting zone. This was urgently required for work on roads, if for nothing else. Road-work had hitherto been carried out by French labourers, who really formed part of the French Territorial Regiments,[1] and as such were gradually called up for service in the front line. Similarly in Belgium all civilian workers were steadily absorbed into the Army.

By September, 1915, orders had been issued for infantry labour battalions to be formed for work at the front; and the first of these arrived early in 1916. At the same time a call had to be made farther afield, since it was obvious that Britain could not supply the numbers that might be needed. This policy was set in motion, and resulted in the arrival in France of men from overseas, and subsequently of units recruited among coloured races, who could not, owing to the terms of their contract, be employed anywhere within the area of actual operations—that is, they were to be kept out of range of long-range artillery fire. Aerial bombing was another matter, and the coloured workers were not infrequently sufferers from this new type of warfare.

Ever-rising Numbers

The actual number of men employed in labour formations thus rose steadily throughout the War. The official figures of the total strength were as follows: December, 1916—42,000; December, 1917—91,100; November, 1918—nearly 125,300. These numbers represented men actually at work on any one day.

The first South African labour unit arrived in France in September, 1916. This was a labour battalion of "Cape Boys," having an establishment of 2,000. It was first employed in forests, and on ammunition dumps in forward areas. The South Africans were followed by detachments of coloured Garrison Artillery from Bermuda, and by four battalions of the British West India Regiment. All these men had been actually enlisted as fighting troops, and so could be employed in handling ammunition in the forward area.

After the Battle of the Somme the situation grew far more difficult. It was realised how much greater, in a modern war, was the need for labour units than anything which had been foreseen, even a few months earlier, for construction and maintenance of roads. Moreover, the strain of battle on the fighting troops now rendered it imperative to relieve them from all tasks except such as fell to them in the course of their fighting duties. In addition, those coming out from home had to be spared any encroachment on their time, which should be fully absorbed by training.

Labour units, also, were beginning to follow the growing trend toward specialisation, and were classified in three main branches according as they were required for:

(1) Railway maintenance and operation.

(2) Communication construction and maintenance (light railways and roads).

(3) Unskilled labour—mostly employed on field fortifications, roads, and docks, and on lines of communication generally.

The designation "unskilled" gave rise to some misconception, as the work was by no means altogether "unskilled." But the classification fitted the needs of the situation, and was maintained. Technical railway and communication troops were employed for very specialised work, and were not in the "labour" organisation proper which was now created.

Difficulties and Limitations

When the native South African labour units—consisting mainly of Kaffirs, Basutos, and Zulus—arrived in France, two difficulties were found to complicate their employment. In the first place, they could not be set to do any work in, or anywhere near, the fighting area. Secondly, the terms of their contract of enrolment required that they should be kept segregated in special camps. These two conditions rather limited the uses to which they could be put. Moreover, their organisation into battalions of 2,000 men was thoroughly unpractical.

1 These were composed of men no longer liable to service in the First Line by reason of age.

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Accordingly, soon after their arrival, it was decided that these formations must be broken up into companies on the model of the A.S.C. labour companies—that is, with an establishment of some 500 men apiece. In the end, all these newly-formed companies were allotted to the bases and most important stations on the lines of communication.

The work that the native units performed, when it was understood how best to employ them, was uniformly good. But to obtain the best results, it was particularly important to allot them tasks which they could cope with and understand. It was also most desirable to keep them working by themselves, and to group individuals according to race.

Early in 1917 the South Africans were followed by the first Egyptian Labour Company. In all, close on twenty of these units were raised—about 10,000 men; and they were employed with good results at base ports. One of the companies, which was sent to Dunkirk, had to be moved to more peaceful surroundings after suffering severely during an air raid.

The Egyptian, as is perhaps well known, excels at dock work. But in the beginning serious trouble arose from the fact that the contracts under which the men were recruited for work in France and elsewhere had not been properly explained to them. In addition, the units suffered from inadequate care in the selection of their cadres. But in spite of these obstacles, the Egyptian labourer settled down to his work well.

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

ROADMENDERS

A labour battalion at work on the repair of a traffic-worn and shell-damaged road near Mametz during August, 1916. The nucleus of the vast labour organisation which existed in 1918 was a force of no more than 300 labourers despatched by the War Office to Le Havre in August, 1914, for the disembarkation of stores and the formation of depôts.

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

AT AN R.E. DUMP

Men of a labour battalion taking barbed-wire reels from an R.E. dump near Arras, April 3rd, 1918. Observe the special stakes used for carrying the wire. An indication of the growth of the Labour Corps is afforded by the figures for June, 1916. At that time there were 11 R.E. labour battalions, 12 infantry labour battalions, 30 A.S.C. labour companies, 3 naval labour companies, and 8 non-combatant companies.

Arrival of the Indian Units

Next, in June, 1917, there arrived in France the first Indian labour unit. The Indian units were organised into "corps" of a strength of 2,000 men apiece; and six "corps" were raised. The establishment, as in all other similar units, proved far too high, so the "corps" was split up into companies of the various Indian races represented. Once more the unsatisfactory terms of the contracts militated seriously against contentment. The men had been enrolled nominally for one year or "the duration"; but this was never properly understood, so that before the end of one year all the men began to look forward to going home. Owing, however, to the scarcity of shipping prevalent in 1917–18—as well as to other reasons—the demands could not be satisfied to the letter. Hence much grumbling and even unrest set in, until the repatriation could be undertaken in 1918.

By the end of the War there were next to no Indians left in France: there remained only a company and a half at Marseilles, composed of men who had accepted "the duration" clause in their contracts, and were ready to stay. The Indian labourer worked well, gave little trouble, and, unlike the South African or Chinese, needed but little supervision. But he did not stand the winter climate of Flanders.

Shortly before the Indians had begun

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Photo: Imperial War Museum.

BLACK MEN

Lusty negro members of the South African Native Labour Corps digging out sand from the dunes beside their camp at Dannes, on a cold February day in 1917.

to arrive in France, a Chinese labour unit had disembarked—the first batch of men of a total which was to amount to 90,000. No sooner had they set foot ashore than it was found that many were suffering from a contagious eye disease. This necessitated the isolation of those affected, and the treatment of all Chinese to immunise them against infection.

The value of the skilled or semi-skilled Chinese worker proved so great, however, that all difficulties in the way of organisation and supervision of the units were carefully studied, and eventually overcome. The men's aptitude in learning skilled trades was remarkable; so much so that in the end some 5,000 of them were employed in many classes of quite difficult work. They excelled, for instance, in crane-driving, and many were also employed in machinery repair shops.

The Gentle Art of Shirking

On the other hand, the Chinaman is a past-master in the gentle art of shirking what he considers to be unnecessary work. Moreover, the national vice of gambling led to endless difficulties, and even proved the cause of murder. The constitution of a savings bank, so devised as to ensure that the Chinese labourer should not return home penniless, led to a great improvement in conditions.

After the First Battle of the Somme, another source of labour was tapped in the shape of prisoners of war. Many of these were highly-skilled workers in various trades; and consequently it was found possible to organise them into small companies according to their crafts and capacities. Miners would be sent to work in quarries; woodmen could be allotted to forestry units; while mechanics found suitable employment in workshops. The work done by these men was always good.

The remainder were organised into "general labour units," the employment of which was hampered by considerable limitations. At first they were sent to work at any distance not less than five miles in rear of the fighting front. The provisions of the Geneva Convention rendered any other course impossible. But even so, the risk of their escaping

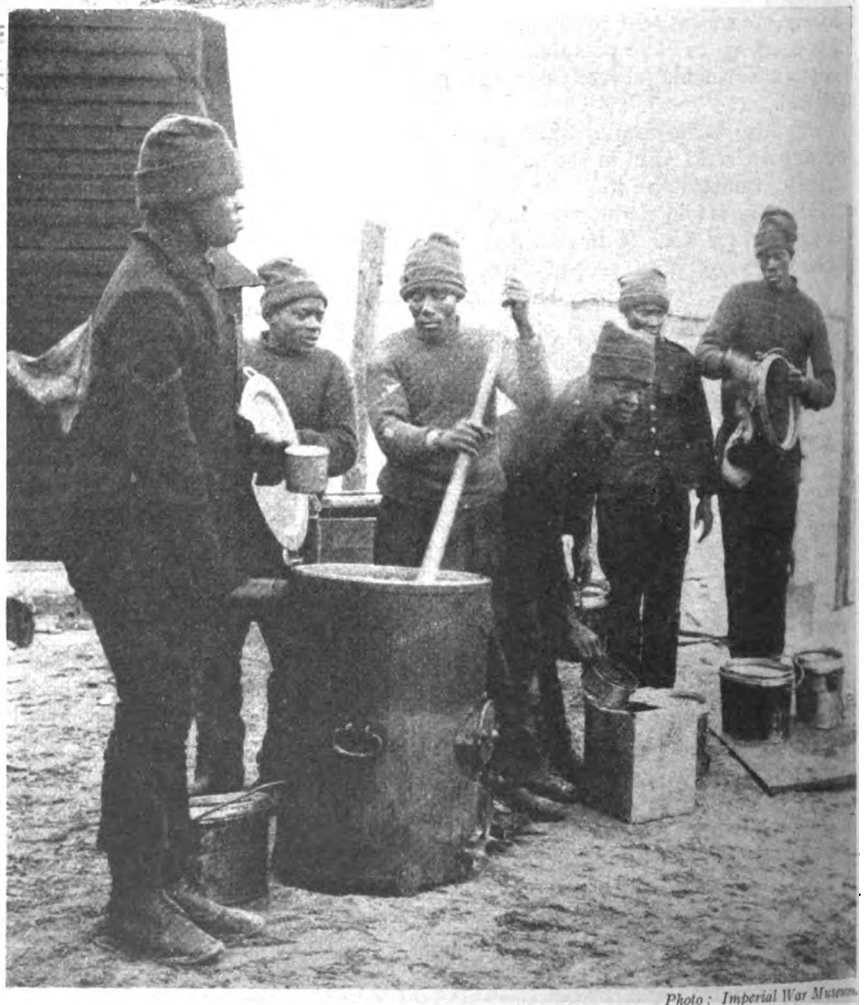

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

SOUTH AFRICAN COOKS

It must strike many an ex-Service man as strange to see the familiar dixies, mess-tins, and other appurtenances of Army meals being handled by these South African negroes. Despite the great number of coloured subjects in the British Empire, their employment for actual fighting was, except in the case of the Indians, confined to the extra-European fronts: a circumstance wherein our Army differed conspicuously from that of the French.

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and getting away with important information remained a serious danger. Also, there was the risk of their perpetrating some serious act of sabotage.

In 1917, owing to pressure from the French, the limit of five miles from the fighting front was increased to twelve miles; and finally this figure was extended by order of the Cabinet to nearly twenty miles.

In addition to these sources of labour, there were various others, although none of sufficient importance to warrant more than a reference. A few Canadian labour companies were formed, mostly of highly-skilled lumbermen and railway troops; and there were the labour companies of the Middlesex Regiment, "The Kaiser's Own," recruited from men who, although they had acquired British nationality, were to be regarded as of doubtful loyalty.

Lastly, at the end of the War there were some Italians. But Italy being herself a combatant, it was not probable that many fit men or loyal subjects would be found in these ranks; and after a short time the attempt to form Italian units was abandoned.

An Increasingly Important Part

Until the First Battle of the Somme, labour had taken no part in the major actions of the War; and during the whole of the Somme fighting its units were kept well behind the front. But after that battle, when the organisation of this branch came to be more fully developed, the men composing it began to play an increasingly important part in the offensives of 1917 and 1918, and also in the resistance offered to the great German thrust of 1918.

It was obvious that the intense artillery bombardments of those years depended on the maintenance of adequate communications behind the guns. Roads, also, were required in the actual zone of the fighting, in order to feed the ever-growing artillery arm. All these requirements could only be satisfied if labour was sufficient and capable of dealing with the situations which now arose.

The first British offensive in which it was employed was that of April, 1917. Before the Battle of Arras there had been some 25,000 men employed as labour units in the Third Army area. Of this total nearly 20,000 were drawn from fighting formations. In February the number increased to close on 24,000. Such a drain on combatant units was most serious; for it meant that the troops, who had been in the line most of the winter, obtained no rest, whilst the training which they so badly needed could not be given to them.

Consequently labour units were demanded and obtained. So satisfactory was the supply that by the commencement of the battle on April 9th, out of a total of nearly 28,000 at work, only 2,000 were drawn from combatant troops.

It is true, of course, that the men composing such units were mostly of low medical category. They were also

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

EGYPTIANS AT BOULOGNE

Egyptian Labour Corps troops made invaluable dock workers, and here a party of them is seen handling crates of tinned food on the quayside at Boulogne. As regards the composition of the British units, the first R.E. labour battalions consisted of elderly navvies and tradesmen, officered by civil engineers, with a lieutenant-colonel and an adjutant of Regular or Special Reserve R.E. Infantry labour battalions were drawn from the personnel of Reserve infantry units, the selection being made from those who were unfit for service at the Front and had no special trade or professional qualifications.

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entirely unaccustomed to military discipline. And they arrived in France at a time when the climatic conditions were thoroughly bad. The fact that only one-sixth of them failed to withstand these conditions therefore exerted no small influence towards their military recognition.

At that time most of the labour units were employed on railway and road construction, not generally a light task. But they were later used, among many other duties, for construction of huts and rearward lines of defence. There was, in fact, only one task at which they failed completely. This was the burial of the dead in the front line during operations. Being untrained to carry out movements under fire, they suffered so heavily that their continued employment on this duty became impossible.

Labour Goes North

After the Arras fighting, the main strength of labour was transferred from the Third to the Second and First Armies, in order to make ready for the Flanders offensive. By August, 1917, there were nearly 250 British labour companies in this northern area. This large number had been found by replacing British labour, wherever possible, by Chinese or Egyptian units, and by the growing number of prisoner of war companies.

It has to be remembered that units composed of prisoners could not at this date be brought nearer than 18 miles from the firing-line, while Chinese and other coloured units might not be brought within less than ten miles. Consequently, the conditions under which the British companies were kept working could generally be described as severe. Many companies had to live, day in, day out, in bivouac, and that in spite of the pouring rains of that autumn; and these were men of low medical category, exempted from duty in the trenches!

They suffered, too, their full share of casualties, for the German long-range artillery and aircraft often concentrated their attentions on those very areas where the labour companies were most busy constructing light railways. By this time the units were being "stiffened" by means of numerous wounded returned from convalescent depôts and from other sources, and in one year their general bearing had improved out of all recognition.

Every effort was made to alleviate the lot of the labour workers in such bad conditions, but circumstances did not allow of as much being done as was wished. The considerable number of mentions and awards made to their units during this period should be proof, if such be needed, of the excellent work done by them, and of their steadiness in the midst of very arduous conditions.

During the Cambrai offensive of autumn, 1917, labour was again called upon to play an honourable part. Some companies were brought into bivouac at not more than 1,500 yards from the firing-line, their duty being to build roads to facilitate the rapid advance of tanks and infantry. At the same time the need of secrecy entailed the execution of their tasks in most uncomfortable circumstances.

Elderly Heroes

During the battle, within 24 hours of zero hour, a light railway was constructed by them right into Marcoing; and another similar line was carried into Mœuvres, to within 1,000 yards of the enemy's machine guns. If it be remembered that the men of this unit were over fifty years of age, and that they had been living in dug-outs close to the front before carrying out this work, nothing but admiration can be felt for them. During the subsequent fighting certain companies became involved in the retirement, and behaved very well indeed.

During the great German offensive of March, 1918, one of the great difficulties confronting the authorities directing labour units was the fact that all prisoners of war and coloured labour must be withdrawn as the Germans advanced; this was inevitable, owing to the necessity of keeping such units at a fixed distance from the fighting area.

But long before the German blow fell on the Fifth Army labour men of all classes had been employed on strengthening the defences of the threatened front—some under corps, some under army management, but nearly all British units. In rear were the G.H.Q. defences, where non-British units could be employed. It is quite untrue that G.H.Q. had not foreseen the German onslaught, or that no steps had been taken to meet the coming battle. But the labour units on this front proved inadequate to construct all the necessary works of defence. The Fifth Army had been compelled to take up a long stretch of front, already weak by nature, and still more poorly provided with artificial works. By the end of April not less than 177 labour companies were at work on the front which the Fifth and Third Armies had found themselves holding when the German thrust came to a standstill.

The March Retreat has given rise to one legend, namely, that the miscellaneous body of troops known as "Carey's Force," which was extemporised as a sort of last line of defence before Amiens, was a conglomeration of labour units, hurriedly armed and organised as a fighting body. This is not correct. Carey's Force was almost entirely composed of Engineer units and details from the nearest training schools. What is true is that after the withdrawal of the Fifth Army had come to a close, it was proposed and approved that British labour units should be taught the use of the rifle and the Lewis gun; and thenceforward this became the regular practice.

Labour All Along the Front

The labour problem changed considerably as the offensives of 1917 and the disasters of the ensuing spring gave way to the summer operations of 1918. In 1917 it had been possible to concentrate all available labour-power in rear of a single army; but in 1918 there was a need for labour all along the front. Then, too, the labour units, as the 1918 advance began, were entirely absorbed for rapid road and railway reconstruction.

Here the absence of adequate transport proved a most serious handicap. In fact, in proportion as the fighting troops moved onwards, so labour failed more and more conspicuously to keep pace with their movement. However, as the devastated zone was crossed, material conditions improved. Billets could be found while the weather remained kind. Labour units were now made to keep ahead of the railway construction troops proper, thereby greatly speeding up the repairs of the damaged lines.

The same method was adopted in the case of roads and bridges. This circumstance led to labour units being frequently exposed to the effects of delay-action mines, and not infrequently of the German long-range artillery. In fact, these units were often in a position of real danger, a circumstance which led to many awards and mentions being assigned to them.

Throughout the War there was not seldom an inclination to "waste" the efforts which labour was making; and this was particularly the case at the various docks. A second difficulty was the enforcement of one day's rest in seven. In time it was arranged that all labour units should have one day's complete rest in eight, this being an arrangement which allowed of a better

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The WOMEN'S SERVICES

Photo: Imperial War Museum

AT WORK ON AN "AVRO" BIPLANE

Aeroplane work during the War provided employment for some tens of thousands of women and girls, who shaped and finished struts and spars, fitted together the sections, sewed the fabric to wings and tail, applied the "dope" to draw it tight and make it weather-proof, and, in short, did almost everything except design the machines and carry out the air tests. Women were also employed in large numbers in the engine shops, where their activities extended even to the difficult task of acetylene welding.

Photo: Imperial War Museum

"WRAFS" SEWING FABRIC

In this picture some of the women employees of a wartime aeroplane factory are seen cutting and sewing the fabric for the main- and tail-planes of aircraft—one task, at least, which does not seem far removed from the traditional feminine occupations. In the more mechanical jobs, excellent working conditions, combined with a high standard of machinery, made it possible to employ women with a minimum of skilled supervision, their work being fully equal, in both quantity and quality, to that of male labour.

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Photo: Imperial War Museum

"WAACS" AT WORK

Members of the Women's Army Auxiliary Corps at work in an Army bakery at Dieppe, February 10th, 1918. This organisation, formed in 1917 by the Army Council to provide women substitutes for male workers at home, at the bases, and on L. of C., was later known as Queen Mary's A.A.C. The "Waacs" numbered some 45,000, of whom 17,000 served in France and Flanders, and others in Italy, Salonica, and Ireland.

QUEEN [illegible] FR

Queen Mary is shown during a visit [illegible] paid o
Hospital at Rouen. Nursing was not [illegible] first, bu
of the many services to which the wom[illegible]-18 de
War organization is better known [illegible] V.D., f
as early as September, 1914. Thanks [illegible] work i
was in 1915 officially recog[illegible] a depar

A COUPLE O[illegible] W

Two smiling "Jill Tars" of the W[illegible]'s
motor launch at Southwick, Susse[illegible]
November 23rd, 1917, Dame Kath[illegible] F
superintendence of the Second Se[illegible]
it said with full deference to the [illegible]-th
the Women's Services. Its work may [illegible] su
everything which naval men did [illegible] ep

Photo: Imperial War Museum

IN THE "BACK AREAS"

The long list of W.A.A.C. activities includes clerking and typing, cooking, waiting at table, housework, laundering, M.T. driving, checking and packing, tailoring, sewing, shoemaking, baking, auxiliary technical work with the R.F.C. and A.S.C. motor transport, and telephone and postal services. Technically the Corps, despite its khaki uniforms, was not under military discipline, but proved itself far from averse to sharing military dangers. Above is a clerking scene in an advanced M.T. depôt at Abbeville, September, 1917.

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FRANCE

d on July 11th, 1917, to an Australian , but undoubtedly the most important 3 devoted themselves; and no feminine ., founded by Dame Katharine Furse rk in France and Belgium, the V.A.D. partment of the Red Cross.

Photo: Imperial War Museum

Photo: Imperial War Museum

FIRST AID NURSING YEOMANRY

The principal work of the " Fanys " in the earlier part of the War was done in Belgium, where, from October, 1914, onward, they worked in field hospitals, established regimental aid posts, and ran convalescent homes and canteens, for the Belgian Army. In January, 1916, the first women's motor ambulance convoy for the British was started; and thereafter this dangerous work became by far the F.A.N.Y.'s most important activity.

WRENS "

s Royal Naval Service cleaning a " Wrens " came into existence on Furse being the director, under This was the smallest and—be the most carefully selected of all ummed in a phrase as including pt the manning of warships.

Photo: Imperial War Museum

Photo: Imperial War Museum

ON BOARD A SHIP-O'-WAR

A scene in the ship's clerk's office of the W.R.N.S. establishment on board H.M.S. *Essex*, at Devonport. The " Wrens " were organized on naval lines, the director being regarded as equivalent to a rear-admiral, and the other members being divided into officers, subordinate officers, and women. Late in 1918 there were 123 administrative officers and 163 non-administrative, while the total number of ratings approached 5,000, split up into eight categories of employment. Of these, decoding and deciphering was one of the most important.

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Photo: Imperial War Museum

THE PLOUGHSHARE ASSISTS THE SWORD

The Women's Land Army, one of whose members is here seen guiding a plough, was a highly organized body of well-trained workers engaged in all branches of agriculture, and in the care of domestic animals. It was grouped under the Food Production Department of the Board of Agriculture, and was directed by Miss (later Dame) Muriel Talbot. In January, 1918, there were three sections: (1) agriculture and afforestation; (2) timber-cutting; (3) forage work.

Photo: Imperial War Museum

AT AN ENGINE REPAIR SHOP

Members of Queen Mary's Army Auxiliary Corps—whose nickname of " The Waacs " remained unshaken by the official change of title—at work in the Engine Repair Shops at Pont de l'Arché, south-east of Rouen. Also connected with matters aeronautical, as indicated on the first page of this section, were the well-known " Wrafs," or Women's Royal Air Force, whose work covered much the same ground as that of the " Waacs," with sundry additions. This photograph might easily have depicted " Wrafs," for one of the principle jobs of the overseas workers was the refashioning of wrecked aero-engines.

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Photo: Imperial War Museum.

STACKING CORN

Under British supervision, Chinese labourers unload sacks of corn on to a dump near Boulogne, August 12th, 1917. On work such as this the Chinese proved themselves excellent workers. Properly handled they displayed all that industry for which their ancient race is renowned. Although it was part of their contract that hired Labour Corps workers should never be brought within a certain mileage of the firing-line, they suffered casualties in a number of air-raids; and allusion has elsewhere been made to the Indian and Chinese Cemetery at Ayette, north of the Ancre, in which 33 of the Chinese fallen lie.

" overlap," so that there need never be a complete cessation of work, as might happen if the observance of Sunday were made a universal rule.

It is, of course, perfectly legitimate to claim that throughout the War the British armies in France were contending with a shortage of labour. It was a chronic impossibility to satisfy all demands. This meant some adaptation of labour units to perform all types of work—a fact which prevented the specialisation that was really desirable.

How frequently, too, did it not happen that most exacting, and often unfair, calls were made upon labour! When anything unforeseen happened on roads and railways, as the result of shelling or bombing, there was usually a tendency to summon labour to set about repairing the damage; and this led to the unfortunate men being frequently taken from their hard-won rest or leisure.

Officers Seriously to Blame

Combatants, as a whole, were often seriously to blame for the way in which they regarded labour units as consisting of inferior beings. The labour men were frequently allotted the worst billets, and cases were even known where they scarcely received the food that was their legitimate due, on the plea that available rations were insufficient for the fighting troops.

In time, in spite of all such discouragement, labour units developed a remarkable *esprit de corps*. This was a necessity; for in industrial life there are many incentives to conscientious and steady work which do not exist in war. Consequently anything to heighten the morale of labour was to be welcomed. At first, the rank-and-file suffered from second-rate officers who felt no real responsibility. The men were regarded as the dregs of the Army, if not of the nation, while their job was considered unworthy of soldiers.

It was not until the last year of the War that these grave defects were, in one way or another, in course of being really cured; and when it is remembered that these units all consisted of men of low medical category, untrained to arms and unaccustomed to discipline, it may well be claimed that their behaviour and performance were altogether admirable.

In such a stupendous conflict as was the Great War it would have been quite impossible for the combatant troops to carry on had it not been for the small armies of men who, in the back areas, performed such prodigies of labour. If the members of the Corps, or at least the vast majority of them, could look forward with reasonable certainty to returning at some future date to their homes, they had no real share in such honour and glory as was to be found on the fields of battle. It was theirs to toil unceasingly, and right well they performed their task.

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CHAPTER XLVIII

THE OLD WAR HOUSE

The War Office in Whitehall has always been regarded by the man-in-the-street—and during the Great War the man-in-the-street was temporarily the man-in-the-trench—as the headquarters of a group of exalted beings who worked "in a mysterious way their wonders to perform." Some would even go so far as to say that they worked in a dilatory and muddlesome way. Statements of this sort, however, had but little foundation in fact. It was the personal experience of the present writer that the War Office functioned with most remarkable drive and efficiency. Its task was continuous, extremely complicated, and heavy. The wonder is not that an occasional mistake was made, but that there was not muddle without end.

For many years prior to the Great War the War Office shared with mothers-in-law, landladies, and tipsy red-nosed men the distinction of being a subject for Press and music-hall witticism. It was supposed to be the last word in inertia and inefficiency. It was peopled by old and debilitated officers. It did nothing in particular, and did it very well.

A Civilian Department

The joke was amusing, but—like many funny things in the Press—was hopelessly out of date. It went back to the Crimea. And what neither music-hall back-chat comedians nor bright young men in Fleet Street ever realised was that in those days, and after, the War Office—in Pall Mall—was a civilian department of State, as civilian as the Home Office of to-day. It represented the Parliamentary overlordship of the Army, chiefly expressed in matters of policy and finance.

The *military* problems of the Army, and its training and discipline, were dealt with elsewhere, in a purely military office, the Horse Guards in Whitehall. This military office may not have been the last word in human efficiency or wisdom, but at any rate it did know what it wanted, though it had to spend its time in a long, hopeless, and unequal struggle against the inefficient, time-serving, parsimonious, and political "War Office."

Fortunately all this had been greatly changed for the better by 1914. A fine new building had arisen in Whitehall, which, though still known as the "War Office" (or "The Old War House," as officers came to call it), housed, in addition to the civilian and political control branches, the purely military departments which had for so long been associated with Horse Guards.

And the formation of a real General Staff about the year 1905 had made this new and remodelled War Office an essentially military focus. Parliamentary control of the Army—one of the chief features of our constitution—was still, and is still, undiminished, and in this respect the British Army was entirely different from the German, and to a great extent from the French.

During the War the Old War House underwent great changes in its military personnel. At the outbreak of hostilities it was in a thoroughly efficient and workmanlike condition; and the formation, mobilisation, and transport of the British Expeditionary Force to France, and its appearance—totally unexpected by the Germans—at Mons, were a triumph for the Administrative Branches of the War Office. Nor must one overlook the magnificent work of the General Staff in creating a force which, small though it was, could by virtue of its training for war hold its own against a vast superiority in numbers of the greatest military Power in Europe.

A General Exodus

The intricate and delicate machinery of the War Office received, however, a bad jolt in August, 1914. The senior officers in it were the pick of their profession; they had foreseen and prepared long beforehand the arrangements for such a struggle, and had carried them out with a skill, a thoroughness, and an efficiency which have never been fully appreciated.

But when the time came to put such preparations to the test of war in the field, it was too much to ask of human nature to expect those devoted and zealous officers to remain at desks in Whitehall, while others were gaining the laurels which the public would confer upon those entrusted with the Army on active service. It is doubtless true that "They also serve who only stand and wait"; but it is those who march and fight who receive the promotions and rewards; whose names become household words; who wear the garlands and eat the plums. Soldiers, like other people, relish plums; and, more than other people perhaps, they are partial to laurels.

The result was that, when war broke out, many of the senior staff officers at the Office had themselves at once transferred to important positions with the Army in the field. Their places had, to a large extent, to be filled by senior retired officers, who, in some ways, were unavoidably out of date.

The result was that the fragile mechanism of the War Office was dislocated, and Lord Kitchener, who had been appointed Secretary of State for War, found himself dealing with a staff old in years and so old in experience as to be rather behind the times. An excessive centralisation was, not unnaturally, practised by Lord Kitchener in these circumstances, and it is now a matter of history that—certainly for the first months of the War—the Old War House was by no means as efficient as it had been for years before the European upheaval.

However, as the struggle progressed, things generally improved. It was found possible to bring home some senior staff officers, the richer by the priceless experience which they had been gaining in the field up to the moment of their recall. In addition, there became available—as soon as they were free from the operating-table and the convalescent ward—many wounded officers of ability and with the necessary staff experience.

These one-legged, one-eyed, or one-armed officers, or officers with shrunken, shortened, or distorted limbs, could do useful work at a desk, even if their value in the field had disappeared. It is this era—which may be roughly taken as lasting from about the middle of 1916 to the Armistice—that forms the background for this chapter.

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Photo: Keystone.

"THE OLD WAR HOUSE"

There can be few, if any, old soldiers, sailors, or airmen, who have not at some time in their lives passed down Whitehall and seen the great War Office building opposite the Horse Guards. The head of the War Office is the Secretary of State for War, who is responsible to Parliament for his actions, and for the advice which he gives to the nominal head of the fighting services, the King. The Secretary of State is assisted by two under-secretaries, one permanent and one parliamentary, the latter of whom generally sits in whichever House does not contain his chief.

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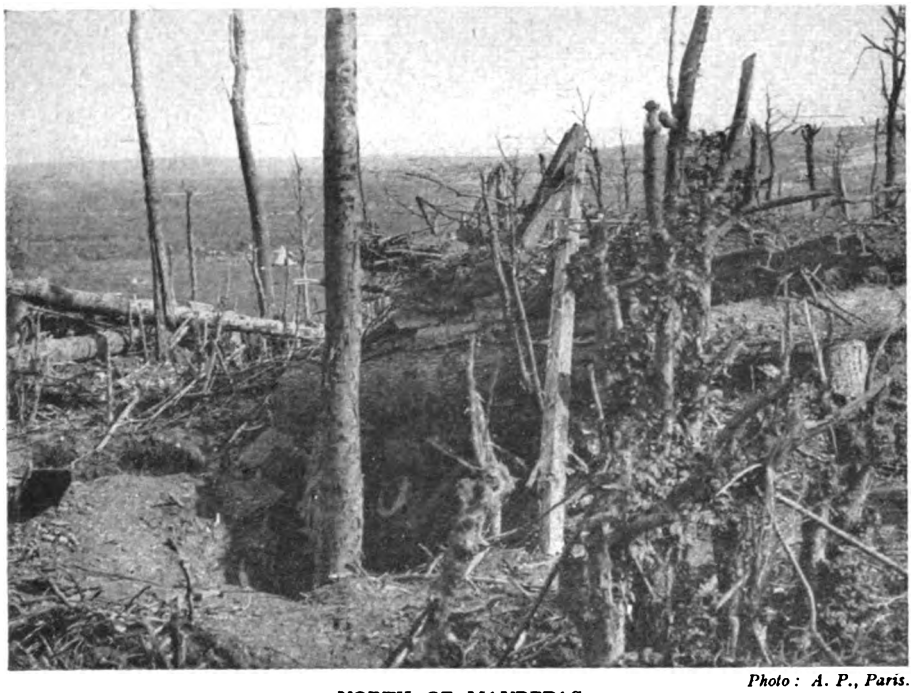

Photo: A. P., Paris.

NORTH OF MAUREPAS

The original French caption calls this the "Bois Sabot," which would seem to be a military nickname for the sabot- or sausage-shaped wood, north of Maurepas and south-west of Combles, properly known as the Bois Dousage. This, in 1916, lay just within the French area of advance, and was captured between September 12th and 27th. The photograph, dated November, 1917, shows an old German gun-emplacement. Observe the wood's commanding height.

The Military Subdivisions

What dwells most in the memory of one of those distorted crocks, about his service in the Old War House, is the combination of real, get-down-to-it, honest-to-God hard work with the cheeriest possible spirit, even in the "dark days"—and there were many of them. Put briefly, the military side of the activities was divided into "A" (A for Administration), which dealt with manpower, recruiting, and discipline; "Q," which handled the colossal—the stupendous—task indicated very roughly by such terms as supply, transport, and stores; and "G" (or G.S., for General Staff), which handled Operations, Intelligence, and Training, and, in consequence, thought itself the salt of the earth.

The Old War House was, however, not altogether military. Somewhere in that vast pile, all unseen by profane eyes—was lodged the sanctum of that emblem of Parliamentary control, the Secretary of State for War, together with his deputy, his personal and private secretaries and *their* sub-secretaries, clerks, personal assistants, stenographers, and so forth.

Then there was the very large Finance Branch ("F" for short)—civilian, and, to the soldiers, always seeming to consist of "cells" implanted by the Treasury to infect and debilitate the active military organisation. (Actually the "F" officials merely wanted to check any avoidable waste, and no Civil Servant had been brought up to envisage a war which towards the end was costing over £7,000,000 *a day*. It takes a very good-tempered watch-dog to avoid biting a little in that kind of upheaval.) But the Old War House in the War was very largely—and necessarily—military, and it is with that aspect of it with which we shall deal.

The hours, though they were never officially laid down, were long and strenuous. From half-past nine in the morning until after seven in the evening came to be regarded as the standard day, and for six days in the week. Work continued on Sundays equally with other days, but every officer, if he could be spared, was allowed one clear day off in the seven.

Sunday became rather a popular working day, for the awful War-time congestion of tubes and buses was avoided, and a week-day off gave opportunities for shopping and a matinée not available on Sunday. The very senior people, of course, did not wear out their energies in tube and bus but were supplied with fine cars (all commandeered) and lovely lady chauffeurs (members of a volunteer organisation).

The "Daily-Breaders"

These sybarites, called for in their West End flats by fleet cars, did not sometimes realise, perhaps, the fatigue which their subordinates endured morning and evening in their crowded and jostling journeys from and to their humble residential districts. It is quite

Photo: G. T. Wat...

WHILE THE SUN SHONE

These haymakers and haystacks are on the outskirts of the present Bois Dousage. In the spring of 1918, the Maurepas Ridge, together with the remains of the Bois Dousage, were occupied for a short time on March 24th by the 12th Highland L.I. (106th Brigade, 35th Division), which had moved up in support of the much-depleted 27th Brigade (9th Division) immediately to the north. The wood was retaken on or about the last day of August.

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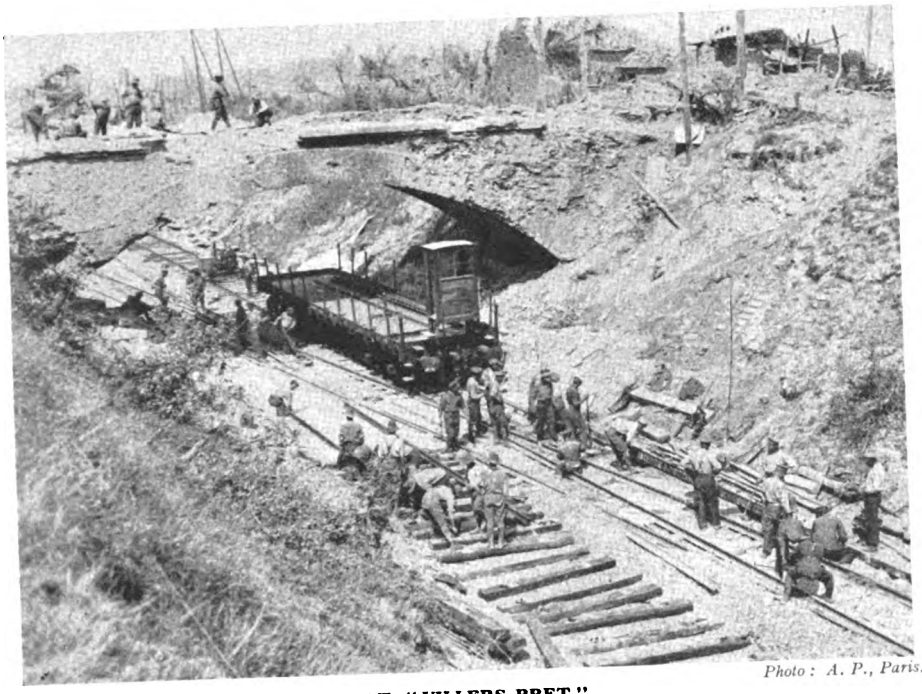

Photo: A. P., Paris.

AT "VILLERS-BRET"

This photograph might well have graced our chapter on the Labour Corps, for it shows Home-Country and Australian labour units at work on the relaying of the line in the railway cutting at Villers-Bretonneux, after the final departure of the enemy from the neighbourhood. The line is, of course, the Amiens—Péronne and Amiens—Nesle main route, which skirts the south side of the village. The exact date of the picture is August 13th, 1918.

possible that some of the Big Shots never made a journey by tube, bus, or suburban train during the whole of their period at the War House.

The "Q" people (who handled all kinds of transport) were, however, very decent with their cars. Any wounded officer who was likely to suffer particular discomfort or inconvenience (often, indeed, real danger) during the evening rush hours in tube or bus was allowed a "compassionate car"—and compassionate lady driver too—which would be waiting in the evening at the War Office at the hour fixed.

It would wait at a small and rather mean-looking side door. The building has a noble entrance giving on to Whitehall, but there was some mysterious taboo about its use by any lesser divinity than a major-general. Instead of this entrance, quite senior people, say colonels of twenty years' service, in all the glory of gilt oak-leaves and red tabs, had to use the mean postern through which flowed the myriads of clerks and women typists.

It was usually said that Lord Kitchener once, in a great hurry, collided with such common clay as a mere major, or even captain, and immediately issued a verbal ukase as to the sanctity of The Entrance. Defiant majors and colonels —returning from a quick lunch at the Senior or the Rag—would, however, daringly ascend the steps and enter, to the sorrowful alarm of the big bemedalled ex-Guards sergeant-majors (with their long ulsters and gold-braided toppers), who could almost be felt thinking, "Discipline is at an end."

It is by no means a reflection—indeed, it is rather the reverse—upon the Old War House in the War that there was a good deal of "making work." There was no occasion for any artificial energy in "A" or "Q": in those branches the toil was incessant, and with most of it a day, an hour, even a minute sometimes meant much.

But elsewhere, there might be "quiet periods," even slack times—a kind of ebb tide and dead water before the current set in strongly again. And every officer, faced with these intervals, felt it a reproach to seem to have little to do, and threw himself into tasks—often really useless—with a praiseworthy but misdirected zeal.

Long Hours and No Work

The writer of this chapter once found himself handling "a job." So far from requiring attendance from 9.30 a.m. till after 7 p.m., the whole of the work could have been dealt with efficiently in a couple of hours per diem by an orderly-room corporal. Fortunately a wider and deeper channel was found for my experience; but there were other absurd jobs like this in other parts of the building.

The working hours were unnecessarily long (it is worth remarking that in the busiest section of the busy "A" branch the brigadier-general used to go round

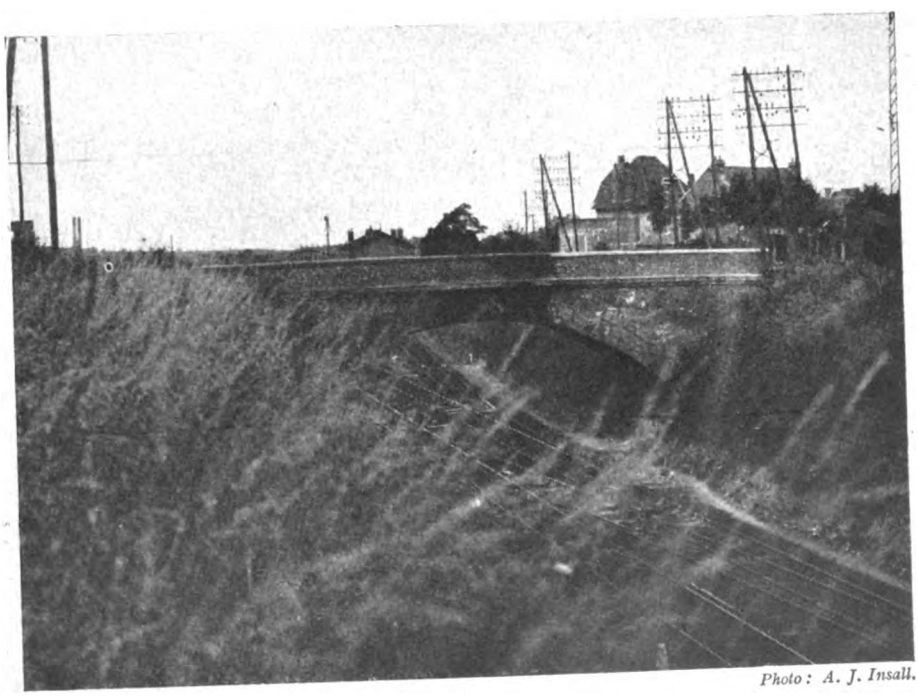

Photo: A. J. Insall.

IN WORKING ORDER

Here we have a picture exactly corresponding with the War-time view, and affording a glimpse of the station roof above the bridge-parapet. In addition to the main line, there is now a light track which, starting at Villers-Bretonneux, runs south to the Somme at Aubercourt, whence it travels east to near Calx, and then goes north again to join a similar light route at Harbonnières—a pleasant run for the British pilgrim.

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every evening at 6.30 p.m. and call out "Clear out, everybody!"). All that nonsense of staying "till long after 7 o'clock" was so much eyewash on the part of seniors with commandeered Rolls-Royces and Daimlers at their exclusive disposal at all times.

There was rather an amusing affectation in the method of signing memoranda and files, etc., in the War House, the endeavour being to show one's importance by omitting anything so commonplace and vulgar as rank and appointment. Thus, the most exalted of all—the Cabinet Minister who symbolised Parliamentary control—was a peer, who of course never dealt with christian names. Let us call him the Earl of Boodle.

Boodle would simply signify his acquaintance with any document by the one majestic initial "B" scratched in the margin. His deputy, Sir Artaxerxes Coodle, would have to ante-up and put in two letters—"A.C."—rather a comedown, but, after all, they were still merely initials. Then the subject-matter would filter into the military compartments, and the headman of all—a lieutenant-general, and all that—would have to write something over *his* name. But not for a moment would he state his rank or appointment, "J. Doodle" would—and must—suffice.

Now the file reaches Foodle, a mere major-general—who is in a quandary. By the etiquette of the game he must be less exclusive than his superior Doodle. He decides that rank is more vulgar than appointment—he is Director-General of Military Things—and signs himself "E. Foodle, D.G.M.T." His deputy, Hoodle, has now no choice: he must at least put his rank, so with rather a wry face he humiliates himself by writing "F. Hoodle, Brigadier-General." He has lost face, definitely—he has acknowledged that he is a soldier; but at any rate he has concealed his appointment which is something.

Humbler and Humbler

Lieutenant-Colonel Noodle now becomes seriously involved with the subject-matter of the file. He writes "G. Noodle, Lieutenant-Colonel" (which makes him no worse than Hoodle), and then, as an acknowledgment of homage, scrawls something which may be the letters "G.S."—or "General Staff." After him comes Poodle, who has necessarily acquired an 'umbleness greater even than that of Mr. Heep. Poodle makes no bones about things, but simply signs his minutes bravely. "H. Poodle, Major; General Staff"—the last two words in full.

Photo: Topical Press

IN AUGUST, 1914

Never had the War Office been the focus of such close public attention as in the early days of August, 1914. Above is a characteristic photograph of the crowds which thronged Whitehall both before and after the actual declaration of war; and it is safe to say that a high percentage of the men here visible later went overseas in khaki—some to remain there evermore. Incidentally, the photograph affords a good view of "The Entrance," to which the author of the accompanying pages makes prominent reference.

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Picture by courtesy of the "Illustrated London News."

TWO FAMOUS MEN

The above is an imaginary scene within one of the more sacrosanct chambers of the War Office, showing Kitchener of Khartoum (at desk) and Roberts of Kandahar in conversation. The drawing, which made its début as an enormous double-page spread in the *Illustrated London News* of October 10th, 1914, was one of many such tableaux designed to set before the public every aspect of the military undertaking.

Lastly comes little Woodle (but he hardly counts; he's only an attached officer, with no "p.s.c." glamour about *him*; and the new red tabs have gone to his head), who has the excruciating gaucherie to give his rank, appointment, and actual sub-department as follows—and three initials, if you please!—"R. S. T. Woodle, Captain, General Staff, M.T.G.(B) (i)." It was fellows like Woodle who used to give the Staff away.

Two curious points about life in the War Office in those days come into one's mind—and the odd thing about them is that, at the time, they were unnoticed, and it is only Twenty Years After that they take upon themselves a marked distinctness. The first point is that, although, during the War, Government employees in all branches of the Civil Service received additions to their salaries, and indeed most employees received similar additions to wages (in the form of a War Bonus, to meet the rising cost of living), the officers of the War Office never received even a sixpence in allowances or in extra pay.

In peace-time they certainly had not been overpaid; and in face of the swiftly-rising cost of living during the War they had rather a thin time. Particularly was this the case as regards accommodation in, or near, London—whether furnished house, flat, or rooms—the rents of which began to soar swiftly upward from about the beginning of 1916; and, as the accommodation had to be engaged merely for an indefinite period, higher rent was extorted.

The writer has no recollection of this financial anomaly ever having been mentioned by any soldier at the Old War House. But looking back now, Twenty Years After, it does seem rather remarkable that the Civil Servants in the War Office should have been paid a War bonus while the fighting men were left to face a startling rise in the cost of living with merely their pre-war pay.

They Never Talked of War

The other curious feature is that war reminiscences and war talk were almost absolutely unknown. There was, indeed, not much time for that kind of thing; still, there was always a "stand-easy" at tea-time, for every room which had four or five working in it had its "tea-club." (Woodle was always, by acclamation, elected secretary, treasurer, and general manager; his duty was to buy a brown tea pot, thick cups and saucers, and to be responsible daily for tea, milk, sugar, bread, butter, cake, and boiling water.)

This daily stand-easy was the most delightful entertainment in the world. Tea, drunk out of thick cups, at a table littered with files, letters, memoranda, red-books, and so forth, in companionship with four others of one's cloth, tasted such as no tea, before or since, has

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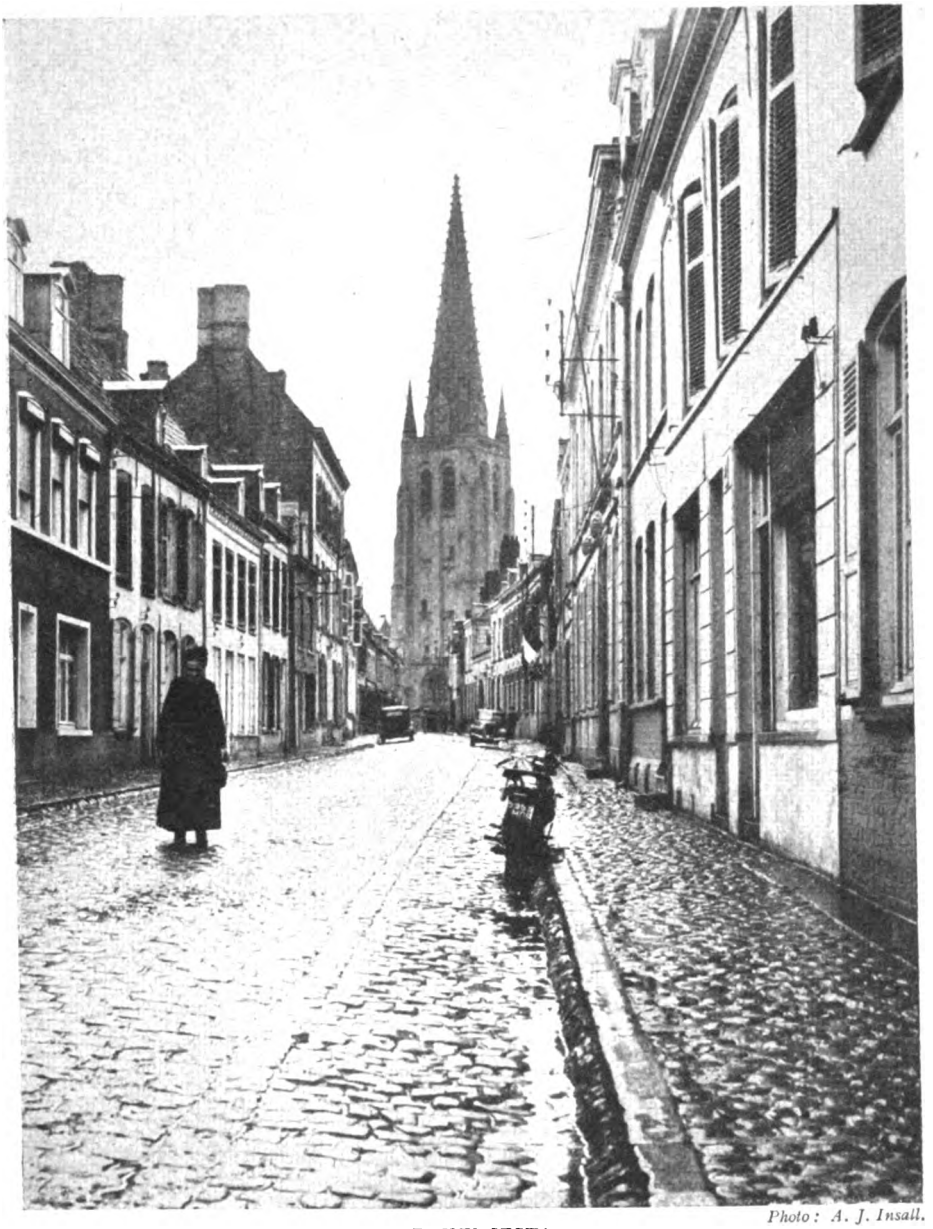

Photo: A. J. Insall.

A RAINY VISTA

The church-spire and the wet cobblestones in this photograph are those of Hondschoote, a typical Flemish village just inside the French frontier, and 16 km. east-south-east of Dunkirk. The place is on the railway, and the Bergues-Furnes canal passes close to its northern outskirts, so that in one way and another it saw a good deal of War-time traffic in addition to the inevitable Army vehicles on the roads. The modern community numbers 2,790—a fairly high figure.

ever tasted. The talk was cheery; the flow of conversation unrestrained; jests, jokes, chaff, and leg-pulling never ceased. But very seldom did the talk ever turn to the Front, as then existing. And never did it turn to the part played in the War by any of those present.

This is an odd thing, and odder still is the fact that not until this year 1937 has the present writer ever realised how odd it was. Is it not strange that, looking back and remembering four officers with whom, for months on end, he worked, talked, collaborated, argued, and did things to help win the War, this scribe never had, nor has still, any knowledge even on what front—or at any rate on what portion of it, and when—his comrades had fought?

One feels in a dim kind of way that at the back of it all there was a kind of unexpressed, "We are Regulars. After all, fighting is our job. A job is 'shop.' Besides, what did we do? Other fellows did much more." This may not be the whole explanation, but the Western Brothers ought to study the matter.

The very senior officers at the War Office were brave men. They were like lions in the field. They feared no foe. They could rightly sing, "Let me like a soldier fall." But their courage had limitations. They quailed before a politician. Their knees trembled before an M.P.

When the Greatest Kowtowed

The reason is an intelligible one. Mere underlings, such as colonels and brigadier-generals—the Noodles and the Hoodles—advanced by winning the smiles of their military superiors. But the Very Big Men had few or no military superiors to win smiles from. *Their* advancement came not from a military quarter. For them "promotion cameth not from the north or the south." It came from Downing Street. Very Big Men in the War House used to mind their P's and Q's when a Cabinet Minister was knocking around.

Therefore, when Noodle, stepping blithely one day into the Old War House, descried an anxious-looking messenger hurrying along a corridor with a file marked with a green label, he felt his heart sink. A Question is Being Asked in the House. Noodle breathes a silent prayer that *his* section won't be dragged into it. But one glance at Hoodle's face tells him the worst.

Hoodle loses no time, and speaks with military terseness, "You're damned late again, Noodle. Listen. Question in the House. S. of S. has to answer it at 3.30. Here's the file. Get on with it at once. What's that? You've something vitally important on hand? My dear Noodle, this is a Question in the House. Put *everything*, important or not, aside at once. Foodle wants the answer at one o'clock sharp. It is now 9.45. Let me have the answer at twelve noon without fail." And Hoodle vanishes to his sanctum.

Noodle is hard-boiled, and knows the procedure all right. He first mobilises Poodle and Woodle; sternly telling them to put *everything* aside—however important. Question Being Asked in the House. Then he seizes his telephone, gets on to his head clerk, tells him to put *everything* aside, however important, Question, etc. etc. Then he opens the file and reads the printed slip within it which contains The Question.

From the long rigmarole (usually the grammar is rather poor), Noodle gathers that the Member for Bunkumton wishes to know whether the Secretary of State for War is aware that the apparatus for use in teaching recruits how to attack with the bayonet is highly dangerous; and, further, is he aware that No. 37857721 Pte. John Stickup has recently been seriously injured in consequence at a training camp at Catterick?

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Descending the Rungs

Of course the S. of S. (Boodle, you will remember) is aware of nothing of the kind, and merely tells Coodle to "find out from the soldiers what it's all about." So Coodle shoves it on to Doodle (*The* Doodle, as you have been told) and says he must have the information by three o'clock. Doodle naturally knows as much about Pte. Stickup as an emu does of envelopes, and loses no time in passing the query on to Foodle, with a peremptory demand for the truth by 2 p.m. sharp.

From Foodle to Hoodle is a very quick hop, and Hoodle is warned to dish up the facts not a moment later than one. Hoodle, as you have been told, at once chases Noodle. Noodle now comes into the picture. His head clerk—an omniscient man—has joined him. A plan of campaign is quickly arranged. Woodle is sent off hot-foot to the department of the Director-General of Medical Services (with strict injunctions to mention Question Being Asked in the House).

Poodle is entrusted with sending a reply-paid telegram to Headquarters Northern Command, demanding full information without a moment's loss of time. The clerk says he knows the bloke in the Headquarters Office Northern Command, and will put through a priority call on the 'phone and drag the truth out that way. Noodle lights his pipe, and, as he has been definitely ordered to put everything, no matter how important, aside, lets the War go hang for an hour or so.

Meanwhile the Headquarters Northern Command has been humming with activity. Telegrams and priority telephone messages from Whitehall are not to be treated lightly. We will, however, keep ourselves at the War House, where from eleven o'clock onwards the facts come pouring in by telephone and wire.

The most intelligible statement is brought by a major R.A.M.C., who comes hurrying round from the Director-General Army Medical Services with the definite statement that the whole thing's bilge; the fellow took a toss and scraped his right hand, wasn't detained in hospital, just a bit of sticking plaster, and so on.

Noodle waves away his clerk, Poodle, Woodle, and the medico, and gets down to it. His pen flies rapidly over the paper. In twenty minutes he vanishes with a file into Hoodle's room. Thence it passes by rapid regulation stages through Foodle and Doodle. A leap then into the Civil Branch, and Coodle is conning it. He hurries into Boodle's room, and Boodle gravely draws a great "B" in the margin and returns it to Coodle to Answer in the House (for Boodle, being a peer, is not allowed, of course, into the House of Commons).

Wisdom From the Oracle

Next day Noodle sends Woodle down to the library for Hansard, and turns up the appropriate page. He summons Poodle and Woodle from their desks, points to the Question and Answer, and says, "Read, children, what Father wrote."

Poodle and Woodle find that the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for War has not only assured his questioner that Private Stickup has suffered nothing more severe than an extravasation of the cuticle unattended by hæmorrhage (all this being Noodlese), but then gives his questioner and the House of Commons generally a brief but masterly account of the importance of bayonet-fighting in war; a description of the apparatus by which it is taught; and a most reassuring piece of statistics (worked out to three places of decimals) proving that the accidents in such practice were merely negligible. All of which makes the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for War seem a very knowledgeable fellow indeed.

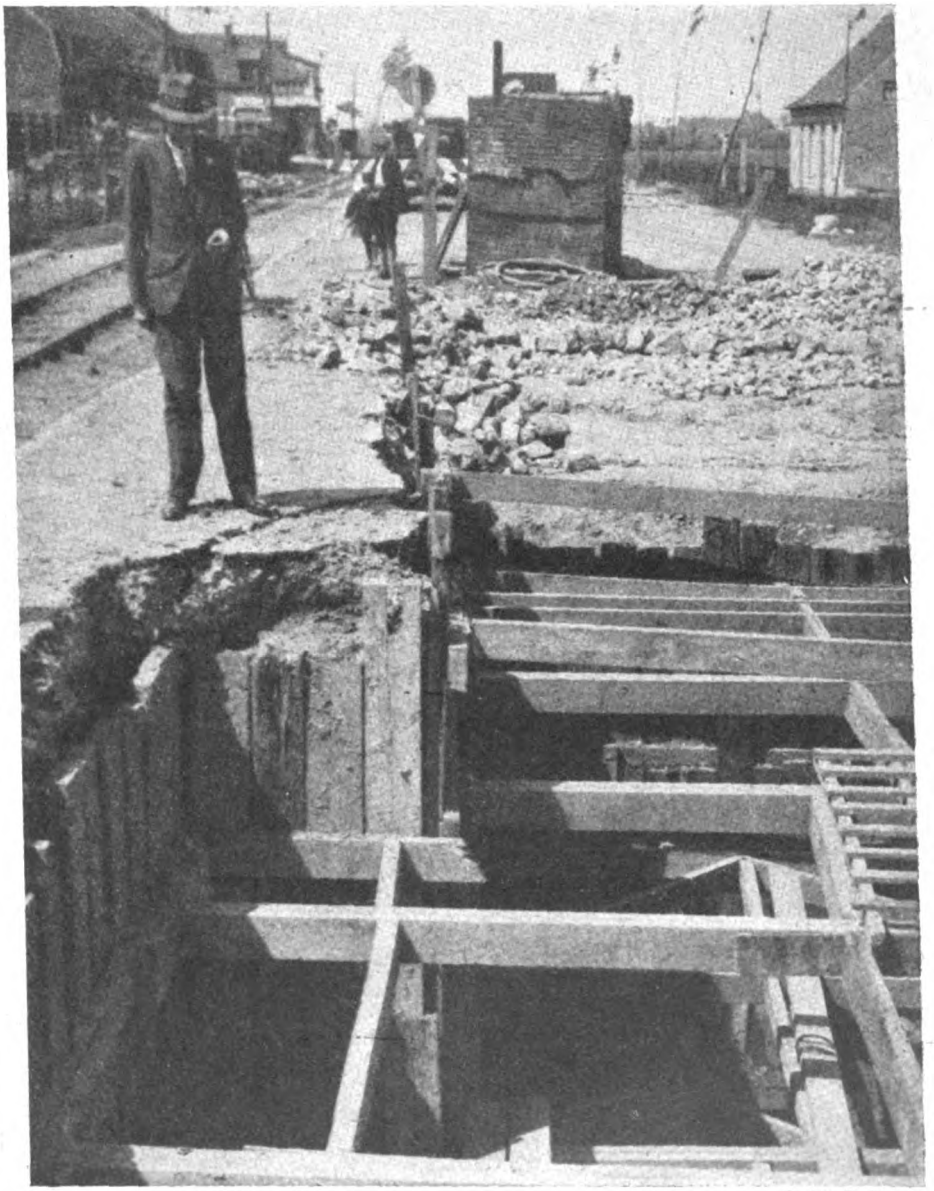

Photo: H. Barrow.

SUDDEN REMINDER

This interesting snapshot from a reader shows part of the great tunnel built by the Germans through the crest of the hill close to Hooge Château. After the War the entrances to the tunnel became blocked, and the existence of it was entirely forgotten until suddenly, in 1931, a great section of the Menin Road fell in, as shown. The railway seen on the left is the light line from Ypres to Gheluvelt and Menin.

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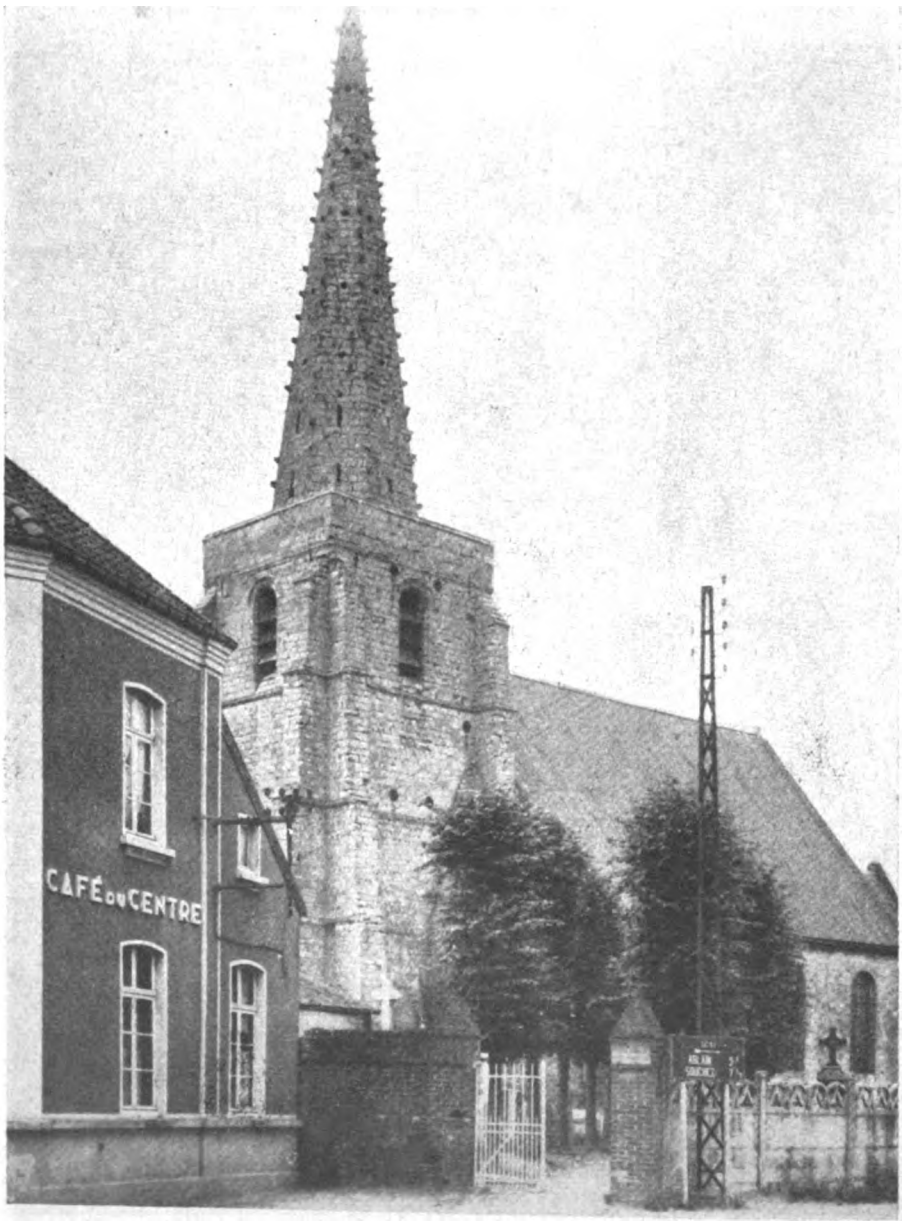
Anyone who served in the War Office during the Great War will certify that the above incident was by no means uncommon, though perhaps the narration of it has been tinged with burlesque. About another incident, of a time-wasting order, there is no burlesque whatever, and what follows is mere sober fact.

Early in 1918 there were many people who thought that the Germans had shot their bolt. They were quiescent on the Western Front; the submarine peril had been mastered; it was known that the Fatherland was on very short commons; and the Allies were daily receiving reinforcements of American troops.

In these circumstances some well-meaning and earnest people in England thought that this slack period should be turned to educational advantage for the troops at the front, and, with the permission of the War Office and the Cabinet, arrangements were made for classes of instruction at the front in several subjects, English history and literature among them. These people were very keen on Shakespeare.



A HOARY OLD CHURCH *Photo: A. J. Insall.*

This ancient village church is the central feature of Servins, a place of some 500 inhabitants off the Béthune—Aubigny road 13 km. west of Lens. Servins is a typical example of what were once back-area villages, and was throughout the course of hostilities sufficiently far from the firing-line to escape heavy damage. To-day there is no particular feature of interest, except a few British graves in the Communal Cemetery, which the village shares with its neighbour Gouy-en-Gohelle.

Shakespeare and the March Retreat

Well, it is a matter of common knowledge now that "Jerry" proved a much "tougher guy" than people had expected; and from the end of March he delivered such a series of attacks upon the French and British Armies—especially the latter—as had been unknown in the history of war. In the chapter of TWENTY YEARS AFTER dealing with the Big Push, the story has been told of the miles of ground evacuated by the Fifth Army; the prisoners lost; the guns abandoned; the dumps of ammunition, and the thousands of tons of stores, which fell into German hands.

In black days such as those it was not very likely that classes in English history and Shakespeare could carry on. But, believe it or not, while things were at their worst, when no man at the War Office knew what the next hour would bring forth, and even the most hard-boiled were raising their eyebrows and saying, "I suppose we *shall* win this damned war, in the end"—in those terrible hours one of those educational lunatics called to complain at the War Office.

He was eventually brought to Noodle; and to that staff officer the visitor expressed his great annoyance at the way the classes at the front were being conducted, and complained bitterly about the manner in which the attendances had lately been falling off. Now Noodle was at heart a kindly man, and to the educated idiot confronting him he tried to give a brief résumé of the very serious state of affairs in France. But the Shakespeare fan was not to be appeased. He took his departure in high dudgeon, and (again believe it or not) he wrote officially to the War Office once more voicing his complaint.

Possibly he approached his Member of Parliament and tried to get a question asked in the House, but without effect. The written remonstrance came first to Noodle, who started it on the usual Hoodle-Foodle-Doodle route; but it was checked early in its journey by the minute, "Rather an odd moment to bring this matter forward."

The Old War House has been sometimes reviled for its rather sceptical and chilly attitude towards war inventions. Even the tank—probably the most important contribution to the weapons of land warfare since the invention of gunpowder—had by no means a path of roses at first. But the traducers of the War Office are unaware of the extraordinary number of cranks whom a great crisis infects with the inventive bacillus.

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Photo: Imperial War Museum.

PANORAMA OF VALENCIENNES

Showing in particular the railway station and some of the sidings, as they looked when the 4th Canadian Division recaptured this important town on November 1st, 1918. Situated midway between Douai and Mons, Valenciennes and its intricate network of lines had been for four years the target of R.F.C. and R.A.F. bombs.

Photo: Keystone.

A VAST JUNCTION

Two War-time glimpses of Valenciennes appeared in Volume Two, but the above is our first contemporary picture. The "Old Contemptibles'" 19th Infantry Brigade detrained at this station on August 23rd, 1914, to take up its position on the left flank of the British line along the Condé Canal. The Retreat, however, was made east of the town, which the Germans entered on the 24th.

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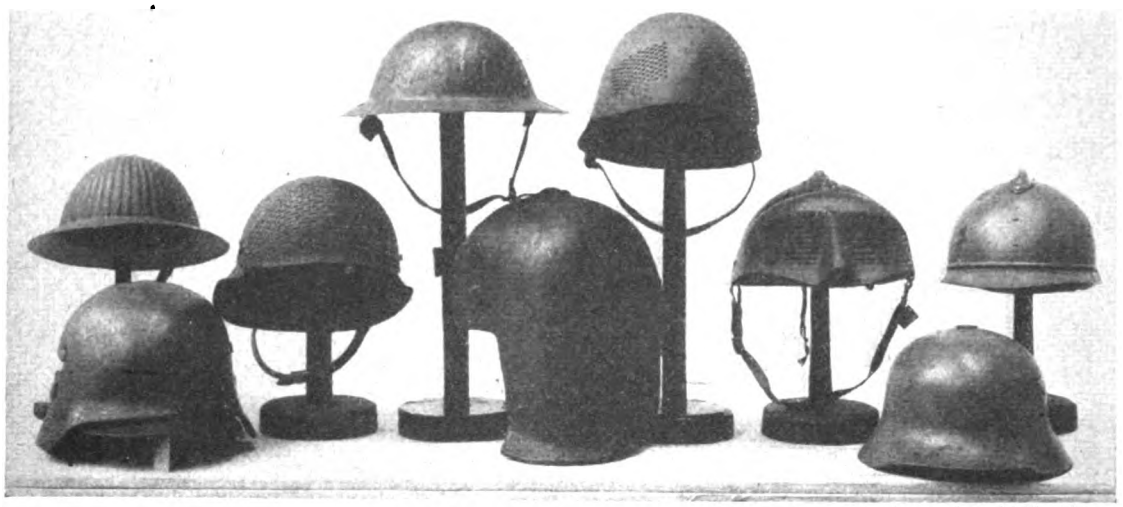

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

"TIN HATS" OF THE NATIONS

From left to right, the helmets on the stands at the back are: (1) Portuguese, 1917 pattern; (2) American; (3) British; (4) Belgian; (5) French, 1916 "Adrian" pattern with vizor designed by a Major Polack; (6) French, 1916 pattern designed by General Adrian after an original model by Edouard Détaille. The three helmets in the foreground are: (1) German, with reinforcing piece as worn on the Verdun front; (2) sniper's mask, Western Front type; (3) Austrian.

A Childish Simplicity

Lord Jellicoe in his book about the Grand Fleet has told of an inventor who submitted an infallible method for dealing with German submarines. The scheme had a grandeur of simplicity about it—merely to fill the North Sea with Eno's Fruit Salt, and to leave the effervescence to force the under-water craft to the surface.

Not all the cranks who worried the War Office were as demented as that. As a rule they were just very nice people who combined intense earnestness with a childish simplicity, and were totally devoid of any sense either of proportion or of humour. One day a card was brought in to Noodle, bearing the name of a retired colonel of the Indian Army. Noodle bade the messenger usher the visitor in.

One glance showed Noodle what he was in for: those snow-white locks, those sunken eyes with the baleful glare in them, that fierce revivalist look, told of heat-strokes and brandy pawnee while Noodle was but a child. However, the visitor was asked to state the object of his visit. He had (so he whispered) an infallible method of winning the War. Noodle was all politeness—though a restrained politeness.

The gentleman's plan was very simple; much simpler than the Eno's Fruit Salt scheme. It was just to make every soldier in France fire *one* round a day—the visitor several times emphasised the fact that it was to be but *one* round—of ball ammunition from a fixed tripod at a mark. The result (so the gentleman claimed) would be surprising. The improvement in British musketry would quickly annihilate the enemy.

Noodle remained calm, interested, bland, and soothing, but he was adamant in his refusal to write forthwith to Sir Douglas Haig, ordering him to institute this musketry exercise forthwith. This visitor also departed in high dudgeon (like all similar wasters of Noodle's time), loudly declaring his intention of catching the first

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

HELMETS OF THE GERMAN IMPERIAL ARMY

Upper left—Uhlan Lance cap worn by Lancer (Uhlaner) Regiment; upper centre—Prussian Gardes du Corps (Cuirassier) Regiment; upper right—dragoon's helmet as worn by Prussian Regiments Nos. 20, 21, 22, and 25 (plume not carried on active service). Lower left—Prussian infantry field service helmet, 1916; lower right—ditto, 1914, with waterproof cover.

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train to Hythe to explain his scheme to the Commandant of the School of Musketry.

The shrewder invention-fiend went about things in a more cunning way. There was the Lady of the Fan. It was pretty common knowledge by the end of 1917 that gas could hang about trenches and be a nuisance—even a very dangerous nuisance. This lady had a brain-wave. A fan can move air, therefore it could shift pockets of gas. Let fans be provided in the trenches—just ordinary hand fans, made of thin metal.

The Besetting Sin

It never occurred to her that the people in France must have been experimenting with fans and fire, and anti-gas chemicals, and that they had every interest in finding out the quickest way to avoid asphyxiation. Lack of realistic imagination was the besetting sin of most of these cranks.

She wrote to her Member of Parliament. Then the dance began. The M.P. was terrified of his constituents, and this fear surged up to the political War chiefs, even to Boodle himself, who, as usual, told Coodle to put the soldiers on to it. The Doodles (there were really four or five of them), scenting something of "Parliament," quailed, and instantly the correspondence was sent rattling down the groove which led Noodlewards.

Noodle (who ought to have known better) started by treating this Fan business as a huge joke. Within a week he had discovered his error. Letters came pouring in—from the M.P., from the lady, and from influential civilians and friends of the lady, who knew as much about decontamination as an armadillo knows of algebra.

There were rumours that, on the Olympian heights, the brow of Boodle was furrowed. Coodle had actually been seen hurrying down a passage. It was definitely known that The Doodle was upset. Foodle spoke sharply to Hoodle, and Hoodle was downright rude to Noodle, hissing into his ear that quite possibly A Question might be Asked in the House.

Those were weary days for Noodle. There was nothing for it but to see that some of the fans—if recollection serves right, some had actually been made and sent out privately to France—should be officially tried and a report submitted on their value. All this, of course, took some time, during which the Fan Fiends had to be kept at bay somehow.

Finally, however, the impatiently awaited report arrived, and, as might have been expected, it—to say the least of it—threw a good deal of cold water upon the "invention." Indeed, from some of the actual reports of gas experts, attached to the summarised general report, the "fan" had evidently been

Photo: G. T. Watson.

THE CHEMIN DES DAMES

A contemporary view of the notorious ridge, along whose crest ran a *via dolorosa* comparable only with the Menin Road. Twice—in September, 1914, and May, 1918—the Chemin became a theatre of British action; and during the many intervening months it was time and again the scene of bitter Franco-German struggles, especially between April and July, 1917. To-day the chalky summit, still pock-marked, is the inevitable haunt of souvenir-vendors. The shelter seen in the picture accommodates shells neatly displayed for sale, and is also the entrance to underground shelters or tunnels in which many subterranean French and German graves are to be found. The War-time Press often referred to the Chemin des Dames as the "key to Laon," the big town 15 km. north of it.

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looked upon merely as a childish toy. It had no value whatever as a decontaminator.

Noodle, however, was mighty careful this time to be very serious in *his* summary, which he started on its journey to the Olympian Heights. The Lady of the Fan faded away, and everyone, from Boodle down to little Woodle, got on with the War again.

Ever-growing Tasks

If the pen of the present writer has strayed into trivial aspects of life in The Old War House, it is because no pen can really do justice to the stupendous work there carried out between 1914 and 1918. The outstanding feature of the War Office in that era was the manner in which it was constantly expanding and grappling with tasks of ever-increasing magnitude.

In peace-time the British Army was very small, and all the problems connected with it could be carried out in an orderly and regular routine. But the Great War proved to be of such unexpected duration, and was fought out on such a gigantic scale, that the War Office was confronted with tasks that had never been contemplated.

Picture to yourself a church clock, in a tiny and lonely village, doing its job quite well, and revealing the time of day with quite sufficient accuracy to the easy-going rustics of the place. Then suddenly the whole place is changed. A vast munitions factory is hurriedly constructed round the hamlet. The steady-going old church clock is called upon to perform new duties. It must give absolute Greenwich time ; it must have a time signal, it must have chimes ; it must be illuminated at night ; its face must be visible at three times the former distance ; the gentle, tinny note of its bell must be made as sonorous as that of Big Ben.

Then imagine that all the extra machinery, all the cog-wheels, the ratchets, the springs, the bells, the hammer, have to be interpolated without stopping the old clock for a moment. The belfry becomes crowded out. Never mind ; put the extra machinery in the nave and aisle. When the whole building is full, erect other buildings, and connect them up electrically with the clock tower.

The old clock must never stop for a moment, and must meanwhile absorb and "mesh" with machinery that no clock had ever seen before.

That is what the Old War House did, and did it so well that its name is no longer a standing jest in the music-halls.

Photo: A. J. Insa

ENVOI

With this picture of the cliffs of Old England, that England which Englishman, Scot, Welshman, Irishman, and Overseas Briton of every Empire country went forth to defend, we bring to a close the last volume of *Twenty Years After*. Obviously it has been impossible to illustrate all the hundreds of towns and villages known to British troops. But we hope that for every omission there have been many compensations ; and, as a final item of statistics, we may add that the caption matter alone, in these three volumes, has amounted to more than 250,000 words, or enough to fill a book of 870 pages.

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ERRATA

It is necessary here to draw attention to certain statements embodied in this work which, it is believed, have been made in error. In a few cases reference is made to errors discovered in the pages of Volumes One and Two to which attention was drawn only after the Errata pages relating to those volumes were printed.

Page 143, vol. 1, column 2, line 3. A squadron from both the North and South Irish Horse landed in France in August, 1914. They were attached to G.H.Q.

Page 671, vol. 1. Caption "Going up to the Line." There is some doubt as to whether the men shown here belonged to the King's Liverpool Regt. Some, it is believed, were men of the 1/4th King's Own (Royal Lancs.).

Page 924, vol. 2, column 3, line 8. For "Loyal" read "Royal."

Page 1097, vol. 2. Caption "The Rue de Beauvais on a Wet Day." The street shown here is believed to be the Rue de Noyon.

Page 1304, vol. 2, column 2, lines 20–21. For "12th East Surreys" read "12th Suffolks."

Page 1347, vol. 2. Badges—Eleventh Selection, No. 17. The bugle in the badge of The Liverpool Rifles (6th King's Liverpool Regt.) should be reversed so that the mouthpiece is on the right instead of the left.

Page 1391, vol. 2. Caption "Keeping it Warm." It is believed that the men shown here were probably details of more than one unit, and not of the 13th Canadian Bn. as stated. It is suggested, however, that they belonged to the 15th Canadian Bn.

Page 1412, vol. 2, column 3, line 51. For "the 18th Division" read "the 18th (Indian) Division."

Page 1463, vol. 2, column 3, line 1. For "1st Leinsters" read "1st Leicesters."

Page 20, vol. 3. Caption "Countryside near Barleux." In the fourth line for "117th Durham L.I." read "1/7th Durham L.I."

Page 23, vol. 3, column 3, line 13. For "except East Africa" read "except East Africa and the Cameroons."

Page 59, vol. 3, column 3, line 14. For "*capire*" read "*capere*."

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Page 74, vol. 3. Caption " Wiring a Road." The men shown here belonged to a working party of the 8th Bn. The Royal Scots and were not Royal Engineers as stated.

Page 76, vol. 3, column 2, line 18. For " nearly a million tons " read " nearly a million lbs."

Page 140, vol. 3, column 1, line 25. Commander Jones was picked up by a Danish tramp, on board of which he died.

Page 144, vol. 3. Caption, last line. The year " 1881 " should read " 1884."

Page 169, vol. 3, column 3, lines 12–13. Rawlinson was a Guardsman (Coldstream) and not a Cavalry officer as stated.

Page 314, vol. 3, column 2, line 12. For " Amban Bay " read " Ambas Bay."

Page 320, vol. 3. Caption " Neptune's Fountain," line 1. For " south-eastern side " read " north-western side."

Page 347, vol. 3, column 2, line 4. For " Johnson's Jolly " read " Johnston's Jolly."

Page 429, vol. 3. Lettering on illustration. " 6" 20 cwt. Howitzer " should read " 6" 26 cwt. Howitzer."

Page 490, vol. 3. Illustration " Brought down in Flames." The burning mass shown in this picture is a kite-balloon and not an aeroplane as suggested in the caption.

Page 506, vol. 3. Caption, lines 1–2. For " looking toward the Lille Gate " read " looking toward the Menin Gate."

Page 540, vol. 3, column 2, lines 10 *et seq.* The story of Alexander Szek is one which must be accepted with reserve. It is taken from a well-known work published on the Continent, but its truth cannot be vouched for. When the lines referred to above were printed the account was believed to be authentic, but since publication information has been received which would tend to throw doubt upon it.

Page 663, vol. 3. Illustration. This depicts an ammunition wagon and not a gun as stated.

Page 678, vol. 3, column 2, line 2. After " 1916 " it should have been emphasised that many of the units serving with the 55th and 56th Divisions had already seen much fighting with the regular divisions, to which they had been attached previously.

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